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Kerry plan is best Israel can expect, Liberman says

Raphael Ahren
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman said Sunday he won't agree to any peace deal with the Palestinians without the exchange of the "triangle" area southeast of Haifa, which is heavily populated by Israeli Arabs, for West Bank areas populated primarily by Jews, known as "settlement blocs."

He stressed that he backs the creation of a Palestinian state and appreciates the current efforts of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to reach a final status deal, but added that he would not accept an agreement that would allow "even one" Palestinian refugee to return to Israel.

He also said that Kerry's positions on the peace process, including his understanding of Israel's security needs and its demand to be recognized as a Jewish state, are the best offer Israel can expect from the international community.

Liberman spoke at the opening of the Foreign Ministry's ambassadors conference for heads of Israeli missions around the world. At the conference, which took place at Foreign Ministry headquarters in Jerusalem, Liberman sounded decidedly less hawkish than in recent years. He has insisted in the past that a peace agreement with the Palestinian Authority was unattainable and accused Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas of "political terrorism," but on Sunday he seemed to accept the idea that a Palestinian state will be created in the near future.

Continued on page 16

African migrants protest in Tel Aviv

Amid calls for a nationwide strike of migrant workers, thousands of asylum seekers gathered in Tel Aviv urging the Israeli government to review asylum requests. Please see related story on page 15. *[Israel Sun photo]*

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Federation outreach to Israelis starts to pay off

'They don't realize that if they don't work on it... their kids will not have the same identity'

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Despite ongoing efforts by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto to integrate the city's 50,000 Israelis into the organized Jewish community, Galya Sarner, the federation's Israeli-Canadian Project director, said that although there have been many successes, there's still a long way to go.

"I think it's going to take time. We're not there yet," said the Israeli-born Sarner, who moved to Toronto in 2005, with her Canadian-born husband Robert – the director of communications for Roots Canada and a former Israel-based journalist and columnist for *The CJN* – and their three children.

After decades of exclusion and alienation from the Jewish community and its institutions that greeted the first waves of Israeli immigrants to the city, the federation, under the leadership of outgoing CEO and president Ted Sokolsky, has sought to make meaningful connections with Israelis in Toronto, Sarner told *The CJN*.

Due to a perception by Diaspora Jews and the Israeli government that leaving Israel went against the Zionist ideal of having strength in numbers in the Jewish State, Israelis were once made to feel shame for leaving their homeland.

Continued on page 11

Galya Sarner

Beshalach
Candlelighting: 4:44
Havdalah: 5:48
Greater Toronto Area

Les Miz actor living his dream
Heebonics — See page 23

Peace talks accompanied by rise in terrorism — please see page 7

CANADA

Teen Gets Probation

WINNIPEG — A teen who tried to light a Jewish classmate's hair on fire and made anti-Semitic comments as he did so got 18 months supervised probation last week. The 17-year-old, who was 15 at the time of the November 2011 incident, singed the hair of his female victim, also 15. He pleaded guilty to assault with a weapon. The judge agreed the attack didn't appear to be racially motivated. The Crown called the boy a "jerk and bully." His lawyer said he didn't intend to light the girl's hair on fire, which occurred when she pulled away. The teens were friends and the boy apologized that day, court heard. The defence said his comments reflect how teens interact at their school and said others addressed her similarly.

Goldbloom Named

MONTREAL — Michael Goldbloom, principal and vice-chancellor of Bishop's University in Lennoxville, Que., has been named to the Order of Canada. He was among 90 appointments announced Dec. 30 by Gov. Gen. David Johnston. Goldbloom, 60, was cited "for establishing several transformative civic organizations in Montreal and for his dedication to building bridges between the city's English- and French-speaking communities." A labour lawyer, Goldbloom was previously publisher of Montreal's *Gazette* and the *Toronto Star*, and is now a member of *The CJN*'s board. He's a former head of Alliance Quebec, an anglophone rights group, and chair of the Ville Marie Social Services Centre. .

WORLD

Death Claim Denied

JERUSALEM — Israel denied a claim by one of its retired ex-ambassadors that it has killed most of those responsible for the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community building in Buenos Aires. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs dismissed the claim by Yitzhak Aviran, the envoy to Argentina from 1993 to 2000, saying they're "pure fantasy." He made the claim in an interview published Jan. 2 by the *Jewish News Agency*, or *AJN*, a Spanish-language service. Eighty-five people died in the 1994 suicide bombing at the multistory AMIA building and hundreds more were wounded.

Jewish Groups Oppose Proposed Charter

MONTREAL — Jewish groups have called for the withdrawal of Quebec's proposed charter of secular values in briefs submitted to the National Assembly.

Frank Dimant

Bill 60, tabled in November by the Parti Québécois government, is "a bad solution to a non-existent problem," the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and Federation CJA said in a joint brief.

"While no empirical studies have been used to demonstrate a decline in the secularism or religious neutrality of the state, the government is proposing serious restrictions to fundamental freedoms by banning the wearing of religious symbols in the public and para-public service, and possibly even in the private sector," the organizations say.

Public hearings on Bill 60 are slated to start Jan. 14.

The proposed law would discriminate against and marginalize members of minority faiths "by undermining the principle of state religious neutrality," CIJA and the federation believe, violating freedoms protected by the Canadian and Quebec human rights charters, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

B'nai Brith Canada also argues that Bill 60 would have a detrimental effect on religious freedom and social cohesion. "The legislation will only serve to create divisions in Quebec society… [and] threatens the continuity of minority, religious and cultural groups in the province,"" said B'nai Brith CEO Frank Dimant.

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Community steps up to help ice storm victims

CJN Staff

In response to the ice storm that struck the GTA in late December, a warming station was opened Dec. 22 at the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, Ont. Overnight shelter for those in need was provided, as well as light snacks, beverages, hot coffee and water.

From Dec 22 to 24, a total of about 10 guests were there each day, including a young family of five and a senior woman.

The overnight shelter stopped receiving guest by about 8 p.m. Dec. 24, when the service was deemed no longer necessary.

Volunteers also helped deliver water and snacks to seniors trapped in their apartments along the Bathurst Street corridor from Finch to Steeles avenues – to people who had no power, no heat and no water, as the apartment pumps were down.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto received a call Monday night from Circle of Care about these seniors. By the next morning, the agency had determined which buildings needed help most, and it sent out the call for volunteers. By the afternoon, the necessary supplies were in the Lipa Green Building lobby. More than 150 volunteers lined up to collect the supplies and learn which buildings they were to cover. Most had to walk up the stairs (up to 16 floors), and they delivered the packages to 225 seniors in nine buildings

"Within hours of the storm taking hold, and despite the fact our central offices were shut down due to the power failure, UJA Federation's senior professional team convened regularly by conference call to assess the situation and provide leadership and support in whatever way we could," said Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of the Toronto federation.

"Fortunately, our offsite computer and phone backup systems met their biggest challenge ever, working as planned for such emergencies, and we were able to remain in contact with each other, our partner agencies and the community. And wow did the community respond!"

UJA Federation set up a warming centre to help those in need during December's ice storm that struck the GTA in late December.

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Iran and Turkey will stay in the news this year

As the New Year began, two of the Middle East's dominant stories from 2013 continued to unfold: Iran's nuclear and regional ambitions, and Turkey's passive response to the Iranian challenge. They are interrelated, but let's begin with the former.

Despite several rounds of talks in the intervening period to work out such fundamental "details" as a start date, the Nov. 24 Geneva agreement between the "P5+1" and Iran limiting Iran's nuclear enrichment program – in exchange for the easing of some economic sanctions – has still not been implemented.

Stories have circulated in Iranian media that the details might be ironed out by the end of this month, but nothing is clear.

On Jan. 1, *AP* reported that Iran has added "hardliners" to its negotiating team in an effort to placate critics of "moderates" such as President Hassan Rouhani and Foreign Minister Mohammad Zarif, who are leading the talks.

And, since Nov. 24, despite Tehran's denials, Iran has had a free hand to continue work on its nuclear weapons program.

It's not surprising, then, that a keen Mideast observer such as Jeffrey Goldberg wrote in his Dec. 31 Bloomberg column that it's nothing short of "astonishing" that "the Obama administration, and its European allies, have let more than a month slip by without actually getting this deal done."

According to Goldberg, 2013 was a very good year for Tehran: "Iran continues to be the most potent state sponsor of terrorism in the world; it is still the prime backer of Hezbollah in Lebanon and of the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria; and it hasn't shown any inclination to actually roll back its nuclear program."

Iran has already benefited economically. As former Israeli ambassador to Washington Michael Oren explained to *Times of Israel* editor David Horovitz in an interview published Dec. 30, "[They] got a big bump on the rial. [They] got a jump in the stock market in Tehran. The message has gone out that the sanctions will not be tightened, which translates as you're loosening them. It is gain for the Iranians."

Oren continued: "Meanwhile, they're continuing to work on [the heavy water] Arak [facility]. Meanwhile, they continue to build and do research for the centrifuges… Weaponization is off the table. So the program in fact is progressing. Maybe they're not breaking the 20 per cent [enrichment] red line, but they're expanding out horizontally, and in depth in terms of the weaponization. The Iranians are gaining."

With respect to Turkey, the assumption that economically and militarily powerful Sunni Turkey would act as a natural counterforce to Shia Iran – which has been extending its tentacles from Shia-dominant Iraq through Syria and into Lebanon – has been upended. If anything, Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Erdogan has deepened his economic ties with Iran while forging energy deals with the autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq and the Iranian-backed central government in Baghdad. This has left wealthy, but otherwise ill-equipped, Saudi Arabia to challenge Iran's growing influence in the region by supporting rebel factions fighting Bashar Assad's Iranian-backed regime in Syria.

Erdogan is currently contending with the largest corruption scandal affecting his AK Party since it came to power in 2002. According to Gallia Lindenstrauss and Yaniv Avraham of Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies ("INSS Insight," Dec. 30): "Some of the corruption now exposed in Turkey involves trade relations between Turkey and Iran and the extensive use of Turkey by Iran to circumvent the economic sanctions, especially with regard to banking transactions."

Lindenstrauss and Avraham argue that these revelations will spark "international pressure on Turkey to reduce the scope of its economic ties with Iran." Still, that pressure is unlikely to have much effect.

While Israel has been trying to improve relations with Ankara (El Al flights to Turkey may resume this spring), such efforts have been buffeted by accusations in Turkish media outlets with close ties to Erdogan's ruling party that Israel, the "Jewish lobby," and the United States have been promoting rumours about Turkey's political corruption.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

POLLARD PETITION: Israeli MKs Nachman Shai, left, and Ayelet Shaked presented President Shimon Peres with a petition which he is to send to U.S. President Barack Obama. The petition which urges him to release Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard from U.S. federal prison, won backing from every faction of the Knesset. One hundred and six members of the Knesset signed the document at the close of a lengthy discussion of the Pollard issue on Jan. 1, which has come to the fore once again in the wake of recent disclosures of American spying on Israeli leaders. At right is Efi Lahav, head of the Free Pollard committee.
[Haim Zach/GPO photo]

Stars of David win hockey championship

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Is it too early to refer to the Israeli Stars of David as a hockey dynasty?

Let's see – you've got the 1956-60 Montreal Canadiens. They were pretty good. There were the Leafs teams of the early 1960s. They won four Cups. The Islanders and the Habs later won four in a row and the Oilers hoisted Lord Stanley's silver-plated mug five times in seven years.

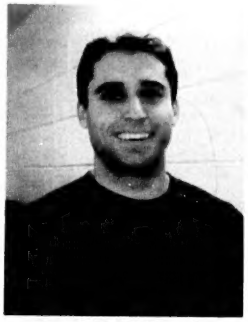
So when the Stars of David won their fourth title in six years in the Canadian Multicultural Hockey Championships, it pretty much qualified them to be mentioned with hockey's elite. Didn't it?

Removing tongue from cheek, it was undeniable that the Stars were the class of the annual winter hockey tournament, which brought together teams representing various Toronto ethnic communities.

The Stars defeated Japanese Arashi 6-0 in the Dec. 30 title game. They went 3-0 in the round-robin portion of the tournament, 2-0 in the playoffs, gave up five goals in five games, captured three of the top four spots in the scoring race and had one of its players, right winger and scoring leader Seth Klerer, named tournament MVP.

About 60 or 70 friends and family came out to watch the Stars' in the championship game, played at Chesswood Arena. The Stars dominated right from the start, drawing a penalty in the first 15 seconds and scoring moments later on the power play. They never looked back.

The Arashi, a strong skating team, barely dented the Stars' defence, hitting the post once late in the game when the result was not in doubt, but creating no sustained pressure.



Seth Klerer

The Stars, coached and managed by Alex Voihanski, looked like a well-oiled machine by comparison. They threw the puck around with tape to tape passes, broke up Arashi rushes at both blue-lines, were quick in transition and peppered the Arashi netminder with shot after shot, generating numerous chances on rebounds, which the goaltender generously provided. They had chances off the rush, on scrambles, off the cycle and on odd-man rushes.

"This is the best game we've ever played," Voihanski said in the subdued winner's dressing room afterward, as the boys enjoyed an adult beverage.

"I think we dominated. We played a really strong game. The early goal set the tone for the game. We just played a smart, strong defensive game. We didn't give them a sniff."

Though the Arashi were badly outclassed, the Stars were given a scare the night before in the semifinal by the Polish Hussars. Though they out-chanced and out-shot the Hussars by a three- or four-to-one margin, they won 4-3 thanks to a last minute goal, Voihanski said.

"It was a bang-bang goal," Voihanski said. "Thankfully, the hockey gods were on our side."

Only a few weeks before the tournament, Voihanski was wondering whether he'd bring together the guys to compete this year. But then, he started receiving phone calls. The core of the team, which has been together for five or six years, wanted to know when the games began.

Voihanski put together a team he considers the best of all the Stars' championship squads. What elevated this version of the Stars over previous incarnations was depth. They rolled three lines and had a deep defence corps, he said.

For Klerer, who played NCAA Division 1 hockey with Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y., it was his first time suiting up for the Davids. "We're a pretty highly skilled team with three lines," he said. "We move the puck well."

Playing on a line with Alon Eizenman, who played for several years in the French professional league and was a member of the Israeli national team, and Adam Weinberg, the trio meshed immediately.

Defenceman Jordan Weinberg, the middle brother of three Weinbergs on the team, has played for the Stars for five of its six years at the tournament. In that, he's not alone.

Weinberg, who played Junior A for the North York Rangers, said "you've got to trust in your teammates. One of the advantages of playing for so many years is that everybody has a role. It's like a kibbutz. You do your job and it's knowing what you can accomplish. Nobody has to do too much."

Bryan Weinberg, a forward at York University, rounds out the family's brother act. But they weren't the only trio of brothers on the team. They were joined by the Schwartz brothers – Jesse (who'll play for the University of Connecticut next year), Noah and Brendan.

Other team members included Sergei Frenkel, who has played for the Israeli national team, Darryl Karpel, Thomas Zubrick, Jordan Klein, Aaron Stein, John Garbe and Daniel Mazour. They were backstopped by Jake DiDimenico, who plays for York University.

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New year, same old story

Last Thursday, comatose former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon took a significant turn for the worse. And at virtually the same time, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry landed in Israel for talks with its current prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. I'm sure the symbolism wasn't lost on anyone: a Mideast peace process on life-support, survival unlikely, just like the man who proved more than any Israeli or Palestinian leader since his tenure how far he would go in pursuit of peace.

In Jerusalem, Kerry spoke of "tough decisions" facing Israeli and Palestinian leaders, but neglected to mention that neither side appears willing to make them. Indeed, the days leading up to Kerry's 10th visit in pursuit of peace saw both sides blatantly undermine the process. The jubilation in the West Bank and Gaza at the return of 26 Palestinian prisoners, convicted killers among them, was disappointing, even if entirely predictable. Meanwhile, the Israeli government followed up the prisoner release by leaking plans for new construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem. Kerry never stood a chance.

Guest Editorial

And then Sharon's condition deteriorated to critical: multiple vital organs ceased functioning, and family gathered at Tel Hashomer hospital by the bedside of a warrior engaged in his final battle. Talk quickly turned to Sharon's fighting spirit and astounding political transformation, and one couldn't help but compare him to the current main players in the peace process.

What stands out is that Netanyahu, Abbas and Kerry, and even U.S. President Barack Obama, all lack Sharon's fearlessness. He proved he was willing to stick his neck out for peace – none of them has done the same. Sharon's 2005 Gaza disengagement plan was difficult for Israel, but it was also bold and innovative. He did the riskiest thing he could – make the first move – and when the disengagement was over, most Israelis were still behind him. Sharon understood that making peace will always require "tough decisions," and instead of pushing them off until someone else blinked or it wasn't his problem anymore, he took action. Israelis trusted him because of that.

It's tempting to wonder if things would have been different had Sharon not fallen ill almost exactly six years ago. Maybe the Palestinians' puerile response to the Gaza pullout – stepping up rocket attacks, not to mention demolishing synagogues, torching greenhouses and looting homes – would have soured Israelis on making any more concessions in the vain hope of reciprocation.

Then again, maybe Sharon would have wrested something from Palestinian leaders. Maybe his conviction would have scared them into getting serious about peace or risk being left behind. And maybe we wouldn't still be locked in this stalemate.

January has only begun, but both sides need to show more courage if 2014 is to be the year Israelis and Palestinians finally make peace. Unfortunately, it seems more likely Netanyahu and Abbas will continue to play for time, posturing about lack of trust while at the same time fomenting that distrust – and while they stall, Kerry and Obama will keep pretending they're making headway.

New year, same old story. There is no one to bulldoze this process forward.

Yoni Goldstein

United Church must change focus

The United Church should really get out of the boycott business. ("Group mobilizes against United Church boycott," *The CJN*, Dec. 19.) After preaching hatred of Jews for nearly 2,000 years, the Christian church is hardly a neutral party. There are more than two million Canadians out of work and needing assistance. Why not help people here at home, rather than extending yourself 5,800 miles to a situation you may not fully understand.

Edward J. Farkas
Toronto

Silence doesn't defeat hatred

Josh Morry, a representative of the University of Manitoba Students' Union, might have history, logic, common sense and the moral high ground on his side in his efforts to call out Israel/Jew-hatred on his campus at U of M ("To protest or not to protest," *The CJN*, Dec. 26), but does that make his decision to counter Israel/Jew-hating lies a wise decision?

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) believes that all historical evidence showing that Jew-hatred rhetoric precedes Jew-hatred violence no longer applies.

But CIJA would be wiser to take notice of three important and irrefutable facts: First, Israel is more politically isolated than ever, facing numerous boycott resolutions from academics, student, teacher, union and church groups worldwide. Second, it was because of vocal advocacy that hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews escaped persecution at home and helped bring an end to racial segregation in the United States and South Africa. Finally, there is no evidence showing the benefits of silence in the face of hate and lies.

Steven Werner
Dundas, Ont.

Kudos to *The CJN*

I am writing to commend *The CJN* team for increasing your coverage of diverse Jews and Jewish communities in far away lands. It's imperative that we, Ashkenazi Jews in particular, but all Canadian Jews, start to realize that Jews come in all colours, have lived in every country on the planet and that emerging and re-emerging Jews need our support, beginning with recognition and inclusion.

The Nov. 28 edition really struck me, and I was so excited that I sent *The CJN* web link to friends all over the world, for there were no fewer than seven stories that dealt with diverse Jews. Amazing!

As chair of the Jewish diversity committee of Congregation Darchei Noam and now also founding president of the Canadian Friends of Kulanu, I commend you.

Andria Spindel
Toronto

Lev Tahor responds

I read the editorial "Let's wait to pass judgment" (*The CJN*, Dec. 26), and I agree with every word.

If someone forces a person into marriage, it is a crime against humanity and against the Torah. If someone abuses a child, it is also a crime against humanity and against the Torah. If we know someone like this in our community, we will be the first to hold him responsible for his actions.

Regarding the kidnapping charges against Lev Tahor leader Shlomo Helbrans, there was no claim at all that the rabbi abducted a child. The charges only allege that the rabbi gave the child, who was running away from his mother, advice by phone on where to run.

While the legality of such action in New York is in doubt, the accuracy of the allegation is also in doubt, since it was denied by the child himself during a trial and he continues to deny it 20 years later, now that he is secular and has served in the Israeli army.

We would be more than happy if the court removed the publication ban from the court documents, so that every reporter can see the nonsense of these allegations. We are also always ready to co-operate fully with authorities.

Nachman Helbrans
Lev Tahor
Chatham, Ont.

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Terror upsurge accompanies 'peace' talks – again

Alex Traiman
JNS.org

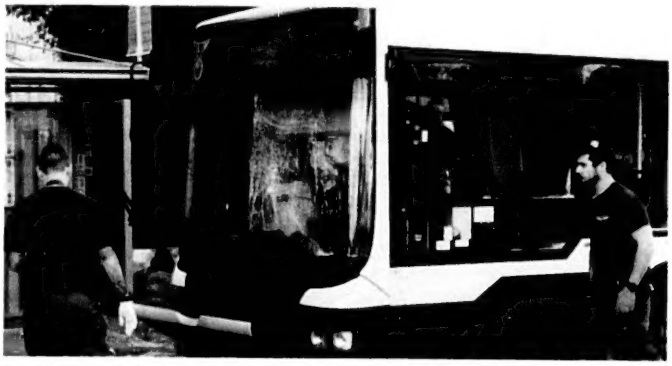
Upsurges in Palestinian terrorism have often accompanied progress – and eventual breakdowns – in Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiations over the past 20 years. The latest round of talks, brokered by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, is proving to be no different.

Palestinian attacks on Jewish military and civilian targets have been on the rise since a Lebanese sniper killed an Israel Defence Forces soldier in mid-December. A civilian hired by the IDF was murdered Dec. 24 while repairing the Israel-Gaza border fence. A bomb exploded on an evacuated bus in the heavily populated city of Bat Yam, just south of Tel Aviv, on Dec. 22. A police officer was stabbed and moderately injured Dec. 23 while directing traffic at one of the West Bank's busiest intersections along the Ramallah bypass road, and Jewish drivers have reported several potentially deadly stoning attacks. In one of several recent Palestinian rocket attacks from Gaza that provoked Israeli retaliatory air strikes, one rocket landed near a bus stop used by schoolchildren near the city of Ashkelon.

"Unfortunately and regrettably, it's quite typical to the junctures in which political decisions and painful compromises are expected to be taken by the negotiating parties," Gilead Sher, who served as chief of staff and policy co-ordinator to Israel's former prime minister and defence minister Ehud Barak, told *JNS.org* regarding the uptick in Palestinian terror.

"Time and time again, we see the leash loosening for these kinds of acts, that typically characterize the Palestinian response to the kind of progress that seemingly is what is happening within the negotiating room," said Sher, who was a chief peace negotiator at the Camp David summit in 2000 and the Taba summit in 2001, in addition to taking part in several other extensive rounds of covert talks with the Palestinians.

Mark Regev, a spokesperson for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, tweeted that the recent terror attacks "are a direct result of the incitement and hatred propagated in Palestinian schools and media." Regev added, "We are disappointed that so far [Palestinian Authority] President [Mahmoud] Abbas has not condemned these acts of terrorism, as one would expect from a partner in peace talks."



Israeli police and rescue personnel inspect the scene of an explosion on a passenger bus in Bat Yam, near Tel Aviv, on Dec. 22. The bomb was part of a recent upsurge in Palestinian terrorism. *[Gideon Markowicz/Flash90 photo]*

Sher, who currently serves as a senior researcher at Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies, told *JNS.org* that "[the recent terrorism is] intolerable, and I believe it has to be quite explicitly explained by the Americans and the international community to the heads of the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] and the PA that it is their responsibility and duty to subside those acts and to prohibit these kinds of acts emanating from their territory against Israeli civilian and military targets."

Sher added: "Israel has to do whatever it takes in order to counter those terrorist attacks, and at the same time, the government has a duty to pursue, explore whichever avenue possible in order to attain a two-state reality and a two-state solution, even if it is only a framework agreement or a partial agreement."

The rise in terrorism has stirred a heated debate among Israeli defence officials and parliamentarians about the need to continue pursuing U.S.-brokered Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiations.

Israeli Economy Minister Naftali Bennett, head of the Jewish Home Party, said, "Israel is continuing with the diplomatic process as though there's no terror, while the Palestinians are continuing with the terror as though there's no diplomatic process."

Bennett echoed the messages of Netanyahu spokesperson Regev and Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon, attributing the attacks to Palestinian incitement.

"When you educate your children to terrorism from kindergarten, when your television broadcasts paint Jews as monsters, when even Tel Aviv is missing from your map – you're a terrorist," Bennett said in a statement.

Ya'alon stated, "As long as the Palestinian Authority continues instigation against the State of Israel and its citizens and does not encourage a culture of peace, we will be forced to deal with terror attacks. This is an intolerable state of affairs as we see it.

Responding particularly to the rocket attacks, Ya'alon added, "We will retaliate forcefully and painfully to this shock to our sovereignty and harm to our civilians and soldiers. If there is no peace in Israel, there will no peace in Gaza."

Labor MK Eitan Cabel warned that the violence – including the bus bombing – should not get in the way of current efforts to jumpstart talks with the Palestinians.

"We've been hearing about efforts to renew the diplomatic process," Cabel said. "Despite the bombing attempt, we must continue the process with all our energies."

Sher believes that while Israel is "always looking for as little collateral damage to the political process as possible," it "cannot by any means agree to have it in a way taken hostage or be handicapped in terms of its response and retaliation because there is a political process."

"These two elements should be completely separated," Sher told *JNS.org*.

Israel was planning to free 26 Palestinian terrorist prisoners this month in the third phase of a prisoner release it agreed to as a gesture to the PA for re-starting the current negotiations.

Deputy Defence Minister Danny Danon condemned the planned release amid the terror surge. "In a normal country, when a bus explodes on Sunday and a police officer is stabbed on Monday, you don't release terrorists as a 'gesture' the following week," Danon said.

Labor MK and former defence minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer countered that negotiations with the Palestinians are "an Israeli strategic interest," and said that Israel "must not let up in efforts to push the talks forward."

Meanwhile, the violence is doing little to increase the already-low confidence of Israelis that the latest U.S.-brokered talks will be more successful than previous rounds of diplomacy. A new *Israel Hayom* poll found that 85.8 per cent of respondents said the current negotiations would not lead to a peace deal.

"I personally don't think it has reached a level of violence that actually affects the confidence significantly. I don't think there is a lot of confidence anyway. I don't think there is a lot of trust in the first place, so there is not too much to harm," Sher told *JNS.org*.

"Having said that, we always take into consideration that the extremists will always try to affect the political process by means of violence and terrorism," he said. "It is intolerable, it is despicable, and there is no way to accept that. And we have to respond to it as though there is no connection between the violence and the negotiation process."

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Harper's Israel itinerary: a modest proposal

Gil Troy
in Montreal

When Prime Minister Stephen Harper visits Israel this month, he can expect the usual political itinerary filled with ancient and eternal symbols such as the Western Wall, moving memorials like Yad Vashem and marathon meetings with politicians. Still, he should leave the beaten path, too, to learn about the meaning of Zionism as Jewish nationalism – because Jews are a people, not just a religion; to see Israeli democracy in action; to fix some Canadian diplomatic anomalies, and, most importantly, to see the wonderful partnerships that express the shared values uniting Israel and Canada.

Mr. Harper, beware: it's too easy to rush through your Israel trip without deepening your understanding of Israel, the Jewish People and Zionism. The Western Wall can feel like solely a religious site as you don a paper kippah and see everyone around you praying and swaying. Yad Vashem can make Israel seem only to be a response to the Holocaust. And meetings about the Palestinian problem and the Iranian nuclear threat can make Israel feel like one big embattled headache.

But that's not all Israel is.

To learn about the Jewish national past as the basis of today's nation state, perhaps Harper's security people could allow him to walk out of the crudely – but accurately – named Dung Gate and visit the City of David. The remains of a 3,000-year-old Davidic palace and the impressive water tunnel that King Hezekiah hewed through hard Jerusalem rock 2,700 years ago frame the Jewish story as one of kings making political and military decisions, not just priests and rabbis teaching religion and ethics. A visit to Jerusalem's Theodor Herzl Museum – not just Herzl's grave – or the Menachem Begin Center – will root the story of Zionism in 19th-century nationalism, again emphasizing Judaism's national dimension, which yearned for fulfilment by restoring this ancient displaced people to their historic homeland and building a modern state there, decades before the Holocaust.

Quick side trips either to the Jerusalem Venture Partner's Media Quarter or the PICO – People-Ideas-Community-Opportunities – creative work-and-think space in Talpiot will bring alive Israel's cutting-edge entrepreneurship and its unique position as the *Altneuland*, Old-New Land, fulfilling Herzl's dream.

To see Israeli democracy in action, Harper should wander around Jerusalem's colourful Machaneh Yehudah market, tasting Israel's diversity. There he can stop at a news kiosk, buy half a dozen Israeli newspapers, then sit at a cafe with a translator translating the headlines and the conversations around him. There he will experience a thriving pluralistic, multi-ethnic, poly-lingual democracy in action, even in a Jewish state that is 80 per cent Jewish.

Less fun, but equally necessary, is a tough managerial trip to the various Canadian diplomatic and NGO facilities, where he will confront civil servants who don't always follow his policies or share his vision on how to progress in the Middle East. All too often, these representatives of the Canadian people blatantly favour Palestinians, and even the occasional Palestinian rejectionist. Harper should insist that no Canadian diplomats or activists on the Canadian federal payroll undermine the careful, anti-terrorist, anti-anti-Zionist, pro-Israel and pro-peace approach he and his foreign minister, John Baird, have developed.

More fun will be seeing all the good that Canadians have done in Israel. In Jerusalem, let him scramble up my jogging path – the zigzag walkway leading up Mount Zion to Zion Gate, which was landscaped decades ago by the Canadian branch of the Jewish National Fund. In Tel Aviv, let him ride to the top of the Azrieli Center to see what one Polish-born Canadian-Israeli entrepreneur has achieved. And let him peruse the list of fellowships, scholarships, social welfare program and educational initiatives that Canadian philanthropists have sponsored. These for-profit and philanthropic initiatives are helping the world and building an important Canadian-Israeli bridge. Once inspired, the prime minister can push the Canada Revenue Agency to be more encouraging of these projects, many of which justifiably earn Canadian tax deductions, implicitly including the Canadian taxpayer in these humanitarian, globe-improving efforts.

There will inevitably be serious meetings with Israel's political leadership. But I also hope Harper has enough exposure to Israel in all its colour, grandeur and history.

I also hope he has enough contact with regular Israelis who want to give him a simple message, "*Todah rabah*," thank you, for standing tall and supporting Israel steadfastly, courageously and honourably.

The ice storm of 2013

The little reed, bending to the force of the wind, soon stood upright again when the storm had passed over. -Aesop

Urban Writer
Avrum Rosensweig

The storm of 2013: it was different for everyone. And yet, it was the same thing for all of us, a pivotal time in our lives.

The ice storm. Like all difficult situations, it required people to respond in a way that was mightier than the damage the fallen trees had created. We had to be brave and giving so as not to let the tumbled branches and torn wires win. Thus, throughout the course of that wicked weather, you would see individuals shovelling wooden debris off their property and that of their neighbours. Times were not normal, and the rules we generally follow – "You stay on your side, and I'll stay on mine" – were cast off.

Man-made borders were exactly that. Contrived. Thanks to the freezing cold winds.

During these times, we all become keepers of the story, archivists. All men, women and children now have a story to tell, an account of how they helped an old or unwell person stuck in his or her 20th-storey apartment, or how they draped their expensive quilted blanket over a suffering child.

The storm became an integral part of our city's and our country's narrative. We ask, "Where were you when the lights flickered and the maple trees fell? That question will stand tall forever.

It was quiet inside and out. A stench emanated from the refrigerator, and I was concerned about the well-being of my family and friends. On Day 2 of the ice storm, with no power, I was with my son and my mother, and I noticed that my mental state wasn't great. It was dark, pitch dark like the plague in Egypt, I told my son, as we manoeuvred the black stairwell. We took advantage of the weather, the very strange, different, inclement weather, to learn from it and understand our lives as they are today and how they might have been 150 years ago, when the day ended early because it was impossible to see.

Stories abound. A friend, a Holocaust survivor living on an affluent street affected terribly by the icy cold (proof that the elements are an equalizer) – told me the following as she waited on Day 5 for her lights to flicker on. "I was in Auschwitz for three years, and every winter was like this," she said, referring to the harshness of the wintry Polish countryside. "Yet, I had less clothes, I was hungry and I didn't know what tomorrow would bring. But somehow we survived."

(I was taken by the word "we." Often survivors will begin a story with "I" and end with "we.")

My elderly friend continued: "I thought about this during the ice storm, and it made things easier."

The ice storm of 2013 compelled us to think about such things. How did the men, women and children who survived the Holocaust do the marches in the frigid and damp winter days?

The ice storm of 2013 made friends of all of us. Arguments subsided. While the very naughty broke into the homes of the vulnerable and chilled, thefts were down, and in a strange way, joy was up.

We live in a place where we frequently don't know our neighbours, and that's sad. So when the lights go off, food is limited and our socks don't keep our feet warm enough, we warm our bones through the kindness and sharing of others.

As my son said: "Daddy, I really like this ice storm. I wish it happened all the time." And he did, because our neighbours opened their doors and learned the name of a man who lives three metres away from us.

The ice storm of 2013 was different for all of us, but the same thing for most – a time to experience something authentic – empathy and community.

If patience is worth anything, it must endure to the end of time. And a living faith will last in the midst of the blackest storm. -Mahatma Gandhi

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

Helping friends in their time of need

Joe Oliver

This year, as we celebrated Chanukah with friends and family, on the other side of the world, Typhoon Haiyan was gathering its destructive and menacing force in the Pacific Ocean. When it hit landfall in the Philippines, more than 6,000 people were killed (and 1,800 people are still unaccounted for), 16 million homes were damaged or destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of survivors suffered from a lack of water, food, and medicine. It was the deadliest typhoon to hit the Philippines in a long history of natural disasters.

In the face of this tragedy, with tremendous dignity, courage and faith, people on site rallied to rescue the trapped, help the injured, provide support to the homeless and rebuild their communities. I personally heard from many constituents about the tragic effects on families and loved ones in the Philippines.

The government of Canada played an important role in assisting Filipino Canadians as they struggled to cope with near-paralyzing worry for relatives and friends, their need for information and their desire to help. The government immediately pledged $5 million in aid. Soon after, Prime Minister Stephen Harper visited Our Lady of the Assumption Parish in Toronto, where he offered a further $15 million and pledged that the government would match donations made by individual Canadians to charitable organizations.

We quickly sent the Canadian Humanitarian Assistance Reconnaissance Team to the hardest-hit areas of the country to evaluate first-hand the widespread devastation. That was followed by the Canadian Forces' Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), whose members were among the first responders to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Citizenship and Immigration Canada also pledged to prioritize immigration applications from those affected by the typhoon.

Canadians from across the country, including the Jewish community, responded with care and generosity. UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Philippines Typhoon Relief Fund will support the life-saving efforts of the federation's partner agency, the Israeli-based humanitarian organization IsraAID.

The relationship between the two communities is strong, with many Filipino Canadians living along the Bathurst Street corridor in Toronto. Our support is not only a matter of doing what is right. It's also saying thank you to the many caregivers from the Philippines who look after the sick, the elderly and the young.

Jews are renowned for extraordinary fundraising and other efforts for good causes. These contributions reflect our religious and moral commitment to tikkun olam, humanity's shared responsibility to heal, repair and transform the world. Acts of tzedakah save lives and repair broken communities. They represent gemilut chasadim, a mitzvah that an individual completes without the anticipation of receiving something in return. I am proud to be citizen of a country and a member of a community that contribute so much to help people in times of difficulty, well beyond our borders. It reflects the best of Canadian and Jewish values.

Joe Oliver is the MP for the Toronto riding of Eglinton-Lawrence.

Proposed academy shelved

CJN Staff

MONTREAL — The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) has put "on hold" plans to open a high school in Côte St. Luc after failing to obtain minimal registration.

Wallenberg Academy, which the EMSB had hoped to open for the next school year, would have offered a Jewish heritage program, among other specialties, such as a sports concentration and enriched arts and language studies. Wallenberg was to have been located in the former Wagar High School, now called the Giovanni Palatucci Facility.

Commissioner Syd Wise, who spearheaded the project, said, "We have not reached the minimum number of students to comfortably begin an academic program in this location in September 2014." The plan was to begin with grades 7 and 8.

The EMSB hoped the creation of Wallenberg Academy, with its "concept" programming, would stem the decline in enrolment by attracting a new clientele, mainly away from private schools. He said that the EMSB continues to experience a "slow, but relentless, contraction" in registration, like the rest of the English public school system.

"This downward spiral in Anglo education cannot be acceptable without at least making an attempt to tackle the problem," Wise said. "We are struggling for linguistic survival and that means stopping the bleeding… Yet, we have had no major task force seriously studying the problem."

This past year, the EMSB lost 554 students, he said, and the number of school-aged children eligible for English education continues to shrink.

"The reality is if we are to survive as a major Anglo force in Montreal, we are in need of a number of Wallenberg-like concept schools to make ourselves more attractive to eligible Anglo students," said Wise, a former Wagar principal. "If we do nothing, then we will have failed the Anglo community."

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Dividing a pension on divorce

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 32 years

Do you know anyone going through a divorce who may have a pension? Wonder how Ontario family law divides it on separation? Do you know whom to call to get the pension valued? Well, did you ever try cutting a diamond — it's about as tricky and valuable.

So to help answer such questions I invited an expert pension valuator, Mr. Mathew Krofchik of Krofchik Valuation Partners (Toronto), as my featured guest to assist in writing this. If you're still scratching your head you can contact me (see below) or Mr. Krofchik at matthew@kval.ca 416-922-9889. Their website address is www.kval.ca.

Once two spouses are separated, every pension needs to be valued in order to ensure a fair division of each spouse's marital property.

Figuring out whom you need to call to value a pension has become pretty complicated in recent years as a result of some new legislation. On January 1, 2012, a dramatic change in the way pension assets are calculated and divided between divorcing couples in Ontario came into effect. The "new rules", as they are commonly referred to, affect different pensions in different ways.

For example, pensions covered by the Ontario Pension and Benefits Act ("OPBA") like HOOPP, OMERS, and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (or in other words, Ontario provincial pensions) require the pension administrator to complete the valuation for no more than $600 plus HST (some exceptions apply) and within a set time frame.

On the other hand, if you or your spouse are a member of a pension plan that operates at a nationwide level, like those available to federal public service employees or banks, the value of the pension is calculated using a formula set out in the new rules. One or both of the divorcing spouses or their lawyers can retain a professional pension valuator.

This is a markedly different approach than is required for Ontario pensions, where only the member or their spouse can apply to a pension administrator to have the subject pension valued. Common-law spouses cannot apply to a pension administrator to have the pension valued.

How do you figure out if the pension is provincial or federal?

The easiest way to figure this out is to contact the pension administrator and ask if the pension falls under the OPBA. If the answer is yes, proceed to ask them for the necessary forms to complete and then send them into the administrator. If the answer is no, ask for a pension statement for "family law" separation purposes, and give as close to the date of separation as possible and retain an independent pension valuation firm to value the pension.

So what are the major benefits to the new rules if the Pension is provincial?

Under pensions regulated under recent amendments to Ontario's *Pension Benefits Act*, divorcing spouses who are Provincial employees now have the option of transferring a percentage of the value of the member's pension in the form of a transfer from his/her pension plan to the non-member spouse's own registered pension plan, RSP or even within the same plan to his or her credit ***rather*** than having its value added to their net worth (calculated as of the date the parties separated) thereby (in many cases) having left the pension holder without any current cash or interest in the matrimonial home: i.e. by splitting a piece of the Pie directly from the Pie itself rather than taking its "value" and perversely prepaying the Pie's value from your ***current*** share of your home or savings. Federal employees have had this option for some time now.

This option was not available for separating spouses prior to the new rules coming into effect. Previously, non-member spouses could only receive their portion of their spouse's pension by calculating the entire value of the pension (after tax) and the non-member's share. Since the pension holder could only receive payment of his pension on retiring, the member would often be obliged to pay his/her spouse's share out as of the date of separation through the regular division of net family property (e.g., through a lump sum cash payment or some other trade-off such as, "you get the house and I'll keep my pension").

This would often lead to a very unfair result in situations where a middle-aged member had only an interest in a house, a pension and some investments/cash. Suddenly, on separation, he/she was obliged to pay out his spouse's share of his pension (often six figures) from his half-share of the equity in his home or his savings, even though he/she was not retiring for several years into the future!

Even with the change in the law, it's very important to know that this new ability to transfer an interest in a member's pension at source (i.e. from the pension itself) on separation to the non-member's own fund to avoid this injustice is only an "option". Spouses can still elect to split the pension the old fashioned way if they so agree. However, if the spouses can't agree on which option, the Court will decide at trial. In certain high conflict situations, the non-member would rather keep the house and leave the member spouse's pension intact when he/she retires, leaving the member with no equity in his/her house and perhaps little cash or investments as of the date they separated.

Finally, how are taxes dealt with?

Pensions do need to be valued net of taxes in most circumstances. Even though the new rules stipulate that pension administrators in respect of Provincial pensions must calculate the value of certain pensions, they do so on a pre-tax basis. Accordingly, even with Provincial pensions, firms such Krofchick Valuations are still often retained to calculate the taxes that need to be deducted in order to ensure an appropriate division of marital assets.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-866-0359 • jsyrtash@gzlegal.com*** *Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.*

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Montreal's Israeli community smaller, more well-established

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

Montreal's Israeli expatriate community – which is both more established than Toronto's and, at an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 people, much smaller – isn't the focus of any specific attention by Federation CJA here.

Daniel Malca, director of the Combined Jewish Appeal's Sephardic campaign, said the federation doesn't have any programs directed at Israelis, but he added that he has been "talking to many, many people" to see what their needs are, if any, and that the federation is in the initial stages of reaching out to the Israeli community.

Years ago, the YM-YWHA, a federation agency, ran Betsavta (together in Hebrew), an outreach program for Israelis.

Today, the main link between Israelis and the organized Jewish community is through the Hebrew cultural committee of the Jewish Public Library (JPL), which organizes occasional events in that language, including an annual theatre production, films and lectures.

The most regular activities for Israelis are organized by the Israeli consulate, under its Habayit Haisraeli (Israeli House) program.

Its director, Sefi Melchior, now in her third year in Montreal, notes that Habayit Haisraeli is sponsored by Israel's Ministry of Absorption, whose first goal is to help Israelis who want to return to Israel.

In other words, the objective is not to integrate them into the Montreal Jewish community.

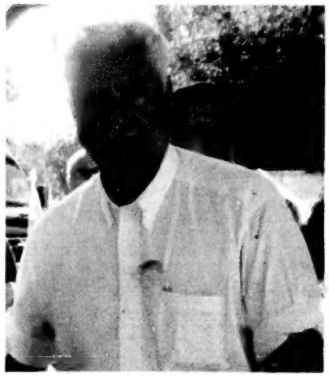
Melchior said she provides both practical assistance and emotional support to those considering going back to Israel. She said about 30 to 40 do so each year, and until a five-year program ended last year, many took advantage of special incentives offered by the Israeli government to former citizens.

Melchior is not sure how many emigrate here annually, as newcomers don't necessarily make themselves known to the consulate. "I don't know the numbers – [it's] not in the hundreds, maybe 20," she said.

Habayit Haisraeli tries to keep Israelis connected to their heritage through social and cultural activities organized throughout the year, such as holiday parties, storytelling for children, and, for teens, meetings through the Zionist youth group Hashomer Hatzair.

New is a discussion group for parents, she said, where they can express concerns about maintaining their children's Israeli identity abroad.

"I'm not here to necessarily convince people to go back to Israel, but I do want to help them keep this Israeli ingredient in their lives," Melchior said.



Arlazar Eliashiv

Some, she said, speak about feelings of guilt over leaving Israel, or regret over the loss of family ties, and she is there to listen to them.

Determining how many "Israelis" live in Montreal is difficult, as is defining who is Israeli, given that many, including Russians and North Africans, lived in Israel for short periods.

The consulate estimates that there are between 8,000 to 10,000 Israelis in the Montreal area, going by the number who come to renew passports, Melchior said.

In the federal government's 2011 National Household Survey, the voluntary questionnaire that replaced the census, 4,380 Montreal-area respondents listed Hebrew as their mother tongue, according to results made public last spring.

In recent years, there has not been a discernable influx of Israeli immigrants, and many of Montreal's Israelis have lived here for decades.

Melchior thinks Israelis do not really represent a "community" here, especially not among younger people.

"Those who have lived here 30 or 40 years have a stronger connection [with one another], they have more of a community, they have their own Israeli cultural events," she said. "Younger families do not go to these events."

Israeli-born Arlazar Eliashiv has lived in Montreal longer than he cared to pinpoint. He believes Israelis are generally well integrated into the Montreal Jewish community and don't need an organization of their own.

He pointed out that events geared toward Israelis are open to the wider Jewish community as well. When the JPL Hebrew cultural committee runs films or plays, they routinely feature English subtitles to encourage everyone to come to them.

Continued on page 11

Israelis now 'more and more integrated'

Continued from page 1

Today, both the federation and the Israeli government realize that the Israeli diaspora can be a benefit to Zionism.

"Israelis finally got recognition from the Israeli government saying… 'We do want you back in Israel… but we know that you have an important role in the Diaspora as ambassadors for the State of Israel. You do bring Israeli education to other countries. You can be the *devek*, the glue, that brings people together," Sarner said.

The beginning of the outreach effort, Sarner said, was a 2005 public apology by Sokolsky at the General Assembly of North American Jewish federations, held that year in Toronto, in which he asked for Israelis' forgiveness for what was seen as a paternalistic and distant attitude toward them in the past.

Israeli Scout troop

Today, Sarner said, with all the programming available at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre in Vaughan, which serves about 7,000 members, the community is moving in the right direction.

"We see Israelis more and more integrated into the federation. They have been taking on leadership roles. We care about their advice. We very, very much respect their leadership and [willingness] to volunteer," Sarner said.

"The last two years, I've been running a committee… called the Israeli Council, made up of a group of about 10 to 15 professionals. We share ideas, exchange ideas."

What makes Toronto's Israeli community outreach effort unique is the lead role the federation plays in creating and promoting programs that run under the Israeli-Canadian Project's cultural arm. By contrast, in most other North American centres with large Israeli populations, organizations that serve Israeli expatriates operate independently of local federations.

The Toronto effort has garnered attention: in November, it was one of a number of topics explored at a conference in New Jersey hosted by Moatza Mekomit, a newly formed umbrella organization for the New York area's Israeli community, together with the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Israeli Immigrant Absorption Ministry and the Israeli American Council.

Some of the successful programs running in Toronto include the Israeli Cinema Club, which presents Israeli movies with English subtitles; Yeadim, a leadership program in Hebrew for high school students that encourages participants to connect to their Israeli identity as well as the Toronto Jewish community; a cooking class called Taste Israel With Galya Sarner; and the Israeli Scouts of Toronto (Shevet Hermon), a program for students in grades 3 to 12.

"What keeps me going are the stories behind the stories, and when people come forward to say, 'Galya, I want to volunteer. I want to be part of it. I want to make a difference like you made a difference,'" she said.

During one Israeli Scouts event late last year, Sarner noticed that one of the volunteers – an Israeli mother whose daughter was taking part in the program – was crying.

"I asked her, 'Why are you crying?' She explained that her daughter was going to Associated [Hebrew Schools] – she was subsidized by UJA, but at a certain point, she still couldn't afford it, so she had to pull her daughter out.

"For some reason she wasn't connected to the Israeli community, but she heard about the Israeli Scouts. She said, 'I was lost… [But] this is how I was able to make new friends, reconnect to my Israeli roots… Whatever you need from me, just tell me and I'll be there,'" Sarner recalled her saying.

"I think this is something we created. We created an amazing sense of belonging, an amazing sense of a desire to be part of something, to reconnect to our roots."

There are likely hundreds of similar stories experienced by Israelis in Toronto, but Sara Dobner, volunteer chair of federation's Israeli Identity Program, said there are still many Israelis who aren't interested in integrating and skeptical about the federation's intentions.

"They think, 'They must want money, and we don't have money. We haven't been here for so many generations, and we're not going to give money so the federation can give money to [the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto] to pay for Jewish education when we can't even afford to send our kids to CHAT,'" Dobner said.

She said despite the ongoing outreach programs and the initial and subsequent apologies from Sokolsky, many Israelis still harbour resentment and anger.

There are also many cultural differences that Israelis find hard to grow accustomed to.

Dobner said when she first arrived in Toronto 26 years ago, "We didn't know how to live in a community – we never lived in a Jewish community. We lived in Israel. It's a state. It's not a community, so the whole concept of community life is very foreign…

"[Philanthropy] is also not part of our culture. In Israel, we didn't have to pay for Jewish education. We didn't have to pay for UJA. We didn't have to pay a 'Jewish tax,' because everything was included in our taxes," she said.

"Here, there is a cost [to living a Jewish life], and Israelis can't accept it," said Dobner, who also volunteers as a board of directors' member for TanenbaumCHAT, as well as an advisory board member for Kachol Lavan, the Israeli supplementary school.

Dobner said secular Israelis are also wary of programs that centre on religion, so the challenge is to help them realize the importance of exposing their children to Canadian Jewish culture, which is often religion-based.

"They don't realize that if they don't work on it… their kids will intermarry, their kids will not have the same identity as they think their kids will have. Speaking Hebrew is not enough. It is an important part of who we are, but it's not going to keep their Jewish identity," Dobner said.

"We can keep our connection to the Israeli community, but if our kids [don't integrate into the Canadian Jewish community], the battle is lost," she said, adding that her strategy is to create more programming that targets second- and third-generation Israelis.

The purpose of creating programming for Israeli families living in Canada is to help them hold on to their distinct identity while learning to embrace Canadian Jewish culture.

The Sarner and Dobner families are perfect examples of what that means.

"My children are literally Israeli-Canadian," Sarner said, referring to the fact they're equally influenced by their Canadian father and their Israeli mother.

Sara Dobner

"We have a daughter who made aliyah, but she won't lose her Canadian identity. I think she appreciates that she was exposed to both worlds."

Dobner said her daughters, 18 and 22, were both born in Toronto, but consider themselves both Israeli and Canadian.

She believes it was her decision to send their kids to Jewish schools and summer camps, as well as to live in a Jewish neighbourhood, while maintaining their Israeli identity by speaking Hebrew at home and visiting Israel frequently, that strengthened their connections to Israeli and Jewish-Canadian culture.

"Now I realize much more that the only way for Israelis to maintain anything for the second generation is to focus their efforts on integrating the second generation into the Jewish community."

Dobner believes it's more important than many Israeli immigrants realize that they enrol their kids in Jewish day school to better integrate into the Jewish community.

"I'd like to see more Israelis going to Jewish schools… The second thing I'd like to see is more Israeli events where Canadian Jews come and show interest," she said.

"It's really about an exchange – bringing Israel to our community and also learning how to be Jewish in the Diaspora from the community."

Sarner said she thinks Israelis living abroad are beginning to "understand and very much appreciate and respect the effort we make in creating very unique programs [to address their] cultural needs, educational needs, and social needs. They do very much understand that there is a serious effort to engage them."

'Israelis involved in Yom Ha'atzmaut rally

Continued from page 10

"The Israelis are not marginalized," he said. Quite a few Israelis, for example, are involved in organizing the annual downtown Yom Ha'atzmaut rally.

Eliashiv was principal of United Talmud Torahs and Herzliah High School, among the founders of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, and is currently the president of the Canadian Zionist Federation, Eastern region.

He said the relatively modest Israeli presence in Montreal can't be compared to the one in Toronto or some U.S. cities.

Before asking the federation to support programming for Israelis, Eliashiv said it must be considered what the federation's expectations would be in return. "What is it that they [the federation] would want?"

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The conquest and settlement of Canaan

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

The conquest and settlement of Canaan have been at the centre of controversy since the beginning of modern biblical studies. The Bible itself gives two accounts of the event. In the Book of Joshua, we have one version – a blitzkrieg-like rendition in which the Israelites sweep through the land destroying everything in sight under the charismatic leadership of Joshua.

In the Book of Judges, the portrayal of the conquest and settlement is a much longer, drawn-out event that lasts for almost two centuries. In the early days of the State of Israel, the blitzkrieg-like version was the one that held sway. It was the version favoured by the great scholar, statesman and military commander, Yigael Yadin, who was head of operations of the paramilitary Haganah in the War of Independence and later went on to become head of the Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Yadin used his excavations at the famous site of Hazor, just north of the Sea of Galilee, to support his position. He found an enormous conflagration and destruction level at Hazor, which he attributed to Joshua.

The longer process of the Book of Judges was the one favoured by the German School of Tradition History, which emerged in the first half of the 20th century and was first espoused by two brilliant scholars, Albrecht Alt, and then Martin Noth. It was also the view that was favoured by Yadin's main scholastic rival in Israel, Yohanan Aharoni, who headed the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Tel Aviv.

Nevertheless it was the blitzlike account of the conquest and settlement of Israel that tended to prevail in both North America and Israel, thanks primarily to the influence of the great biblical scholar, W. F. Albright, whose pupils occupied many of the positions in biblical archeology in both North America and Israel. Chief among these was Albright's pupil and disciple, G. E. Wright, who held the chair at Harvard. However, by the 1970s the pendulum had begun to swing in the opposite direction.

A number of scholars in both Europe and North America were beginning to question the Albright School's literal interpretation of the biblical text. Among these scholars was Prof. John Van Seters who was teaching at the University of Toronto in the early 1970s.

Also interesting were a number of studies that appeared in North America and Israel in the 1980s. One of the two most fascinating of these was put forward by Baruch Halpern, who had been a pupil of Wright's at Harvard before teaching at York University in Toronto, and who went on to hold the chair at Penn State University. The other study was that of Israel Finkelstein, which grew out of his doctoral dissertation at Tel Aviv University. Both of these controversial works said that ancient Israel coalesced in the Judean highlands amongst people who had never left Canaan. It's a debate that continues to enthrall.

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The spirituality of Tu b'Shvat

Midrashic Moments
Rachael Turkienicz

Tu b'Shvat is known in the Jewish world as the birthday of the trees. In today's environmentally sensitive world, it's wonderful to have a holiday that recognizes the importance of trees in the world. Jewishly, however, this isn't an environmental issue, but a strongly spiritual one.

Jewish environmentalism is expressed daily in the laws we have about how we are to treat and interact with nature. The holiday of Tu b'Shvat doesn't reflect how we treat the trees, but how we see ourselves in our roles and purpose on earth.

To understand the nuances of this spiritual approach, the sages refer us back to the beginnings of the book of Genesis. God creates the world and once that creation is completed, God plants a garden of beautiful trees, the Garden of Eden. In fact, the first human being is created and placed in the garden to be its gamekeeper. The only instruction given for the job includes both a positive and a negative. The positive is the commandment to guard and work the garden. The negative is the prohibition against eating one specific fruit from one specific tree. We all know how that ends.

From the moment we're created, our fates are connected with how we interact with trees. We're meant to protect them, and we're forever defined because we overstepped ourselves when helping ourselves to what they produce. Interestingly, the outcome of eating the forbidden fruit includes bringing death into the world, and yet we're unable to live without trees, since we breathe in what they breathe out.

Yet with all those physical and symbolic connections to the trees, the sages emphasize a more spiritual moment that transcends the physical. Again, returning to the book of Genesis, we observe God's actions. After creating the world, the first thing God does is plant a garden filled with trees. We're taught that when we enter the Land of Israel, we must plant trees as our first act of settlement. The moment that we're involved with a physically gruelling act – literally getting our hands dirty and sweating with labouring in the dirt –is simultaneously a moment of fulfilling ourselves as creatures in the image of God.

In fact, fulfilling our spiritual paths through involvement with the physical world is a beautiful ideal. Judaism isn't about finding spirituality by removing ourselves from the world. Rather, the challenge is to fulfil our spirituality by immersing ourselves in the world. Only in that way can we be active partners with God in completing the vision of creation. We learn the method by observing and imitating God. Judaism is about this world before it is about the next world.

This message is taught in the Talmud, which states that if we begin to plant a tree and someone tells us that the Messiah has finally arrived, we must first finish planting the tree and then go greet the Messiah.

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

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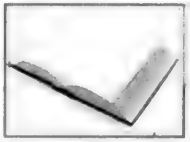
The Jewish journey for youth

Rabbi Jordan Helfman



Rabbinic Reflections

It's no wonder that Canadians are so passionate about Israel: shivering through a Canadian Tu b'Shvat (Jan. 16 this year) makes this holiday's interpretation as "Jewish Earth Day" seem less about environmental education than about a hope for global warming.

Similarly, there is no denying the warmth and beauty of a kabbalistic Tu b'Shvat seder, influencing a move in the *sefirot* (the 10 spheres of Kabbalah) from hard, earthly existence to spiritualism through the openness of white wine. But in Canada, when the seder ends and one steps outside, cold air slaps away all dreams of *Yerushalayim shel malah* (the spiritual Jerusalem). When we are again warm enough to reason, however, the first thought is a ticket to *Yerushalayim shel matah* (the earthly Jerusalem) via Ben-Gurion Airport.

Tu b'Shvat, historically, is a time for accounting in the land of Israel: it is the start of the tax year for tree fruit. So let us account for how we invest in the future of Israel and the Jewish People.

As Zionists, we are doing right by Israel by welcoming the Israelis that have joined our communities, visiting Israel and supporting the Jewish State both financially and politically.

Yet, we lag behind when it comes to our youth. Qualitative work on the success of youth movements demonstrate the power of articulating a Jewish journey that's expected of our youth as they mature into adulthood.

For many Diaspora Jewish communities outside of North America, the expected Jewish journey includes a nearly two-month trip to Israel in the summer after Grade 10 and seriously considering participation in an Israeli gap year program between high school and university.

In the United Kingdom, as part of this well-articulated community journey, the UJIA (United Jewish Israel Appeal) sends more than 50 per cent of Jewish 16-year-olds to Israel through youth movements.

While a high percentage of Jewish Canadians have visited Israel, there is nothing like the bonding experience of a peer trip. Our community recognizes this, through support of Birthright Israel. It's a mistake that instead of articulating the language of an expected Jewish journey, our community "saves itself" for a short trip without commitment. My own first trip to Israel was with Birthright, and I believe it is a fantastic program for catching those who are not on a clear journey to remind them of our Jewish home. But it should not be our communal default.

Teen Israel tours and gap year programs already exist – Young Judaea's Biluim sends around 75 teens a summer to Israel, and 14 of the 37 participants on Habonim Dror, North America's gap year program, are Canadian. Programs like these should be the communal expectation for all of our youth.

As our trees lie dormant, so do our expectations of a Jewish journey with a peer experience in Israel. But as we look at the seasonal burden that our trees bear, let this cold Tu b'Shvat remind us that with an investment in planning our children's Jewish journeys to Israel, soon, "Jacob will strike root, Israel will sprout and blossom, and the world will be full of fruit." (Isaiah 27:6)

Rabbi Jordan Helfman is the assistant rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto.

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What happened to the love?

From the Bimah
Rabbi Philip Scheim

In an early episode of the classic television sitcom *All in the Family*, Archie Bunker confronts his wife Edith's mood-swings, a result of her entering her "change of life" phase.

Out of character, Archie must respond to her volatility with kindness and restrain his frustration. He manages to control his temper for a while, but finally, unable to contain himself, he shouts: "If you're gonna have the change of life, you gotta do it right now. I'm gonna give you just 30 seconds. Now c'mon and change."

Edith responds to Archie's outburst with a smile, and says: "He loves me!"

I thought of this episode, which aired more than 40 years ago, when I received a phone call from a prominent rabbi in the haredi community, with whom, over the years, I have had pleasant encounters and whom I respect enormously. In his customary respectful tone, he proceeded to criticize me for a program in which I was involved, because of its problematic theological implications.

The more I reflect on the phone conversation, the more I have come to appreciate the rabbi for having called. Caring enough to criticize reflects a meaningful relationship. It would be easy for someone in the haredi world to ignore happenings in more liberal quarters of the Jewish community. The expression of concern, even criticism, reflects a love of *amchah*, of the wider Jewish world, a love that has the potential to break down walls of separation that too often prevent interaction.

One of my regrets is that there is so little connection between rabbis of different affiliations in our community. I fondly remember meetings of Toronto's rabbinic cabinet of State of Israel Bonds a decade or more ago, when Orthodox, Conservative and Reform rabbis would gather around the same table, share ideas regarding the High Holiday Bonds appeal and engage in discussion. Those meetings, in my case, led to long-lasting and meaningful relationships with prominent Orthodox rabbis, whose wisdom and friendship I value to this day.

Sadly, in the last several years, the annual gathering of the Bonds rabbinic cabinet has consisted only of Conservative rabbis. The precious interchange between right, left and centre in our rabbinic world that meant so much to me and many others has been relegated to history.

I fondly remember a heated exchange at one Bonds meeting between Reform's Rabbi Dow Marmur and the late Rabbi Moshe Burak, who was Orthodox. True, they were unlikely to agree on very much, given their positions so far apart on the Jewish spectrum. But that they would sit at the same table, even once a year, was good for the Jewish People.

We can argue, we can disagree, but as long as we're willing to talk to one another, we remain bound by the love that one Jew ought hold for the other, no matter where, how or when he or she prays.

I hope the day will again come when we rabbis can build relationships not only with those whose patterns of practice and ideology mirror our own, but even with those with whom we differ on significant aspects of Yiddishkeit.

Sometimes disagreement, argument and even anger can be an expression of love.

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Sharon 'grave, but stable'

The Times of Israel

As of Sunday morning, former prime minister Ariel Sharon's condition had been stable for the previous 12 hours and his heartbeat and blood pressure were "good," Sheba Medical Center director Zeev Rotstein said.

"We knew he had a good heart, and now we know he has a strong heart," Rotstein said, but added that Sharon's life was still in "immediate danger" and there was no cause for optimism.

Sharon is "a true lion" who "continues to fight for his life," the hospital director added.

His family remained at his bedside, the hospital said, and former soldiers who fought alongside him were among the well-wishers who visited him during the day.

On Jan. 1, hospital personnel put out a laconic statement saying the comatose former leader's condition had taken a turn for the worse.

His family was at his bedside on Jan. 2, and his condition has since been defined as critical, with indications that he has at most a few days to live. Rotstein said Sunday that his family members were still at his side and the doctors were "treating him with all their might."

In his previous statement to the press on Jan. 3, Rotstein said the former PM was in critical condition and deteriorating, and continues suffering from continuous organ failure that may lead to critical damage to many bodily systems.

Doctors said Sharon, 85, who has been in a vegetative state since 2006, was suffering from renal failure that could lead to multiple organ system failure and death. Sharon has been hospitalized at Sheba, near Tel Aviv, for seven years.

Ariel Sharon
[Wikimedia Commons photo]

The hospital director said last week that while Sharon's condition had "seen ups and downs" in the past 2-1/2 months, his life was now in danger.

"The danger [to Sharon's life] exists, [but] as we know, [Sharon] is a powerful man and has survived difficult situations during his time in our hospital," he continued. "I'm no prophet, but the feeling among the doctors treating him and the family by his side... is that he has taken a turn for the worse."

Rotstein added that Sharon wasn't receiving dialysis treatment for his kidney collapse, as it was not recommended for a patient with multiple organ failure. He said the ex-prime minister had received antibiotic treatment in recent weeks for infections that caused his condition to deteriorate.

"He is receiving all the treatments that a patient in his condition should receive," he said.

Visit cjnews.com for updates on Sharon's condition as they become available.

TimesofIsrael.com

Pope to visit Israel in May

JTA

ROME — Pope Francis will visit Israel in May, along with Jordan and the West Bank.

The pontiff made the formal announcement of his long-anticipated trip from his Vatican window before a crowd who had gathered in St. Peter's Square on a rainy Sunday.

"In the climate of joy, typical of this Christmas season, I wish to announce that from 24 to 26 May next, God willing, I will make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land," he said after celebrating Mass.

Francis said he would visit Amman, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The main purpose of the trip, he said, would be "to commemorate the meeting between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras" that took place 50 years ago, on Jan. 5, 1964.

Paul VI was the first pontiff to visit the Holy Land. Francis' two predecessors, John Paul II and Benedict XVII, both made pilgrimages to the region.

Pope Francis
[Wikimedia Commons]

Francis said his trip would include "an ecumenical meeting held at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the representatives of all the Christian Churches of Jerusalem, together with Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople."

He added, "As of now, I ask you to pray for this pilgrimage."

There had been speculation for months that the trip would take place in the spring.

Francis had been officially invited to visit Israel on several occasions since he was elected pope in April, and he expressed his desire and intention to visit the Holy Land on more than one occasion.

Dec. 30 marked the 20th anniversary of the signing of the agreement that established diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Israel.

African migrants march on Tel Aviv embassies

JTA

TEL AVIV — Thousands of asylum-seeking African migrants marched on foreign embassies in Tel Aviv, asking them to pressure Israel to consider their refugee requests and release those in prison.

At least 2,000 protesters demonstrated Monday in front of the United States embassy in Tel Aviv, and hundreds of others in front of the embassies of France, Britain, Canada, Romania, Sweden, Italy and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or UNHCR, among others, according to reports.

The protesters, mostly from Sudan and Eritrea, reportedly handed a letter to U.S. Ambassador Dan Shapiro asking him to convince the U.S. government to intercede on their behalf. Israel contends that most of the asylum seekers are economic refugees.

The African migrants were on the second day of a three-day strike. On Sunday, thousands of African migrants and their supporters demonstrated in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square and hundreds more protested in front of the Interior Ministry offices in Eilat.

The larger protests follow two weeks of smaller demonstrations.

Last month, the Knesset approved an amendment to the Migrant Law to allow Israel to hold African migrants in prison for up to a year without trial and indefinitely in the open detention facility in Holon.

The Holon residence is called an "open facility," with detainees free to leave during the day and with mandatory check-in at night. They are not allowed to hold jobs.

Israel's Supreme Court had ruled unconstitutional the law allowing officials to hold migrants without trial for three years.

Chassidic landlord found dead

JTA

NEW YORK — The *New York Post* is under fire for a cover story about the murder of chassidic landlord Menachem Stark.

"Who Didn't Want Him Dead?" blared the headline of the Sunday edition, next to a photo of Stark wearing a large shtreimi and graying side curls.

The story said Stark "had so many enemies that investigators say they almost don't know where to start looking."

It cited an unnamed law-enforcement source as saying Stark, a 39-year-old father of eight, was involved in several "shady" real-estate deals and was in debt.

Stark's body was found on Jan. 3 on suburban Long Island some 16 miles away from his Williamsburg office, from where he was kidnapped the previous evening. He reportedly was suffocated before his body was placed in the dumpster outside a Great Neck gas station and burned, according to police.

Video footage taken from his office showed Stark being taken into a van after a struggle outside his office in heavily Satmar Williamsburg. The identity of his abductors is not known.

Local politicians, including State Senator Simcha Felder and New York City Council Member Stephen Levin, urged the *Post* to apologize, as did Jewish media outlets. Many reportedlty threatened to cancel their subscriptions to the newspaper and to organize a boycott of it.

Stark's brother-in-law, Abraham Buxbaum, speaking on behalf of the family, told the *Algemeiner* newspaper that the headline was "disgusting."

He added: "Apologies won't help, the damage is done, I think," he added.

"The *Post* does not say Mr. Stark deserved to die, but our reporting showed that he had many enemies, which may have led to the commission of this terrible crime," the paper said in a statement, in response to the criticism. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this time of loss."

Public records show Stark has a string of foreclosures and a $1.3-million judgment against him, according to reports. A police source told the *New York Daily News* that he "had many enemies." Some have accused him of being a slumlord, according to the paper.

Thousands attended his funeral last Saturday night in the Williamsburg neighbourhood of Brooklyn. Most of the mourners were Satmar Chassidim.

He was remembered by friends and relatives as a "go-to guy" and for being very charitable, as well as for his warmth and sense of family.

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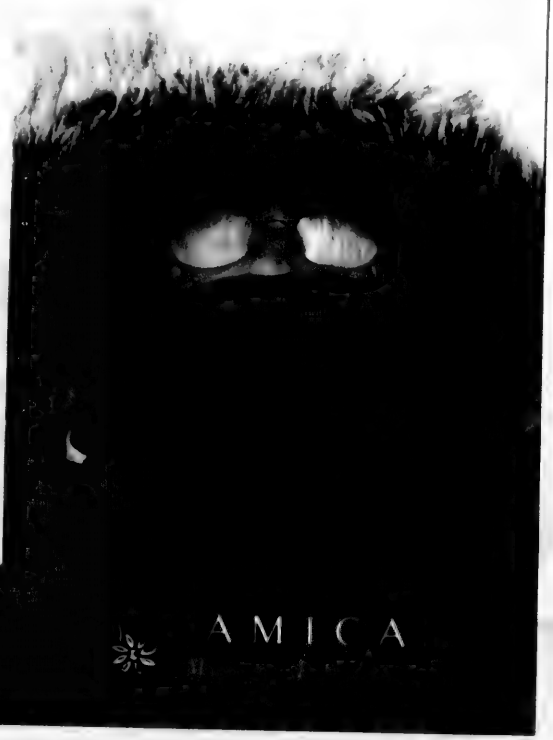

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Liberman rejects any 'right of return'

Continued from page 1

"It's appropriate to talk about an issue that is not exactly politically correct," Liberman said in a lengthy foreign policy address. "I'm talking, of course, of the exchange of territory and populations. And if someone thinks that I'm talking about an exchange of territory and 'the triangle' and Wadi Ara [both are mostly populated by Israeli Arabs] – indeed, that's what I am referring to."

His party, Yisrael Beitenu, will not agree to a peace agreement unless it includes such a territorial exchange, which would place a large portion of Israel's Arab population centres within the future Palestinian state, and most of the West Bank's Jews within the Jewish state. Liberman emphasized that he was not talking about a population transfer. "Everyone will stay in their own houses, in the same places. Just the borders will move toward what is today Route 6 [the highway along Israel's eastern spine], more or less."

The redrawing of Israel's borders to exclude major Arab population areas now on the Israeli side of the Green Line and populated by longtime Israeli citizens, has long been Liberman's policy. In the past, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected this approach.

The area known as "the triangle," located in the Sharon plain, contains mostly Arab-populated towns including Kafr Qara, Umm al-Fahm, Tayibe and Qalansawe. It was to have come under Jordanian rule in the arrangements that saw the establishment of the State of Israel, but was ultimately included in Israeli sovereign territory under the 1949 armistice agreements because of Israeli security demands. Israel instead ceded territory that had been earmarked for Israeli sovereignty in the area of the southern Hebron hills.

Last week, unnamed sources told *Ma'ariv* that the "triangle" plan, involving some 300,000 Israeli Arabs living on land that would become part of a new Palestine, had come up during talks between Israel and U.S. officials at various levels, including at least one occasion when very senior officials, Kerry among them, were in attendance. Israeli legal officials have begun investigating legal aspects of such an arrangement, the newspaper said. It added that the Americans have apparently not agreed to the idea, and that the Palestinians are likely to reject it.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, left, and Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman [*Matty Stern/U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv/Israel Sun*]

The idea is aimed at addressing two central issues in a possible peace agreement: first, land swaps between Israel and a Palestinian state would enable Israel to expand its sovereignty to encompass major West Bank settlements, while compensating the Palestinians with territory that is currently part of sovereign Israel; and second, preserving Israel's Jewish majority.

Liberman on Sunday also warned of millions of Palestinian refugees who would move to a Palestinian state as soon as it is created. "There's no doubt that the Palestinians who today live in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan will all consider moving to the Palestinian state," he said.

Currently, some 2.4 million Palestinians live in the West Bank, with almost three million in the three countries he mentioned. "Let's take into consideration that the Palestinian economy is not like the economy of Switzerland or Norway," he said. "They need to live and work somewhere. What will happen then? What kind of pressure will be exerted on Israel then?"

Liberman said he rejects a Palestinian "right of return," even on a theoretical basis. "I will not sign any agreement that includes any right of return into Israel, not even a single person. Because if you keep that option open, even theoretically or on a limited scale, it will invite a lot of pressure. And this pressure will be very heavy."

It's important to look at the day after the signing of a possible peace deal, he said.

"It is important [to know] if we can live with the pressure that will be exerted on us, from outside and from within. Will a signature on the agreement with the Palestinians bring about an end to pressure on Israel from international community, or instead of so-called settlements, will those who criticize us over the settlements find something else to pressure us about?" Liberman said.

The people who decry Israel over settlement expansion are preparing to challenge Israel on other issues, such as the Bedouin or Israel's Jewish communities in the Galilee, he added.

"It's clear that they are not about to calm down. Even if we sign a peace agreement and the issue with the settlements is solved, they're already preparing the next issues."

Liberman praised Kerry for his efforts to bring Israelis and Palestinians to sign a final deal, and said the talks are valuable, even if they don't lead to a deal. While he said Israel needs to look for other partners across the globe, Jerusalem's relations with the United States are the "cornerstone" of Israel's foreign policy.

TimesofIsrael.com

Reform rabbis get gov't salaries

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli government money was transferred for the first time to the Reform movement in Israel to pay the salaries of four community Reform rabbis.

The transfer of more than $86,000 on Jan. 1 comes 18 months after Israel's Supreme Court approved an arrangement to enable non-Orthodox rabbis who lead congregations to receive state salaries like their Orthodox counterparts.

The money was paid by the Culture and Sport Ministry, however, instead of the Religious Services Ministry, according to the *Times of Israel*.

Under the agreement, Reform and Conservative rabbis in Israel's regional councils, but not in large cities where most serve, will be recognized as "rabbis of non-Orthodox communities" and will receive wages equal to those of their Orthodox counterparts.

In addition, the rabbis must work full-time and be present at their congregation for at least 40 Sabbaths each year. Only rabbis of congregations with at least 250 members can receive full-time pay. Those leading congregations of 50 to 250 members may receive half a salary, even though they'd be required to work full-time.

Prior to the deal, sparked by a lawsuit filed in 2005 by Rabbi Miri Gold, only Orthodox rabbis received state funding.

"This is a historic and important step in the long struggle toward pluralism, religious freedom and the recognition by the State of Israel of all branches of Judaism," Rabbi Gilad Kariv, director of the Reform movement in Israel, told *Ha'aretz*. "The Reform movement will continue to act to redefine the relationship between religion and state in Israel and to separate the religious establishment from the authorities. However, as long as the state continues to fund religious services and the salaries of rabbis, we will make sure that this is done on an egalitarian basis."

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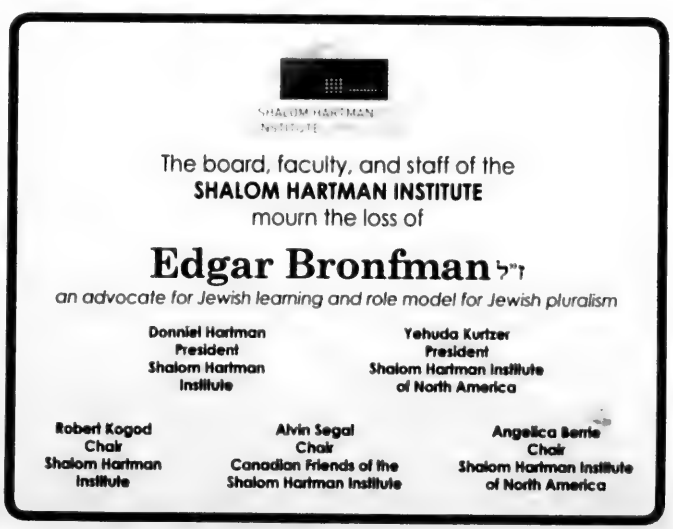

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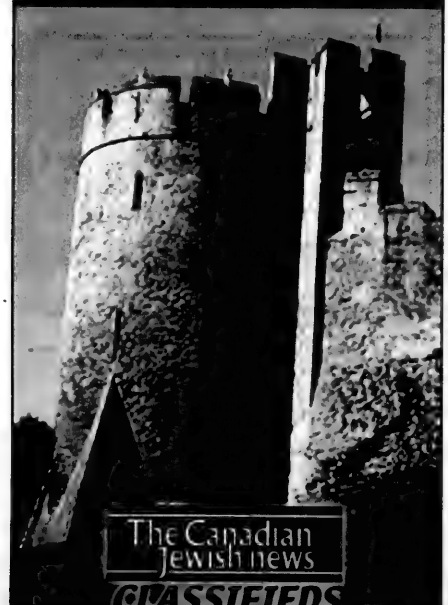

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Vernik, Emmanuel	Dec. 15/13	1101 Steeles Ave. W
Goodman, Ernie (Aaron)	Dec. 15/13	268 Ridley Blvd
Mikhailovskaia, Sofia	Dec. 15/13	6250 Bathurst St
Zulauf, Sol	Dec. 15/13	1 Emerald Lane
Levy, Miriam	Dec. 15/13	21 Acton Ave
Fernbach, Toby	Dec. 17/13	59 Covewood St
Reichman, Helen	Dec. 17/13	131 Sultana Ave
Brock, Goldy Bessie	Dec. 17/13	7905 Bayview Ave
Vadas, Steve	Dec. 17/13	546 Steeles Ave. W
Mossny, Beatrice	Dec. 15/13	
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Szweras, Lejba Leon	Dec. 26/13	170 Red Maple Rd.
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Doctor's pic-sharing app aids in diagnoses

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Imagine you're a doctor and a patient comes in to show you a strange rash. You think you know what it is, but you're not entirely sure. What do you do next?

Joshua Landy is hoping that you'll turn to Figure 1, an app that has been described as Instagram for doctors.

Landy says that's a bit of an oversimplification, but it gives you an idea of what it's like – minus the Instagram filters. Doctors can share photos of their patients to educate other doctors, or to ask for comments and advice.

Landy, a Toronto-based physician, says he noticed that doctors across the continent were sharing photos of patients, asking for help or trying to learn from one another.

"If you look across North America, you can see this is happening everywhere, tens of thousands of times every day," he says.

The app, created by Figure 1 Inc., a start-up led by Landy, 33, and two partners, simply gives these doctors a place to share those photos in a way that's safe for both doctors and patients, as well as very easy to do. Doctors can just snap a photo and share it, attaching hashtags to it to help others find it in searches.

From left, Gregory Levey and Joshua Landy, Figure 1 Inc. co-founders

One of the most obvious questions that go along with this app is about patient confidentiality. How can you share photos of patients while keeping their identity and health-care information safe?

Landy says his app makes it easy, with automatic face detection and a feature that allows users to click on any part of the screen to obscure the image. It also reminds doctors each time they post to cover up any identifying features that are not automatically censored, like tattoos.

"We turned to a specialty health-care law firm in Toronto and one in Boston. What we found was, if you remove all the identifying information from the pictures, then yes, you can [share photos]," he says.

Landy isn't the only one who sees a need for this app. Figure 1 recently raised seed funding to the tune of $2 million. The funding round was co-led by Version One Ventures and Rho Canada Ventures.

"That's what is giving us our runway for the next year or year and a half," Landy says, explaining that the money covers the company's operation costs and the salaries for all 10 employees.

Although he says there are many ways the app can earn money, he's not ready to share any of the ideas. The focus right now is on development, and the monetization will come later.

Right now, the program is only available for iPhones and other devices running iOS, but Landy says thanks to the seed money, it will soon be available on Android devices, as well as on the web, so doctors will be able to use the programs while sitting at their desks in their offices.

The other limitation at the moment is that only licensed physicians can post photos and comments. That ensures the photos are accurately described and the advice is genuine, he says. However, anybody can use the app to browse and search through photos and read comments for educational purposes, and he says he hopes to expand the app to give allowances to non-physician health-care providers.

The medical community has so far responded well to the app, Landy says.

"There are people seeing patients and trying to answer questions and find knowledge any time of the day," he says.

"Even when I'm working in the middle of the night… I see there are many people also working through the night on difficult cases.

"There's this medical community out there, and I feel part of it."

The health-care industry tends to take much longer to adapt to new technology than the general population, he says, so he was thrilled when he saw how fast health care professionals were downloading and joining the Figure 1 community. In just over seven months, tens of thousands of users have used the program.

"It was quite exciting for us to see how open the medical community was embracing something like this," Landy says, crediting the success to the fact that the program doesn't ask doctors to do anything new.

"We're saying, 'You're already using pictures. You should do it in a way that's safe and in a way that helps other people.'

"That's the ethos behind our community."

Propulsion deal brings Israel one step closer to moon landing

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israel's moonshot project is a lot closer to reality after the SpaceIL organization, which is developing the Israeli spacecraft that will journey to the moon in 2015, acquired the engine for the rocket that will blast Israel's lunar lander into space.

The propulsion system, produced by Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), cost several million dollars and is "among the most critical components of the project," SpaceIL stated.

SpaceIL is a non-profit Israeli organization, established by a multidisciplinary team of Israeli space enthusiasts, that is building a "blue and white" spacecraft to compete in Google's big Lunar X contest. Google promises to award $30 million (US) to a team that can land an unmanned, robotic craft on the moon before the Dec. 31, 2015 deadline. Once there, the craft will need to carry out several missions, such as take high-definition video and beam it back to earth, and explore the surface of the moon by moving or sending out a vehicle that will move 500 metres along the surface.

SpaceIL's mission, as the organization describes it, is to successfully build, launch into space and softly land on the moon a space capsule, making Israel the fourth country in the world to achieve the feat. More than 250 volunteers are working on SpaceIL and the project has numerous corporate and academic sponsors. Most notable is Israeli telecom giant Bezeq, which, besides helping with the funding, is providing optical fibre technology that will transmit the entire drama back to earth. The money, said SpaceIL, will be used largely to help fund scientific education in Israel.

SpaceIL is one of 18 teams from around the world taking part in the race to land a privately funded spacecraft on the moon. They're seeking to take home not only the prize but the national glory that comes from landing a probe on the moon.

Israel's "secret sauce," said SpaceIL, will be the probe's light weight. The entire thing will weigh less than 150 kilograms (330 pounds). The probe itself – the only part of the craft that will actually reach the moon – will weigh no more than 40 kilos (88 pounds), with the rest taken up by the engines and fuel tanks.

It's a long way to the moon, though – 384,000 kilometres – so to save on fuel and weight, the SpaceIL craft will hitch a ride with a commercial satellite rocket that will take it beyond the atmosphere, ejecting it after passing the earth's field of gravity. SpaceIL is currently discussing several launch possibilities, it said.

Its craft won't just be very light, it will be very small, as well. The probe will measure less than a metre long, making it the smallest probe ever to hit the lunar surface. Though small in volume, the probe will be rich in technology, with advanced cameras, computers, and recording equipment installed to record the adventure and transmit data back to earth.

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Revisiting the writer of *When Harry Met Sally*

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

The Most of Nora Ephron
Alfred A. Knopf

A year and some months after her death at age 71, the legacy of American screenwriter, journalist and blogger Nora Ephron is being spotlighted in *The Most of Nora Ephron*, a 560-page volume from publisher Alfred A. Knopf that presents some of her best writing.

What drew me to this attractively designed book was Ephron's masterful talent as a writer of commercially successful romantic comedies for the movies – *When Harry Met Sally...* (1989), *Sleepless in Seattle* (1993) and *You've Got Mail* (1998). She also whipped together *Julie & Julia* (2009), an entertaining soufflé about famous chef Julia Child that features a stunning performance by Meryl Streep.

Ephron was the daughter of New York screenwriters Henry and Phoebe Ephron, who wrote numerous Hollywood films in the 1940s and 1950s. One of four daughters, she grew up in close proximity to many famous people including Dorothy Parker and Lillian Hellman, both of whom she writes about in this wide-ranging anthology. (Her sisters also became screenwriters and writers.)

She was married three times, most famously to Watergate investigative reporter Carl Bernstein (husband number 2). Pregnant with his child, she discovered he was having an affair, and turned the sordid divorce that ensued into a winning novel, *Heartburn*, which later became a popular movie; the novel is reproduced here in its entirety. So is the screenplay of *When Harry Met Sally...*, the recent play *Lucky Guy*, and dozens of articles from diverse sources.

Perhaps the surest advice her mother ever gave her was: "Everything is copy." Ephron has put this sage wisdom into practice at every phase of her career: as writer and editor for *Esquire* and as freelance reporter, playwright and blogger for the *Huffington Post*. She first attempted screenwriting when her then-husband and his partner Bob Woodward asked her to rewrite William Goldman's script about the Watergate saga, *All the President's Men*. Her version was ultimately rejected but led nonetheless to more movie script work for television.

(Ephron was one of few people in America who knew the identity of Deep Throat, the reporters' secret source in the Watergate scandal. Although she revealed the name publicly on several occasions, "No one, apart from my sons, believed me," she would later write.)

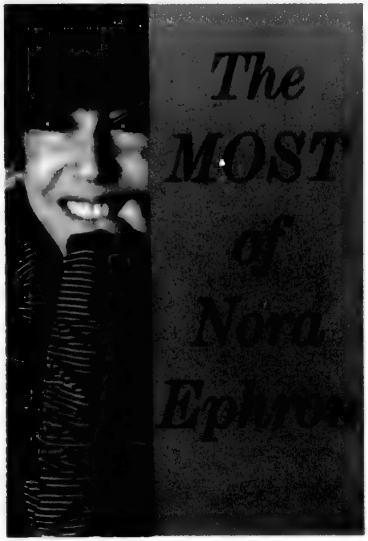
Happily, the movie *When Harry Met Sally...* holds up well after the passage of almost a quarter century, and reading the screenplay is a joy. Like much in *The Most*, it seems very much a product of its times – the self-obsessed '80s and '90s – but also possesses certain universal elements. Much of its humour comes from its exploration of the question of whether men and women can be friends.

In many ways, *When Harry Met Sally...* is the closest thing to a Woody Allen movie without actually being one. The titles are in the Woody Allen style, the backdrop is New York and the soundtrack consists of American jazz standards. The characters, smart and chatty and part of the media elite, talk incessantly about themselves and their relationships and little else.

In a very interesting afterword to the screenplay, Ephron explains that although it has her name on it, much of it arose as a result of creative collaboration between herself, director Rob Reiner, producer Andrew Scheinman and actors Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan. (She modelled "Harry" after Reiner and "Sally" after herself.)

The famous "fake orgasm" scene in Katz's Delicatessen, for example, which culminated in what the *New York Times* judged to be "one of the most memorably funny lines in movie history," was the product of such a collaboration. At first, the scene was supposed to be only a conversation between the two principles. But during an actors' reading, Meg Ryan, playing Sally, suggested that she actually fake an orgasm in the deli; then Billy Crystal, playing Harry, suggested that a nearby woman customer, seeing Sally's display, tell a waiter, "I'll have what she's having." It was one of "dozens of funny lines" that Crystal added to the script, Ephron reports.

Ephron has a genuine knack for seeing the falseness in the way we sometimes behave, and poking delicious fun at social pretension. In her piece *I Feel Bad About My Neck*, she explains that it's best to pretend not to know what friends are talking about when they refer in displeasure to the "little pouches under their eyes, or jowls, or wrinkles, or flab around the middle," even if one agrees that Botox or liposuction or a facelift is definitely required.



"My experience is that 'I don't know what you're talking about' is code for 'I see what you mean, but if you think you're going to trap me into engaging on this subject, you're crazy.'"

This is the equivalent to the balcony scene in *Annie Hall*, when subtitles tell us the real meaning of the dialogue between Woody Allen and Diane Keaton. It works because Ephron, like Allen, is decoding social behaviour in a humorous way, and writing about all of us, not just herself.

The Most is divided into nine sections categorizing Ephron's pieces by subject, genre and chronology. Ephron was a lifelong cooking enthusiast and indulged her passion frequently in her writing, even passing along recipes in her novel *Heartburn*, many of her blogs, and, of course, *Julie & Julia*. She once wrote that although she was Jewish, her religion was essentially, "One cannot use too much butter." She adored former U.S. president Bill Clinton, despised George W. Bush, and often soapboxed for progressive liberal causes. Her overriding interest in affairs of the heart and hearth, not to mention political feminism, seems to define her as a women's writer reaching out, especially in her smaller pieces, mainly to a sisterhood of readers.

For me, *The Most* delivers too much of a good thing, as a number of its offerings do not stand up well. With the retrospect of time, some indeed seem trivial or terribly outdated: for instance, does anyone really care any more about Julie Nixon Eisenhower? Ephron deserves to be remembered and celebrated mostly for her various larger contributions that clearly seem to pass the test of time.

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Online journal for first-rate writers of Jewish stories

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Nora Gold was a storyteller from the time she was very little. She can remember the time when she was six years old, sitting on the floor of her living room and making up stories for her family. Today, Gold is awaiting the publication of her first novel, *Fields of Exile*, about a student combating anti-Israelism at a university.

In response to many years of trying to get her stories onto bookshelves, Gold began jewishfiction.net, an online journal for first-rate writers telling inherently Jewish stories.

"Jewish fiction is considered by many a kind of niche writing," Gold says. "It puts many writers of Jewish fiction in a very difficult position, and I wanted to do something about that.

"People [have either stopped writing] or their work is getting lost, it's sitting in their drawers. I wanted to be able to support first-rate Jewish fiction and Jewish writers. I didn't want people to feel there's nowhere for them."

Nora Gold

It is currently the only English-language journal in the world devoted to publishing Jewish fiction, and it is free to sign up. Gold launched the site in 2010 and writers can send works of up to 6,000 words.

The story they submit must be "Jewish," in that it deals extensively with Jewish characters, history, identity or experiences. Gold says that a story is considered Jewish to her if there would be nothing left without this Jewish content.

Since launching the site, Gold and her small team of manuscript reviewers have read thousands of stories. She estimates that writers submit around 50 new stories a month.

The site's 12th issue came out on Dec. 3. The stories are either originally written in English or translated into English from another language. To date, stories from 12 languages have appeared on the site, including Russian, Turkish, Serbian, Croatian, Yiddish and Hebrew.

"The diversity of our journal is one of the things that I'm proud of," Gold says. "Everything we publish has never before been published in English." She adds that the work coming in from around the world come from a variety of perspectives: left wing and right wing; Israeli and from the Diaspora; from gay and straight writers; as well as authors known and unknown.

Jewishfiction.net has published close to 200 works of short fiction since its launch.

Although the site draws some of the biggest Jewish authors – including Elie Wiesel, A.B. Yehoshua and Chava Rosenfarb, nobody is paid for their work.

"This is entirely a labour of love. Everybody working on it does so on a volunteer basis, me included," Gold says, explaining that the site subsists on donations but that the only person paid for their work is the website technician.

Gold is also an Israeli citizen and does a lot of volunteer work and activism when she visits. *Fields of Exile* came out of the anti-Israelism she noticed after returning to Canada in the early 1980s, after spending six years in Israel.

"I saw things out of one eye as a Canadian Jew and out of my other eye, I saw everything as an Israeli," Gold says.

Before starting *Fields of Exile*, she conducted a nationwide study of Canadian Jewish women, exploring their experiences of anti-Semitism and sexism. She says that without this research, *Fields of Exile*, which will come out in May, would be a much different book.

"Nothing is lost on a writer," she says. "I really couldn't have written this novel without all that background."

Gold's first book, *Marrow and Other Stories*, won a Canadian Jewish Book Award. She is also looking for a publisher for another novel, *The Dead Man*, which is set in Jerusalem.

Beyond her writing, she is a community activist for Jewish and women's issues. In Israel, she is on the board of the Dafna Fund, an organization that helps advance women's rights and positions within Israel.

Gold, who lives in Toronto, collaborates closely with publishing houses in the United Kingdom and the United States. This collaboration ensures that jewishfiction.net often publishes novel excerpts from upcoming books before they are released.

She is now in discussions with Canadian publishers, hoping that more national writers will submit works for the site. She hopes that more Jewish-Canadian voices can come to the fore and help to bridge connections between other Jewish writers around the world.

"It's a particular joy for me to be able to help foster and encourage new writers of Jewish fiction," she says.

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

NEW ISRAELI FILM *BIG BAD WOLVES* IS 'BEST FILM OF THE YEAR,' TARANTINO SAYS

Israeli filmmakers **Aharon Keshales** and **Navot Papushado**'s new film *Big Bad Wolves* is "mesmerizing from start to finish," according to the *Hollywood Reporter*, and the "best film of the year" according to American film director Quentin Tarantino.

Big Bad Wolves focuses on a series of brutal murders that put the lives of three men on a collision course: the father of the latest victim, a vigilante police detective and a religious studies teacher who is the main suspect. *Big Bad Wolves* probes whether a victim ever has the legitimate right to turn into a bloodthirsty vigilante.

The writer-directors said they took their inspiration from contemporary Israeli society and its atmosphere of terrorist violence and "unremitting feelings of being persecuted, inherent intolerance and macho behaviour topped with a historical craving for vengeance." Their first feature, *Rabies*, caused a sensation at the 2010 Tribeca Film Festival and was dubbed Israel's first horror film. *Big Bad Wolves* opens Jan. 17 in theatres across Canada.

• • • • •

Israeli Film: Set in war-torn Beirut in 1982, director **Eran Riklis**'s 2012 film *Zaytoun* is a "touching and inspiring" story of survival, reconciliation and friendship between an imprisoned Israeli pilot and a 10-year-old Palestinian. The Toronto Jewish Film Festival Chai Tea offering, in Hebrew with subtitles, is being screened at City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Vaughan, Sunday, Jan. 19. Tea at 4 p.m., film at 5 p.m. $15. www.tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

• • •

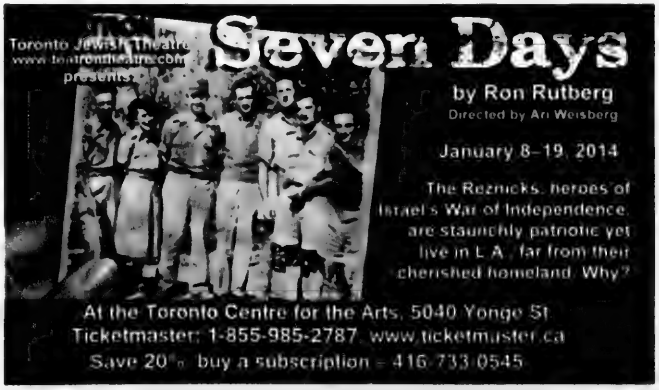
A Polish Town Remembered: Fifty years after it was originally published in Hebrew and Yiddish, *The Memorial (Yizkor) Book for the Jewish Community of Ciechanow* has just been republished in English translation in an attractive hardcover 488-page volume by JewishGen of New York. The book will appeal chiefly to historians and genealogists. Torontonians **Miriam Dashkin Beckerman** and **Stan Zeidenberg** were the translator and the project co-ordinator respectively.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** presents Defining Greatness – Director Steven Spielberg, a series of lectures with film clips about the man who is arguably the most famous filmmaker in the world, with such titles as *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *ET the Extraterrestrial*, *Jaws* and *Lincoln* to his credit. Miles Nadal JCC. Mondays from Jan. 20 to Mar. 17. 7 to 9 p.m. $90 for eight lectures or $11.25 drop-in per lecture. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Friends of Yiddish presents a screening of *The Yiddish Cinema*, narrated by **David Mamet**, and introduced by film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. In Yiddish and English; free admission. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. (between Sheppard and Finch). Sunday, Jan. 12, 2 p.m. Please RSVP to Sandy, 416-458-1440 or at yiddish18@yahoo.com.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Jewish opera star has debut with TSO

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

Jewish mezzo-soprano Lauren Segal teams with violinist Hilary Hahn and three other singers in the Toronto Symphony Orchestra production of Mozart's *Coronation Mass* Jan. 15 and 16 at Roy Thomson Hall.

The concerts, marking Segal's debut with the TSO, are part of the Mozart at 258 Festival from Jan. 11 to 23 presented by the orchestra in honour of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's 258th birthday.

"The *Coronation Mass* is a beautiful mix between the chorus, soloists and orchestra, and is memorable as one of Mozart's most powerful works, often used for royal coronations in Vienna during the 19th century," Segal said.

Born in South Africa but raised in Thornhill, Ont., after her family immigrated to Canada in 1986, Segal has already earned acclaim across Canada for her many roles in opera, performing from British Columbia to Nova Scotia with the Canadian Opera Company.

However, the opera star could have been known as the next Albert

Lauren Segal

Einstein instead of the next Beverly Sills. Segal switched careers while she was earning her master's degree in physics at University of Toronto.

"I loved music even as a child, but took it more seriously as a profession for me when I joined the choir as an undergraduate at York University. Most of my friends in the choir studied opera and I loved it myself. So, I took voice lessons, even while I was considering a career in physics, and have no regrets at all for having a career in music instead of science."

Segal's path to becoming an opera singer was quite different from that of many of her peers who planned for a singing career from the time they were children.

Competing with others who had a more traditional pedigree, Segal immersed herself in the study of French, German and Italian, as well as the history of opera, after leaving university.

Hard work combined with her talent paid off. Performing mostly with the Canadian Opera Company since 2006, Segal has earned standing ovations and critical acclaim for her performances as Sonya in *War And Peace*, Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow* and Nancy T'sing in *Nixon In China*, among other roles.

Segal's prominence as a young opera singer earned her the recognition to be accepted as the only Canadian in the prestigious Salzburg Festival For Young Artists in 2008, and she won the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Encouragement Award twice.

She is only the second Jewish Canadian female opera singer ever to have reached national prominence. The first was the late Maureen Forrester.

Segal's grace, impeccable vocals and physical beauty have made her a sought-out artist. "You don't have to be huge to sing the notes anymore. What is necessary is to exercise the vocal chords, rehearsing and developing a stage presence."

Of all the roles she played on stage, Segal's favourite is the title role in *Carmen*, performed in Hamilton and Saskatoon.

"In the title role, Segal captivates the audience with her acting and her singing. Her beauty and alluring figure present a compelling Carmen as a sultry, smoldering femme fatale," *Opera Canada* wrote of Segal's performance in Saskatoon.

Although she has travelled to Israel, Segal has never performed there. She is proud of her Jewish roots, often being asked to sing in synagogues as a cantor.

"A lot of opera stars have become cantors, but I love performing on the stage and would miss it if I became a cantor. However, singing in the choir is fun to do when I can."

Segal sings with the choir at both Adath Israel Congregation and Beth Sholom Synagogue in Toronto, often on the High Holidays.

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra production of Mozart's *Coronation Mass* is Jan. 15 and 16, 8 p.m., at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto. For tickets, call 416-593-4828 or go to www.tso.ca.

For more information on Lauren Segal, go to www.laurensegal.com.

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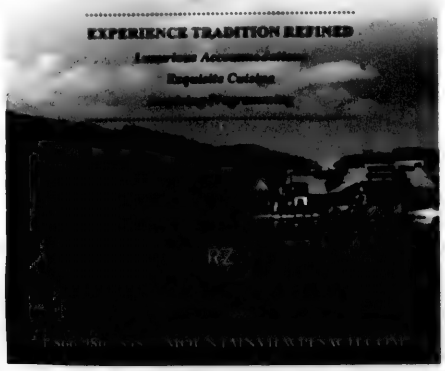


Multifaceted play focuses on Israeli-American family

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

When Ron Rutberg moved from Israel to Los Angeles to study film at UCLA in the 1970s, he became friends with a family who were also from Israel.

His first play, *Seven Days*, written three years ago, is loosely based on this family. Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre presents the world premiere at the Toronto Centre for the Arts – Studio Theatre from Jan. 8 to 19.

Rutberg's tale follows the Reznick family. Nathan and Sarah Reznick were fighters in the Irgun, a right-wing Jewish underground movement in pre-independence Jerusalem. After their side won and the State of Israel was established, the Reznicks moved to America.

"It was a very organic play for me. It was so easy to write because I knew the family," Rutberg says. "I was a lonely, broke film student, and they were a couple with kids. I became friends with one of their sons.

"I come from a socialist, liberal background and they were very right-wing, so it was an unlikely alliance, but I really took to them. We had very serious political debates. They were so fiercely patriotic, veterans of pre-independence organizations in Israel. Eventually, I started wondering what they were doing in Los Angeles when they were so enthralled with everything going on back home. Finally, their son told me, [and this] is revealed in the play."

"This mystery drama lets us peek into two important events in the Reznick family," says Ari Weisberg, the Teatron founder and artistic director, "the day they kicked their youngest son, Barack, out of their home, and the reunion of the family at the death of Sarah 25 years later. And through their stories, we learn more, bit by bit, about their actions during the war."

Rutberg sees *Seven Days* as an immigrant story. He wants audiences to get the feeling of what it's like to leave your home country for somewhere else, with all the baggage you carry. He says it reflects an Israeli syndrome called "sitting on your luggage" – it's about feeling guilty about leaving your homeland.

"You cannot really tear yourself away from the whole Israeli narrative of coming to another country, and you really don't set roots," Rutberg says. "You struggle with your guilt at having left your homeland. This particular story is [about] that dynamic. On top of that, it is about how parents have their own Pandora's Box that they want to keep shut. They torture the kids in many ways by not letting them know the truth about the reasons why they left the country.

"This is also the story of a couple. Even though both of them were partners in a very heroic saga of bringing independence to the home country, yet they're in Los Angeles in a very toxic relationship."

Under the direction of Ari Weisberg, Teatron's *Seven Days* cast of eight includes Ron Boyd, Bob Cooper, Marion Hirschberg, Richard Hoffman, Geoff Kolomayz, Zachary B. Amzallag, Karina Bershteyn and Katherine Housley.

This is Rutberg's first experience working with a professional theatre company.

"Please forgive me for mentioning my name and Tennessee Williams in the same sentence," Rutberg says, and then explains. "Tennessee Williams said how much he benefited in his early days. He thought he wrote the penultimate play and the director challenged him on main points – they worked together, and Tennessee Williams says he came up with a much better play than he would have otherwise. Ari became my dramaturge. He challenged me on certain points and I feel that I benefited a lot from that."

Born and raised in Tel Aviv, Rutberg completed his army service and joined a small kibbutz on the Lebanese border in Upper Galilee before leaving for UCLA. After graduating, he began a career in motion picture production, eventually becoming a motion picture editor at various studios including CBS Television, Universal, Turner Entertainment and Warner Bros.

Rutberg has written a second play called *Serious Business*, currently being considered by several theatre companies. He's now working on a third play, *Boo*.

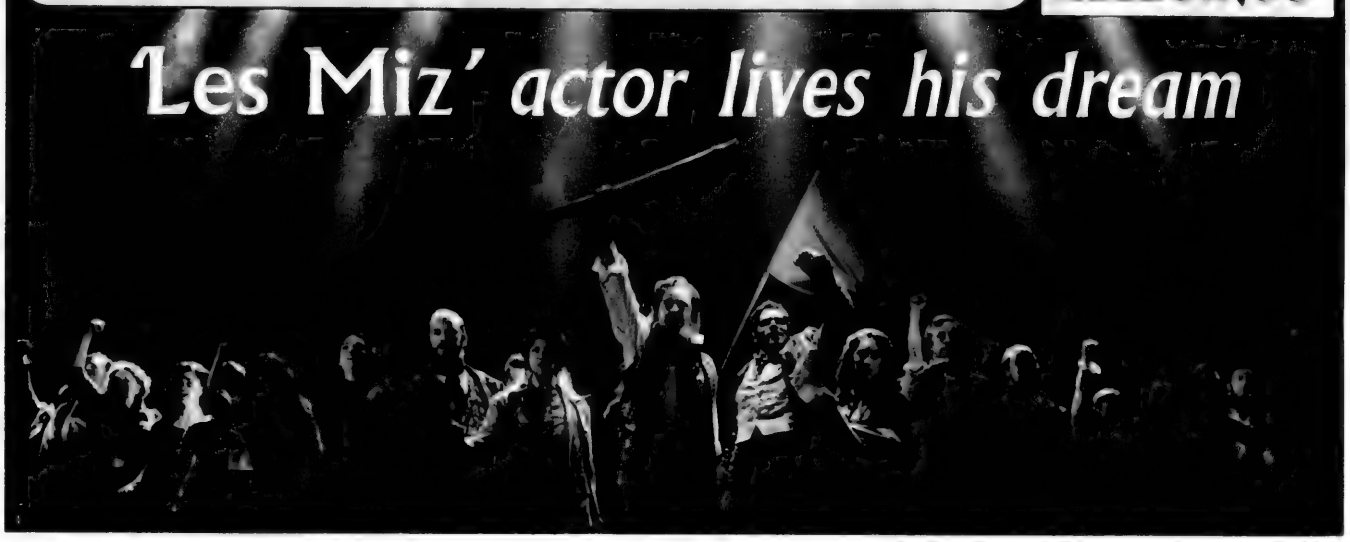
The playwright, who looks forward to coming to Toronto for the first time for the play's opening, is married to Joan, a sculptor and songwriter. They have twin sons, Daniel, an Internet marketing executive, and Elon, a film & TV writer-director now touring with singer Kanye West.

For tickets to *Seven Days*, contact Toronto Centre for the Arts box office or Ticketmaster 1-855-985-ARTS (2787). For information online, go to www.teatrontheatre.com

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

'Les Miz' actor lives his dream



Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

It was pretty clear that Perry Sherman would grow up to be an actor. As a kid, he constantly found ways to get in front of an audience. Now the young performer gets to do that every single day, playing one of the leads in the hit Toronto production of *Les Misérables*.

"When I was a kid, it was magic," he tells *The CJN*. "I'd show up to family parties with a suitcase full of tricks. I loved entertaining people. Then as I got a little older, I started acting and later singing."

Sherman grew up in the epicentre of theatre: New York City. Believe it or not, he didn't catch many Broadway shows during his childhood. "I lived in Long Island and it was difficult to get us all into the city. It was reserved for special occasions," he says, "so it's retained a sense of wonder for me."

In fact, the New Yorker can thank his sister for introducing him to the musical he would later be cast in. "I do remember my mom and sister seeing *Les Miserables* when it was on Broadway," he says. "They came back so excited and my sis tried explaining the story to me... I was eight, but her excitement got me excited and that's how I first got a hold of the soundtrack."

By high school, Sherman knew he wanted to pursue theatre. He was accepted into the acting conservatory at the prestigious Carnegie Mellon University, where he met a voice teacher he clicked with and everything just fell into place. In his first year there, Sherman made his way to an open call audition (*American Idol*-style) for a Boston production of *Spring Awakening*.

"The show was a dream for any young person involved with music theatre," he says. "When I found out I had got the job, I was back at school and I flipped out in the cafeteria. It was great. My year of doing that show was life-changing and I made some amazing friends."

More recently, Sherman landed the main role in a New York production of the Tony Award-winning *Avenue Q*. That in itself was memorable enough, but the show was also special for another reason.

"The incredible Rick Lyon, who designed the puppets and starred in the original Broadway production of *Avenue Q*, decided to direct it," Sherman says. "He had auditions in New York City and I got cast as the lead. He reworked some of the set designs and most of us who had no puppet training got to work with him for over a month. The puppets were amazing; it's such a great show."

Although the play was an incredible experience, Sherman adds it was quite a challenge. "The show was a lot of work though, I had to train my arm to hold up a puppet for two hours."

Earlier last year, Sherman found himself out of work and decided to be proactive. The performer and a handful of friends made a funny video called *Shit Jewish Bitches Say* (a response to a trend going on at the time). However, he didn't expect the self-described "ridiculous" and "silly" video, which pays a cheeky homage to Jewish girls, to go viral the way it did. We're talking almost 55,000 views.

"That's what's great in this day and age, is that something so silly can get recognition. We didn't expect it to get a lot of attention, but here I am discussing it in an interview," he says, adding that "it was really a lot of fun to make."

Last spring, the young actor got cast in a regional mounting of *Les Misérables* in Utah. He played Marius, the same character he portrays on a much bigger scale in the Mirvish production of the show.

"I knew that [the Toronto] project was coming up when I started it and it was really just an amazing coincidence that this happened," he says. "It was a gift! I knew the material before starting the rehearsal process here and did some exploration and decision-making."

Sherman adds: "The director then comes in and tells you it's all wrong, but at least you've made a choice and you're not indifferent. The longer you play a character the more you discover, to a certain extent. Also, the opportunity to work with a different director on the same project is something you rarely get."

The actor says booking the Toronto production was anything but a simple task. Being an American meant he had to prove himself. "They really wanted to advertise the show as something Canadian made," he says. "I had to go in numerous times for the producers and director. Then I had a little work session with my love interest, Sam Hill, who had already been cast. They put me through the ringer, but it was amazing. I fought for the part and it was really satisfying when they offered it to me."

This isn't Sherman's first time in Toronto; he performed *Next To Normal* at the Four Seasons Centre a few years ago and brought *Spring Awakening* to the Ed Mirvish Theatre back in 2008. "I love this city," he admits. "It's weird to call it home and feel comfortable somewhere other then New York, but it has made an impression on me."

His advice for aspiring actors is simple: "Don't wait for opportunity, make your own. Create, sing, act wherever you can and find people who have a similar idea of what art is and start making it with them."

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of Jan. 23 is Jan. 13. The deadline for Jan. 30 is Jan. 20. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Jan. 9

HEBREW CLASSES

Temple Sinai offers Hebrew classes for adult beginners (starting Jan. 14) and intermediates starting today. Call 416-487-3281.

SONGS OF THE SEPHARDIM

Musicologist **Judith Cohen** will perform traditional songs of Morocco and the former Ottoman lands. Her daughter, dancer and singer **Tamar Ilana** will add traditional flamenco vocal repertoire, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

YIDDISH VINKL

Sara Waxman speaks in Yiddish about Jewish food traditions, noon at the Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 (includes buffet lunch) email www.yiddishvinkl.com.

Sunday, Jan. 12

JEWISH ETHICS

"Jewish Ethics vs. Society's Ethics: The Talmud's Most Controversial Cases," is the topic of a panel discussion with rabbis **Yehoshua Weber, Mordechai Torczyner** and **Mordechai Scheiner,** 7:30 p.m., Clanton Park Synagogue, 11 Lowesmoor Ave. 416-633-4193.

THE YIDDISH CINEMA

Friends of Yiddish shows the film *The Yiddish Cinema*, 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. Film will be introduced by **Shlomo Schwartzberg.** RSVP with **Sandy** 416-458-1440, or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca

SHABBAT SHIRAH WORKSHOP

Adam David discusses "Middle Eastern and Afro-Latin Influences on Modern Jewish Music," at a Shabbat Shirah brunch, Beth Emeth Synagogue, 10 a.m.

BAT MITZVAH CLUB

Chabad of Markham's bat mitzvah club begins today. To register, call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

TU B'SHVAT FUN

PJ Library celebrates Tu b'Shvat with arts and crafts and treats 3:30-5 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Life, 36 Harbord St. Free. Register at www.pjlibrary.eventbrite.ca.

HOLOCAUST LOOTED ART

Fern Smiley discusses "Art Lost during the Holocaust: 70 Years Later," Lodzer Synagogue, 7:30 p.m. $10. 416-636-6665.

YIDDISH PROGRAMS

New beginners and ongoing intermediate and advanced Yiddish classes to improve conversation, reading and writing skills begin today. Yiddish culture for kids though arts and interactive activities, Sundays, 9:30 am.-noon. Classes held at Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd. To register for programs, visit www.committeeforyiddish.com, or call **Barbara**, 416-631-5843.

SHABBAT SHIRAH CONCERT I

Cantors David Edwards, Tibor Kovari, David Rosen and **Eyal Bitton,** accompanied by a live band, perform Israeli and chassidic melodies for Shabbat Shirah, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. $10/$15. For tickets, call 416-221-3433 or 416-633-3838.

SHABBAT SHIRAH CONCERT II

Kyra Folk-Farber and **Cantor Benjamin Maissner** present *A Yiddish Recital: Tears and Laughter*, 7:30 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. $36 416-789-3291, ext. 224.

Monday, Jan. 13

STEM CELL PUZZLE

Weizmann Canada presents **Dr. Jacob Hanna** discussing "Revealing a Piece of the Stem Cell Puzzle," 7:30 p.m., The Beer Academy, 75 Victoria St. For tickets, call **Esther** 416-733-9220 or www.weizmann.ca.

MISSION OF HOPE

Beth Sholom Synagogue shows the film *Mission of Hope*, about **Col. Ilan Ramon**, and serves dinner, 5 p.m. $10. Call 416-783-6103, ext. 228.

KOL BO SHABBAT

Today is the last day to register for Temple Har Zion's Kol Bo Shabbat (Jan. 17). Dinner $18. Call 905-889-2252, ext. 5.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

BOOK REVIEW

Marilyn Herbert reviews *The Best Place on Earth* by **Ayelet Tsabari,** 8 p.m., Adath Israel Synagogue.

BUTTER

Temple Har Zion shows the film *Butter*. Lunch at noon, movie at 12:30 p.m. Free.

Continued on page 25

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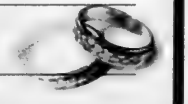

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SYNAGOGUE MUSIC

Cantor Charles Osborne leads a 3-session series on Jewish musical compositions through the ages, 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Learn how to cope with stress, and learn healthy habits, yoga and more. Tuesdays, 2-3:30 p.m., **Jan. 14- Feb. 11**, Circle of Care, 4211 Yonge St. To register, call **Revital** at 416-635-2900, ext. 463 or ext. 592.

SILK PAINTING WORKSHOPS

Paula Miller leads a 7-part series on painting on silk. Create something special for your home for Shabbat. Starts tonight, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. $30/$35. Call 416-633-3838.

Wednesday, Jan. 15

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Understanding Today's Missionary Threat to the Jewish Community," first in a 6-part series, 8 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. Free. To register, call 416-789-0020 or email toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca

Upcoming Events

CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW

Conversational Hebrew, ulpan method, with **Yael Lev** is offered at Pride of Israel Synagogue. Learn modern vocabulary and discuss current events, for intermediate students (Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.) and advanced students (Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.). Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

LASER TAG

Canadian Young Judaea welcomes students in grades 9-12 to a night of laser tag, food and fun, **Jan. 18.** Email anniegamliel@gmail.com.

ISRAEL ADVOCACY

Join Israel advocacy trainers and learn how to defend Israel in the media and among colleagues and peers. Speakers include **Mordechai Kedar, Jacques Gauthier, Mark Vandermaas, Solomon Benzimra, Yudit Shier-Weisberg. Jan. 26,** Village Shul, 1072 Eglinton Ave W. To register, visit bit.ly/israelday.

TU B'SHVAT TALK

Ryan Dyment discusses "The Economy of the Future: Connecting the Economy and the Environment," **Jan. 20,** Temple Sinai, 7 p.m.

FAMILY LAW WORKSHOP

Lorne Fine discusses "Division of Assets," **Jan. 22.** Call the legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women, 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org. Free.

SHORESH FOOD CONFERENCE

Register now for the Shoresh Food Conference, **Feb. 2**, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Miles Nadal JCC. Join rabbis, farmers, foodies and activists to explore the intersection of Jewish tradition and contemporary food ethics. www.shoresh.ca.

JEWISH REFUGEES

Mordechai Kedar discusses "The Untold Story of Almost a Million Refugees," **Jan. 25,** 7:30 p.m., Darchei Noam Congregation, part of a series on Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

TU B'SHVAT FUN

PJ Library celebrates Tu b'Shvat with arts and crafts and treats at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan, **Jan. 18,** 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free, but register at www.srcentre.ca.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Have you been through the mental health system? Would you like to be a peer support to others going through the system and soon to be discharged from the hospital? Baycrest is starting a new support program. For more information, call **Janis Sternhill** at 416-785-2500, ext. 2575, or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

BROADWAY GOES YIDDISH

David Gale leads a Yiddish theatre workshop focusing on "Broadway Goes Yiddish," 7-9 p.m., **Jan. 23-March 27**. To register, visit www.committeeforyiddish.com, or call **Barbara**, 416-631-5843.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2 to 10. Starts Jan. 27, 7 p.m.

Mind-Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Jan. 29 at 35 Madison Ave., 2 p.m. or Jan. 30, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group for couples who are going to be married in the coming year. Starts Jan. 29, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Synagogue.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244 or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Beth Sholom Synagogue. Chai Society senior group holds a Tu b'Shvat seder, Jan. 15, noon. $8. Call 416-783-6103, ext. 228 to reserve.

Adult 55+, Miles Nadal JCC Tu b'Shvat celebration Jan. 23, 1:30 p.m. with JNF shlichah **Hadar Epstein.** Pre-registration required by Jan. 13, 416-924-6211, ext. 0, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Barber/hairdresser Jan. 9, 10 a.m. Casino Woodbine, Jan. 22. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (resumes Jan. 7); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet A. Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267, or register online at centrecamp.ca/register.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com., or call ext. 4103.

Register now for winter programs: **Beverlee Swayze** discusses "The History of Symphony," Jan. 21, 1 p.m.

Osnat Lippa presents "Treasures of the Guggenheim," Feb. 11 and Feb. 18.

Iain Scott discusses "Four Jewish Operas," starting Jan. 16.

Learn to play mah-jong. Beginners program runs Jan. 13-Feb. 24, 7-9 p.m.; or Jan. 15, 1-3 p.m.

To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Register now for winter fun and learning. Klezmer ensemble begins Jan. 14; Hebrew travel skills workshop Jan. 19, Jan. 26; Hebrew Institute begins Jan. 20; fiction and poetry workshops start Jan. 20.

Aviva Chernick hosts a symposium and celebration in honour of Shabbat Shirah, featuring local musicians and leaders of prayer, Jan. 12, 1-6 p.m. $15/$20. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Times and Toys, paintings by **Rob Croxford,** is on display in the gallery until Jan. 23.

Register now for film studies with critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** focusing on the work of **Steven Spielberg.** Mondays 7-9 p.m., Jan. 20-March 17.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

Got Shabbat? Shabbat program (songs, games and stories) for children ages 0-4 with an adult starts Jan. 10. Ext. 388.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

מזל טוב

Family Moments

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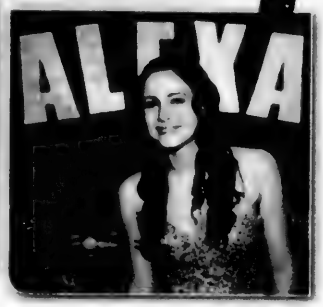

Alexa Amar, daughter of Risa & Richard, granddaughter of Joyce & Carl Gordon, the late Gisele Amar, Daniel & Yael Amar, celebrated her bat mitzvah Nov. 30.

Happy six-month birthday to Charlie Lew, son of Kristen Chemerika & Kyle Lew. With love from the whole family.

Congratulations Amanda on the birth of your beautiful daughter, Makayla Alexandra Serge. Love, your favourite uncle.

Happy 98th birthday Zaidy Ralph! We hope you have the best birthday filled with health, fun and laughter! Love, Shoshana, Sheldon, Ashley and Josh.

Judi & Harvey Nightingale, Randy & Carl Laskin happily announce the engagement of Jenna & Matthew on Nov. 30. Proud grandmother is Barbara Laskin.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click on "Family Moments"

The ultimate gift

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

I'm writing this column from Israel, while back home my husband is determinedly battling bedtime alone with three older kids who refuse to acknowledge that they need rest. Usually, this is a frustrating war we fight together each night, but for 15 days, he has given me the ultimate gift: the gift of time.

When we first married, gifts were all about material things. We racked our brains and begged each other for clues when birthdays and anniversaries rolled around, trying to come up with unique gifts that said I love you with as much passion and conviction as material objects can muster. There was jewelry for extra-special occasions and an accumulation of other stuff that, after the initial excitement wore off, would eventually gather dust.

As the years passed, we both began to understand that purchasing material objects neither of us truly needed was a waste of time, energy and money. With the birth of our first child, we were introduced to a brand new concept of gift giving: the gift of time.

I can't forget the first time he gave me this special gift. I'd been up with the baby during the night and foggily navigating my way through the daylight hours with a newborn. My home, my neighbourhood and my world felt like an entirely new place now that I was officially a mother, a place rife with challenges. But with that role came fatigue like I'd never known it before. I was depleted, exhausted and permanently anxious about the nights ahead, which, intercepted by regular breastfeeds, promised to be no more restful than the ones that had preceded it.

One afternoon early into our parenthood experience, my husband returned from work, took our bundle of baby from my arms and said the words I longed desperately to hear: "You go take a nap. I'm going to take the baby for a walk."

In that moment, I fell in love with him all over again. My nap couldn't have been more than an hour, but it was a siesta more precious than roses, chocolates, lingerie or any of the other typical gifts women are supposed to covet from their spouses. It was a gift that said, "You go first," at a time when we were both so very tired. But one of us had to be the parent in charge, and he volunteered, handing me a period of perfect, uninterrupted sleep that remains, to this day, unforgettable.

Fast forward 17 years, and we've both become better equipped to handle sleepless nights. Still, the gift of time has persisted as the most meaningful gift we can exchange. Oftentimes the gift is a brief one: a couple of hours out with a good friend, a game of poker with the guys, or an evening bike ride on a hot summer night.

Occasionally, though, we get extra generous with each other. Which is how I come to write this column from Israel. It's a mammoth gift, this one, a gift that implies many sacrifices in his daily schedule and a great deal more stress than he might ordinarily encounter. I can only hope I have the generosity of spirit to match it someday, to turn to him and say with total magnaminity, "It's your turn to take a break."

Because time, and how we spend it, is the greatest gift of all.

JACOB'S OATH

***CJN* freelance correspondent Masada Siegel, right, talks to award-winning NBC News special correspondent Martin Fletcher about his new book, *Jacob's Oath*. The book is set in Germany at the conclusion of World War II.**

Fletcher explained, "Not much has been written about the aftermath of World War II. Novels are usually about the more dramatic periods of the build-up to war, the war itself, and then the new world after the war. What fascinates me about the first few months after the end of the war in May 1945 is the period of anarchy, the transition, the bewilderment of 20 million refugees clogging the roads of Europe trying to go home, yet ultimately, there is no home. Refugees can't go home because there is no home. Everything has changed. What was that like? That's what interests me, partly maybe because my reporting career was so much about that, in wars and disaster zones across the globe for 35 years."

To read the story, please go to cjnews.com.

Members of the Girl Guides unit celebrate the kosher certification of the eponymous fundraiser cookies. Clockwise, from top left, are Chaya Akavi, Angela Du and Hadassah Nauenberg.

Girl Guide cookies now certified kosher

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

For the first time, Girl Guides of Canada's cookies will be certified kosher, thanks to a shomer Shabbat unit that pushed the organization to become more inclusive.

"The first question the girls asked when we started the unit was, 'When can we sell cookies?'" said Sara Silverman, who started the unit with her friend, Michelle Nauenberg, three years ago, when they decided they wanted their daughters to experience the Guides program without having to miss out on activities scheduled on Saturdays.

"It is all about fostering positive female experiences to boost self confidence in a totally safe and supportive environment," Silverman said.

It was easy enough to adapt the activities to fit a Jewish lifestyle, Silverman said. The group of 31 girls meets on Sundays at the Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto synagogue in Thornhill, taking part in regular Girl Guide activities, but following Jewish law, such as only allowing kosher food into the synagogue and avoiding Saturday activities.

But the cookies, which are one of the Guides' main fundraising tools, weren't certified kosher, although there was nothing unkosher about the ingredients in the chocolate and vanilla cookies, Silverman said.

"This made the girls very sad, as they really wanted to be able to sell the cookies," she said, adding that missing out on this fundraiser was difficult financially on the unit. "We tried other fundraisers, but the girls kept asking."

Around two years ago, the group decided they would try to have the cookies certified. At first, Silverman said she was told it was not financially feasible, but with lots of perseverance, Girl Guides of Canada eventually agreed. Recently, it confirmed that the chocolate and vanilla cookies for the spring fundraiser – but not the mint chocolate ones, and not the cookies from the autumn fundraiser – would be certified under the Orthodox Union's OU hechsher.

"It feels like our unit has made a difference," said Avigail Rucker, a 12-year-old participant.

For more information on placing a bulk order, or about the shomer Shabbat Girl Guides unit, contact saragsilverman@yahoo.ca.

Try something different

Sue Epstein
Special to The CJN

Do something different. Enjoy a dinner of just appetizers once in a while. Try these Sesame Chicken Strips, some Potato Skins, Baked Salami or perhaps some store-bought pigs-in-the-blanket. Add some cut up fresh vegetables and top the meal off with Pound Cake Cobbler. What a fun, family meal to eat in front of the TV or when you have friends over to watch a game… try it some night!

SESAME CHICKEN STRIPS

(Can be made in less than 1/2 hour)

1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 tsp. onion powder or dried minced onion
1 tsp. dry mustard
1/2 cup crushed crackers
1/4 cup sesame seeds
1 1/4 lb. boneless chicken breasts
Sauce:
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 tbsp. honey
1 tbsp. prepared mustard

In a bowl combine 1/2 cup mayonnaise, onion and 1 tsp. mustard. In another bowl, combine cracker crumbs and sesame seeds.

Cut chicken lengthwise into 1/4-inch strips. Dip strips into mayonnaise mixture, then into cracker mixture. Place in a single layer on a large baking sheet lined with foil or a disposable pan. Grease. Bake at 425 for 15 minutes or until juices run clear.

Combine sauce ingredients and serve with chicken strips. Makes 5-6 appetizer servings.

BAKED SALAMI

1 medium salami
1/2 c. brown sugar
1 tbsp. mustard
1 bottle chili sauce
dash lemon juice

Cut slashes lengthwise all around salami. Combine remaining ingredients. Spread over salami and bake at 250 degrees for 3 hours, basting every 20 minutes. Serve with black bread and spicy mustard.

POTATO SKINS

5 medium baking potatoes
2 tbsp. margarine, melted
1/2 cup chopped tomato, optional for garnish
1/4 cup sliced green onions, optional for garnish
salsa, optional for garnish

Scrub potatoes, prick with a fork and microwave on high for 11 to 14 minutes, or until just tender. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise and scoop out pulp, leaving a 1/4-inch-thick shell.

Brush inside of each potato with melted margarine and sprinkle with a favourite seasoning (basil, paprika, garlic, etc.). Bake in 375-degree oven for 18-20 minutes.

Serve with salsa for dipping, or chopped tomato and sliced green onions. Note: If you're making Sesame Chicken Strips, just bake potato skins together with the chicken but for a shorter period of time because of the higher oven temperature. Makes 6-8 servings.

POUND CAKE COBBLER

1 store bought pound cake (about 10-3/4 oz.)
1 can cherry pie filling
1/3 cup water
1/2 tsp. almond extract
2 tbsp. slivered almonds (toasted preferable)
pareve whipped cream

Cut pound cake into 1-in. cubes. Place in a 1-1/2 quart microwave-safe casserole dish. In a small bowl, combine pie filling, water and almond extract. Spoon pie filling over cake cubes and sprinkle with almonds. Cover with plastic wrap and microwave on high 5-7 minutes, or until hot. Serve warm, topped with whipped cream. Makes 4-6 servings.

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Ariel Sharon 1928–2014

'Friend, leader, military chief'

JTA

JERUSALEM — Former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon was remembered at his funeral as a man of courage and strength, both on the battlefield and in the political arena.

"Sharon was a complex man who lived in complex times in a complex neighbourhood," U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden said during the memorial ceremony Monday at the Knesset plaza in Jerusalem.

Sharon, Biden said, "engendered strong opinions. But like all historic leaders, he had a north star that guided him. The north star, which he never – in my observation – deviated from... was the survival of the State of Israel and the Jewish People."

Former British prime minister Tony Blair, who currently serves as the ambassador of the Mideast Peace Quartet (the United States, United Nations, European Union and Russia), recalled that Sharon was not comfortable in formal meetings, tending to repeat himself or read from prepared texts.

Blair said that when Sharon accepted an invitation to his home for dinner, he saw "a different Arik – warm-hearted, humorous and charming, and passionate."

Blair said that despite agreeing to the failed 2003 Road Map for peace that proposed a two-state solution for Israel and the Palestinians, as well as evacuating Gaza settlements and forming the centrist Kadima party, Sharon's "strategic goal never wavered: [Israel] had to be protected for future generations. When that meant fighting, he fought. When that meant making peace, he sought peace with the same iron determination."

Israeli President Shimon Peres called Sharon "a friend, a leader, a military chief."

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[Israel Sun photo]

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Havdalah: 5:55
Greater Toronto Area

Anti-Semitic comic is anything but funny

Please see page 23

For more Sharon coverage, please see pages 6, 12, 21, 26

CANADA

Israeli Firm Bought

MONTREAL — Montreal-based bicycle and baby-product maker Dorel Industries is buying fellow baby-product maker Tiny Love Ltd. of Tel Aviv for an undisclosed price. Tiny Love, known for its innovative developmental toys, has offices in China and the United States, and sales of about $45 million last year, Dorel said. It also has a strong presence in eastern Europe, "which is an important part of our growth strategy," Dorel president and CEO Martin Schwartz said last week.

WORLD

Tourism Record Set

JERUSALEM — Israel reported an all-time high in annual visitors in 2013. A record 3.54 million visitors arrived in Israel in 2013, half a percent more than the previous record year. Meanwhile, some 272,000 tourists arrived in December, a 14 per cent increase over December 2012, setting a record for most arrivals in the Jewish state in one month. The figures were released Jan. 9 by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics. Nearly 18 per cent of tourists arrived from the United States, with some 623,000 Americans visiting. Russia sent 603,000 tourists, and France 315,000. More than half the tourists, or 53 per cent, were Christian. Only 28 per cent were Jewish. Tourism contributed about $11.4 billion to Israel's economy in 2013, the Ministry of Tourism said.

Poet Dies

NEW YORK — Amiri Baraka, the New Jersey poet laureate whose works were celebrated by blacks but often condemned by Jews, has died. Baraka's writings, lectures and poetry brought him national renown starting in the 1960s, and the one-time black nationalist was celebrated by many African Americans as a voice of the disenfranchised. He was a winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award. But Baraka, who died Jan. 9 at age 79, also could be hateful. In September 2002, not long after he was named New Jersey's poet laureate, he wrote a poem called *Somebody Blew Up America* that suggested Israel knew in advance about the 9/11 attacks. He wrote, "Who knew the World Trade Center was gonna get bombed/Who told 4,000 Israeli workers at the Twin Towers/To stay home that day/Why did Sharon stay away?" The poem prompted calls for his dismissal as poet laureate, including by then-governor James McGreevey. Baraka refused. After it became clear there was no way to force him out, New Jersey's legislature voted in 2003 to eliminate the position entirely.

Missing Teen Found Safe in New York

Caleb Jacoby

BOSTON — Police in Brookline, Mass., said 16-year-old Caleb Jacoby has been found safe in New York City.

Jacoby, an 11th-grader at the Maimonides School in suburban Boston, had been missing since midday on Jan. 6.

The case drew national attention, in part because the youth is the son of *Boston Globe* columnist Jeff Jacoby.

Some 200 volunteers, including friends and neighbours of the family as well as members of local Jewish groups, searched throughout the Boston area in a co-ordinated effort on Jan. 8. The effort was spearheaded by the Maimonides School.

"Our prayers have been answered," Jacoby said via Twitter. "We are thrilled to hear from the Brookline Police that our beloved son Caleb has been found and is safe. Words can't express our gratitude for the extraordinary outpouring of kindness and support that we have received from so many people. All we can think of at this moment is how wonderful it will be to see Caleb again and shower him with love."

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JF & CS seeks adoptive families for older kids

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Sheryl Ederman, manager of foster care and adoption at Jewish Family & Child, wants every kid to have a permanent seat at the dinner table.

The agency's goal is for all children, even older ones, to be connected to a family, she said.

Currently, the agency is trying to make plans for about 20 kids, ages five through 18, Ederman said, and she hopes members of the Jewish community will step forward to help.

"That does not necessarily mean [an older kid] living with the family, but it does mean having a strong family connection."

Sheryl Ederman

Ederman said that after one youth in care got a job recently, she told her worker that although she had a good first day, she was distressed after talking to human resources.

"They asked her for an emergency contact and she had no one to name. She had a wonderful relationship with her worker, but she should have family. We need to develop family for these kids."

Adoption has changed, she said. Until two years ago, Crown wards who had any contact with their biological family could not be adopted, but "Crown wards are now eligible for adoption. Once the agency gets wardship of a child, we can begin to make permanent plans."

When it comes to older kids, community members who want to help have a number of options.

"There are a few levels of choices, such as adoption, a lifelong connection, or a legal guardian."

She said there are about 50 potential adoptive parents on the agency's waiting list, but most want young kids.

"People have to be open to building families differently. These families have been contacted about adopting older kids, and some have been receptive.

"Now we have to follow up, and try to figure out who could fit with what family. We have to find a common thread and try to start with the right match."

One 13-year-old boy, Tyler, for example, is a sports fanatic, and plays basketball with this foster siblings. "Tyler would fit in well with an active family of his own.

"Allison, 16, loves to bake and she works at a cupcake shop on the weekends. She has lived at the same foster home since she was nine, but [recently] was told her foster family is moving without her. She needs a permanent place."

Fostering children is a short-term solution, Ederman said.

"We want kids to be in foster care as long as it takes to find a permanent connection, even if it is the foster parents."

The first connection they seek is family members or close friends of the child, she said.

"When a family is struggling and says they have no one to care for their child, they could be ashamed or estranged from other family members. We have had aunts and uncles come forward and say, 'If I only knew that my niece was in foster care... why didn't anyone call me?' We actively search for these people to see if they can step up," Ederman said.

"Kids need to be in their own community, whether they are unaffiliated or Orthodox. If a non-Jewish family member or friend meets the needs of the Jewish child, we will consider that as well.

"Our goal is for the child to be with someone who loves them."

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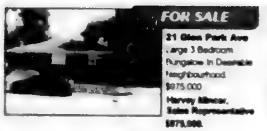
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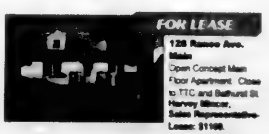
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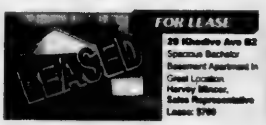

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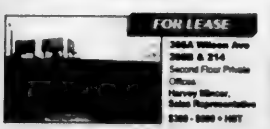
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Why calling Israel a Jewish state is crucial

Why is it now controversial that Israel should be asking the Palestinians to recognize Israel as a Jewish state?

For some, like Roger Cohen of the *New York Times*, you'd think this constituted an outrageous, right-wing demand intended to stymie progress toward a two-state Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement.

According to Reports
By PAUL MICHAELS

In his Dec. 31 *Times* column, Cohen wrote: "This issue is a waste of time, a complicating diversion when none is needed… If Israel looks like a Jewish state and acts like a Jewish state, that is good enough for me – as long as it gets out of the corrosive business of occupation."

It might well be good enough for Cohen, but the question is whether it's good enough for the Palestinians. Even Cohen admits that "any two-state peace agreement will have to be final and irreversible; it must ensure there are no further Palestinian claims on a secure Israel. It may well require some form of words saying the two states are the homelands of their respective peoples… But that is for another day."

The recognition that there should, in a genuine two-state agreement, be "no further Palestinian claims" brings us to the heart of the matter, which Cohen dodges: unless Israel is recognized as the homeland of the Jewish people (with full democratic rights for its Arab minority citizens), Palestinians will continue insisting, as they have, on the "right of return" to Israel of Palestinian refugees and their descendants, now estimated by the UN at 5.5. million people.

The unique status of Palestinian refugees shows just how difficult, even intractable, their case has become. "Returning" to a future Palestinian state would be one possible solution. PA president Mahmoud Abbas, however, has insisted that he will not renounce a Palestinian "right of return" to Israel (even if there have been discussions in the past about limiting the number of refugees "returning" to Israel out of deference to Israeli demographic concerns). If the principle remains sacrosanct, future demands for Israel to absorb larger numbers would be inevitable.

In fact, there would be no end of claims. Unless, that is, the Palestinians were at last willing to acknowledge the Jewish character of Israel.

What's been lost in this debate is that the Palestinians themselves set a precedent back in 1988 for doing just this.

On Nov. 15, 1988, the Palestinian National Council (PNC), the PLO's "parliament in exile," met in Algiers and, among other things, decided – 41 years after the fact – finally to recognize UN General Assembly resolution 181 of Nov. 29, 1947 – the famous partition resolution for Palestine. (The Jewish leadership of the 1940s accepted the plan, but the Palestinian leadership and the Arab states violently rejected it).

At the Algiers summit, the Palestinians declared that "General Assembly Resolution 181 of 1947, which partitioned Palestine into two states, Arab and Jewish… still provides the legal basis for the right of the Palestinian Arab people to national sovereignty and independence."

It appears that this is the only occasion in which the Palestinians have used the term "Jewish" state, but, in finally accepting UNGA 181 as the basis for their state, the Palestinians acknowledged (if only by implication) the basis for the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own (even though the PNC called the partition plan a historic injustice and disparaged Israel).

Nonetheless, that's the meaning of the partition resolution: two states for two peoples – precisely what Israel claims must be accepted now if a genuine two-state solution is to be achieved. Once again, this means that the Palestinians will have to confine their claim (not recognized in international law) for a "right of return" to a Palestinian state. Otherwise Israel would become, demographically, another Arab state.

This is what's at stake, and this is why even Isaac Herzog, the newly elected leader of the Israeli Labor opposition party, recently said that he, too, supports in principle the recognition of Israel as the Jewish state.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs

SeeJN

ASYLUM PROTESTS

Protesters argue during a demonstration outside Tel Aviv University Jan. 9. Tens of thousands of African asylum seekers have been rallying recently against a law allowing authorities to keep them in open-ended detention until their asylum requests are granted, they're deported or they volunteer to leave Israel. ***[Tomer Neuberg/Flash90 photo]***

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Sharon's final lesson

For all his many accomplishments, and his comparatively few failures, the one thing Ariel Sharon will ultimately be remembered for is the Gaza disengagement plan, put into effect over the course of the summer of 2005. No event in his storied military and political career better illustrates the fighting spirit that drove Israel's 11th prime minister to constantly push forward, or conveys his eventual realization that the best cause one can ever hope to fight for is peace.

It took him most of his life to figure that out – in fact, for decades, peace did not appear to figure into Sharon's decision-making. Peace surely wasn't on his mind when he joined the Haganah after high school, or at the battle of Latrun in the 1948 War of Independence. Unit 101, the elite military squad he formed in 1953, was explicitly engineered for the opposite of making peace – seeking retribution.

In Sinai in 1956, when he disobeyed orders and pushed toward the Mitla Pass, and when he turned a blind eye at Sabra and Shatila in 1982, peace wasn't part of his calculation. He thumbed his nose at peace as a champion of the settler cause. Palestinians broke into a round of riots and terror after he visited the Dome of the Rock in 2000. Wherever Sharon went, it seemed, violence always followed.

There is no question Sharon undertook all of the above with Israel's best interests at heart, but in the end, he realized that pursuing peace was the only way to ensure Israel's future – that violence only begat more violence. And yet even as he underwent this fascinating metamorphosis, his essence remained unchanged: he continued to fight with the same unique combination of smarts and guts, and his patriotic drive remained strong. The only thing that changed was the way he channelled that energy.

Alas, Sharon was not allotted as much time to chase peace as he spent hunting security – he fell ill just months after the disengagement came to a close. It must have taken a toll on him, to watch Gush Katif erupt in near-civil war, residents and soldiers battling each other, a nation at risk of being torn apart – and finally, Palestinians blindly tearing down what Jews had worked so hard to build, then increasing the rocket attacks.

The stroke that left him comatose for eight years followed too soon after the disengagement drama for it to have been a coincidence. If it was all too much for Sharon, who could blame him?

Ariel Sharon didn't survive disengagement, but Israel did, and in the course of that summer, the Jewish state's path forward became clear. It was no longer enough to express a desire to make peace, at the right moment and with the right partner. The time had come to force peace to happen, even if that meant going it alone and offering painful sacrifices with no guarantee of reciprocation.

Sharon taught this final lesson to his people, then he was gone. For a man who lived his life with boldness, he saved the best for last.

Netanyahu and Mandela's funeral

In its quest to be a "little bit edgier," I hope *The CJN* does not alienate one segment of the Jewish community in order to placate or appeal to another. I thought the raison d'être of this paper, which prides itself on being a mouthpiece of this community, recognizes that said community is broad and diverse, and as such, it should represent all voices, including conflicting ones, and wherever possible, to find some common ground.

A case in point is the editorial ("Netanyahu's Lame Excuse," *The CJN*, Dec. 19), which lambasted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for not attending Nelson Mandela's funeral. I personally would have preferred if he had been there, though I recognize that there are those who agree with his absence. One can take a principled editorial stance, whether popular or unpopular, with a calm voice that does not denigrate the intelligence of those with whom one disagrees. To cite a Yiddish phrase that, sadly, has gone out of style, "*Ess passt nisht*" – "It's not becoming."

Eli Honig
Toronto

• • •

The CJN's editorial writer should have done a little due diligence before he made the assumption: "That's why Netanyahu stayed away." It is common knowledge that South Africa's security service is not exactly a model of competence and integrity, and that the shredded rump of the Jewish branch of the Communist party planned a major embarrassment to "welcome" the Israeli prime minister.

Nor should it be assumed that Israel would have been given full rein to implement its own security requirements, regardless of cost, as U.S. President Barack Obama was allowed to do, and with whom Netanyahu wished to avoid any contact that would have turned into a "misunderstanding."

But most of all, South Africa's increasingly embittered and aggressive Muslim communities planned a series of pro-Palestinian demonstrations that could easily have gotten out of hand, as things so often do on that unfortunate continent.

Canada's Jewish community now has plenty to contend with arising from Canada's inevitable confrontation with Quebec and a large dysfunctional Muslim community of our own. Who are we to second guess from a great distance the decisions that other leaders cannot avoid?

Norman L. Roth
Toronto

• • •

Settlers are not terrorists

Arie Raif ("Israel must act to avoid civil war, *The CJN*, Dec. 19) has put forward illogical, pathetically appeasing and scare-mongering ideas in his article. He wrongly equates "price tag" gangs with settlers. They are not the same, and they don't want to start a war with other Israelis. What they have in common is that they both retaliate or defend themselves against the violence of the Palestinians. That violence is, however, not mentioned in the article, leaving the reader to wrongly assume that the Jews are originating the violence, while the Arabs are sitting in their fields smelling the flowers. If there is a civil war, it will be between the Arabs and the Jews, not between Jew and Jew as in Raif's examples.

Raif says that "Israel must take pre-emptive action against Jewish terrorists whose doctrine of arrogance, messianism, militarism and nationalism will lead to a civil war." If Raif were truly a Zionist, he would have said, "Israel must take pre-emptive action against Arab terrorists whose doctrines of arrogance, violence, militarism, Islamism, and the destruction of the Jewish state will lead to an internal terrorist attack against Israel."

Jonathan Usher
Toronto

Dry Bones

AFTER BLUNDERING IN AFGHANISTAN, SCREWING UP IN IRAQ, DESTROYING LIBYA, MESSING UP THE EGYPTIANS, ALIENATING PAKISTAN, FUMBLING ON IRAN, AND ZIG ZAGGING ON SYRIA, I RESOLVE, IN 2014, TO FOCUS MY ATTENTION ON ISRAEL.
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• • •

Israel must lead on human rights

I have to say that this was a very one-sided article. ("Israel's critics often ignore its unique predicament," *The CJN*, Dec. 26).

One of the major themes is why Israel is picked on with boycotts for human rights violations when there are other nations that are worse than Israel. Paul Michaels says Israel is better on this count than Syria. Wow! That's a pretty low benchmark.

Israel is also better on this count than North Korea, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and many other nations. Israel always makes the point that it is the only democracy in the Middle East. Israel should be held to a high standard in all of its endeavours, particularly human rights, not the lowest common denominator.

Peter P. Farkas
Toronto

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Snowden vs. Pollard: A contrast in treatment

Bernie Farber

Former NSA and CIA consultant Edward Snowden languishes under temporary Russian asylum while much of the United States argues about whether he's a traitor or a hero.

Snowden, in his capacity as a consultant with America's most important and secretive intelligence agencies, gathered information that demonstrated longstanding covert global surveillance. He leaked it to a number of western news agencies, including the *Washington Post* and the *Guardian* in what was described as the most significant unauthorized release of classified material in the history of the United States.

Snowden's motivation? He believed in his heart of hearts that the American public had a right to know what their government was doing in their name.

The debate rages on. Some senators, such as right-wing Republican and Tea Party favourite Rand Paul, have publicly stated that Snowden deserves leniency.

Indeed, Paul picked up the current thinking of at least one federal court judge, who believes that the NSA's actions as exposed by Snowden are unconstitutional. Not to be outdone, another federal judge offered a very contrary opinion, arguing that the NSA is fully within its rights, leaving the entire question open to a Supreme Court challenge.

Couple this with the fact that other senators, such as Democrat Charles Schumer, strongly believe that Snowden deserves the harshest of punishments.

And yet again, on the other side of the ledger, the liberal-leaning *New York Times* has argued editorially that Snowden should be granted clemency.

Edward Snowden

Contrast this with the older, but equally notorious, spying debacle of Jonathan Pollard, who in 1987, while working as an intelligence analyst for the United States, passed classified information to an ally, Israel.

Pollard's life sentence was the severest ever given to an American citizen for spying on behalf of an ally. No amount of contrition or heartfelt acknowledgments of wrongdoing by Pollard seems to have moved the American intelligence community. Indeed, in 1998, then-Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu pleaded with then-U.S. president Bill Clinton for Pollard's release. Clinton indicated in his memoirs that he was favourably disposed to doing so, but he cited the robust objections of the intelligence community for not moving forward.

It took until 2010 for the American political system to reassess the Pollard case, fully 23 years after he was sentenced. Representatives Barney Frank, Anthony Weiner, Bill Pascrell and Edolfus Townes asked President Barack Obama to consider clemency. This was followed by 39 members of Congress backing a plea for leniency along with numerous others, including former secretaries of state Henry Kissinger and George Schultz, former CIA director James Woolsey, and the chair of the Senate intelligence committee, Arlen Specter.

Jonathan Pollard

To be sure, there have also been many nay-sayers who oppose Pollard's release. Former secretary of defence Donald Rumsfeld, former vice-president Dick Cheney and other former defence secretaries, including Caspar Weinberger, James Schlesinger and Elliott Richardson, all oppose any form of leniency. In 2011, the *New York Times* reported that Obama was considering Pollard's case, though vice-president Joe Biden was dead set against anything less than Pollard serving his full term.

To date, Pollard continues to serve his unprecedented life sentence in federal prison.

In the early stages of this case, most Jewish organizations, fearing the specter of the "dual loyalty" charge, stayed far away from Pollard. It has only been recently and in retrospect that certain respected Jewish legalists and leaders have begun to petition for his release.

Some have suggested that had Pollard been a non-Jew or if Israel were not part of the equation, he never would have received such a severe sentence. In his book *Chutzpah*, Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz, a confidant to many U.S. presidents and renowned legal counsel said, "As an American, and as a Jew, I hereby express my outrage at Jonathan Pollard's sentence of life imprisonment for the crime to which he pleaded guilty."

From where I sit, the actions of both Pollard and Snowden deserve to be seen for what they are: acts of treason that violated the public trust. No matter the motivation, the fidelity to law must always be paramount. Yet, given the treatment of Snowden even before he has entered a courtroom or sat one minute in jail, surely it's time to reconsider the Pollard case.

I fear history will be unkind in its appraisal of a government that incarcerated a felon who certainly broke the law of the land but seemed more harshly judged than another American citizen whom most agree committed the most significant leak of classified material ever in the United States.

Bernie Farber, a former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, writes on human and civil rights matters. He's currently senior vice-president of Gemini Power Corp.

Hoping to influence then-U.S. Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney during his 2012 campaign visit to Israel, protesters held large posters of prominent U.S. officials who have requested the release of convicted spy Jonathan Pollard outside the Jerusalem hotel where Romney was staying. Pollard, an American civilian intelligence analyst, was sentenced to life in prison by the United States in 1987 for spying for Israel.

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An arms cache, and the Palestinian state of terror

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Jamel al-Jamal was the Palestinian "ambassador" to the Czech Republic, until he was killed by an explosion in his official residence in Prague on Jan. 2. The stories concocted to explain his death followed quickly: Palestinian officials blamed a safe that had been locked for 20 years in the old PLO offices, and then moved to a new location and opened. Riad Malki, known as the Palestinian foreign minister, was quoted as saying that the ambassador "decided to open it. After he opened it, apparently something happened inside [the safe] and went off".

An old exploding safe would be, in itself, a strange item, given the history of Palestinian terror, including (or particularly) in Europe. In addition, the hastily invented cover-up quickly unravelled, and the PLO's embassy spokesperson told Czech radio that the safe was "used on a daily basis at the embassy and it was opened and closed almost every day." As the comedic bungling continued, Palestinian officials invented new fictions, telling journalists the weapons were recently retrieved from an old sack, untouched for decades, and that the mission's staff had informed the Czech authorities. But according to Prague Police Chief Martin Vondrasek, the deadly terror arsenal has "not gone through a registration process in the Czech Republic."

Czech officials, to their credit, began a real investigation, and found that al-Jamal (a member of Yasser Arafat's Fatah wing of the PLO since 1975) had enough weapons stored in his residence to arm a terror group of at least 10 people. One report referred to 70 weapons, including submachine guns. And if these weapons were stored in one PLO location, it's likely that similar caches are stored throughout Europe. (One has to wonder whether other governments would have had the backbone of the Czechs – the past 50 years provide many examples of the European practice of avoiding uncomfortable confrontation with Palestinian and other terrorists.)

This deadly explosion (a "work accident") serves as a critical reminder showing that although almost 10 years have passed since the death of Arafat, who shaped the PLO as a terror organization, not much has changed. The Prague arsenal is today's equivalent of the Karine-A – the ship carrying 50 tons of weapons, including short-range Katyusha rockets, anti-tank missiles, and high explosives – that Arafat had organized in 2002. Had he succeeded and had the Karine-A not been detected, boarded and seized by the Israeli navy, thousands of Israelis would have been killed.

Arafat's successor, Mahmoud Abbas, looks, dresses and talks differently, and the façade of diplomacy has been nurtured, but the role of terror remains under the surface. The PLO of 2014 also benefits from additional pseudo-diplomatic immunity provided by the UN General Assembly's vote to recognize a Palestinian state, offering the opportunity to expand the network of PLO operatives and terrorists in European and other cities. Whether the PLO uses the weapons and explosives smuggled overseas in its own attacks, or provides them to other groups, the results are the same.

Most Israelis don't need exploding safes, mysterious deaths, and weapons arsenals to remind them of the unchanging violence at the core of the PLO's agenda – they see the ongoing terror attacks and incitement continuously. Recently, Palestinians based in Bethlehem used pressure-cooker bombs like the ones used by the Boston Marathon terrorists to blow up a bus in the city of Bat Yam. Thankfully, the bombs were discovered in time, and no one was hurt. As a result, Israelis are understandably less than enthusiastic about a Palestinian terror-state a short distance from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, ready to launch rockets and infiltrate murderers. No foreign police force in the strategic Jordan Valley or elsewhere is going to protect Israeli lives.

For the U.S. government officials such as Secretary of State John Kerry, European enthusiasts, and others working intensively to create just such a Palestinian state, the Prague explosion and arsenal is a reminder of the differences between well-intentioned theories and practical realities.

Negotiations, treaty drafts, peace conferences, maps and borders, and the rest remain irrelevant as long as terror continues.

Peace, in any meaningful sense, requires an end to violence. And our Palestinian partners, whether in Europe or next door, are not there yet.

Israel must deal humanely with African refugees

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

To paraphrase Emma Lazarus, the tired, poor and huddled masses of several beleaguered East African nations, some autocratic and repressive, have made their way to Israel in droves over the last few years.

Estimated at between 50,000 to 60,000, they entered Israel through our previously porous frontier with Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Most come from Eritrea and Sudan – including many from Darfur and South Sudan, which just recently became independent.

Tel Aviv, Eilat and Arad have the largest concentrations of them. Depending on one's inclination, these Africans are refugees, asylum seekers, illegal employment seekers or infiltrators.

Our government hasn't done a good enough job dealing with them, although just over a month ago, after 3-1/2 years and 1.6 billion shekels (roughly $500 million Cdn), work was completed on a 245-kilometre long fence along our border with Egypt. Erected primarily due to security considerations relating to chaos and Islamic terrorism afflicting the Sinai Peninsula, this fence has also stemmed the influx of Africans into Israel.

Some Israelis criticize stopping the flow of these Africans into the country. In view of modern Jewish history, they believe Israel can't turn away people in danger of grave injury and even death if they return to their own countries. However, most Israelis believe the number of Africans in the country has reached a critical mass and that we should be dealing with those already here.

The crux of the matter is what should Israel do with the tens of thousands of Africans in our midst. Regrettably, to date, our government has failed, both morally and effectively, in this regard.

Initially, the government provided no direction or policy whatsoever. Could Africans work or not? Were they to be arrested, deported or protected? Could they receive medical care? Open bank accounts? Could their kids go to school? Would someone examine and process their requests for refugee status?

With no clear answers to these and other questions, inertia kicked in. So did NGOs, filling the void and helping these Africans as much as they can.

These folks want to work, to subsist. What little they save is sent home to those left behind. And for fear of political persecution or worse, most can't return to Eritrea, Sudan or South Sudan, and no other country will have them.

Last year, things came to a head in Tel Aviv, which has the largest concentration of Africans, mostly living alongside Israelis in lower-income neighbourhoods in the southern parts of the city. Not all have found work. Some live in public parks. Crime has risen, and living conditions for Israelis in these areas have become difficult, some say unbearable. A young Israeli woman was gang-raped last year. People are afraid to leave their homes.

Populist politicians entered the picture, fuelling anger and discontent with egregious xenophobic exclamations. One MK called Africans "a cancer in our body."

Our government's response was to build detention centres and pass laws allowing authorities to incarcerate infiltrators for up to three years. Thankfully, the Supreme Court quashed this legislation as not in keeping with Israel's constitutional foundations.

But the government can see no other solution. Almost immediately after the court's decision, it initiated new legislation, this time allowing confinement of infiltrators for up to a year. This, too, is being challenged legally, but in the meantime hundreds, some say thousands of Africans are being rounded up and sent to a new "open" detention centre built in the Negev desert near the Egyptian border – "open" because detainees are allowed out during days and must return at night. But the truth is that being stuck where they are, these detainees have nowhere to go most days.

Instead of spending millions building and maintaining prisons, the government would be more sensible and on higher moral ground if it allocated those funds to provide vocational training and jobs for these Africans, who are not enemies of the state, but rather unfortunate individuals who made lengthy journeys to the only real democracy in the region. This would be money much better spent.

In the meantime, tens of thousands of Africans are demonstrating in Tel Aviv and Eilat, beginning hunger strikes and demanding better treatment.

It's not certain where this will lead. One thing is certain, though: most of these Africans won't be leaving Israel anytime soon, and it's high time our government understood this and started treating them and their Israeli neighbours properly.

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MukiBaum Foundation gets new HQ

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

If you like to shop at Lawrence Plaza or enjoy a nosh at United Bakers, there's a good chance that on any given weekend, you'll find Muki Baum in the vicinity, seated on his motorized scooter.

His other favourite haunt is the Holt Renfrew store on Bloor Street, where shelter can be found from the winter cold.

Whether it's along the Bathurst Street corridor or on Bloor, Muki has found success in raising funds for the organization that bears his name, the MukiBaum Accessibility Foundation.

On a good day, he can come home with $300 from Lawrence and Bathurst. Last year, he raised $35,000 in all, his mom, Nehama, said.

Those efforts, along with those of professional fundraisers, have paid off, as the foundation will celebrate its official launch on Jan. 23 at its new headquarters at 401 Magnetic Dr.

The 11,000-square-foot facility will house the foundation's "Academy for Life," explained Nehama, the driving force behind the organization.

It's aimed at clients who experience a broad range of developmental disabilities, including autism and physical restrictions. Geared to enhancing "access" and the development of "ability," the foundation offers clients therapy through music, dance, visual arts, yoga, sand play and sensory therapy.

The foundation, which was founded in 2011 and is unconnected to the similarly named Muki Baum Treatment Centres, aims at improving the quality of life both of clients and their family members. The therapies will help clients adapt to their surroundings, make them more confident, aid in their learning and increase their independence.

"We are all about [helping] people feel they have value and meaning to their lives," said Nehama, a social worker by profession with an expertise in special education and counselling.

The new facility will serve as the foundation's "hub," Nehama continued. It will include a morning program for toddlers, but most of its activities will be held on evenings and weekends, to make it even more family-friendly. The foundation's Academy for Life offers an outreach program for families based on a model that brings together parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents and others to do art, dance, yoga or other movement exercises.

A creativity program for teens 14 and up uses the arts, drama and dance "to build self-esteem" and physical development.

A third program is centred in the tech room. "Computers are a very good mediation between a person and their environment," Nehama said.

A fourth is aimed at toddlers from two to five, who are encouraged to participate in interactive storytelling and drama.

A speakers series provides information for families and a professional audience.

Nehama has been helping people with disabilities since even before her son was born. "I was known in Israel when I was pregnant. I was part of the committee that created cerebral palsy [CP] treatment in Israel," Nehama said.

Muki was born 54 years ago with CP and deafness. With the help of his admittedly aggressive mother, "Muki broke a lot of barriers in Israel."

Realizing education in his formative years was crucial, she had him enrolled in kindergarten when he was only two and a half. Because of his condition, she found herself at the school every 45 minutes in that first year to help him adapt.

At the time, she found that the Israeli education system could only meet Muki's needs up until high school. Foreseeing difficulties ahead, the family moved to Toronto, and Muki was enrolled in Northern Secondary School on Mount Pleasant Road.

"He had a fantastic time. It was a wonderful school," she said.

Along the way, the Baums adopted a seven-year-old boy, Mark, who has Down Syndrome, and over the years, they served as JF&CS foster parents for eight or nine youngsters, some for a year or two.

Up until 10 years ago, Muki lived on his own, but a spinal problem forced him to move back in with his parents.

Muki and Mark, 38, are great together, Nehama said.

"He takes care of Muki. Mark helps him with his [dinner] plates, and when Mark has a problem with his development, Muki helps him."

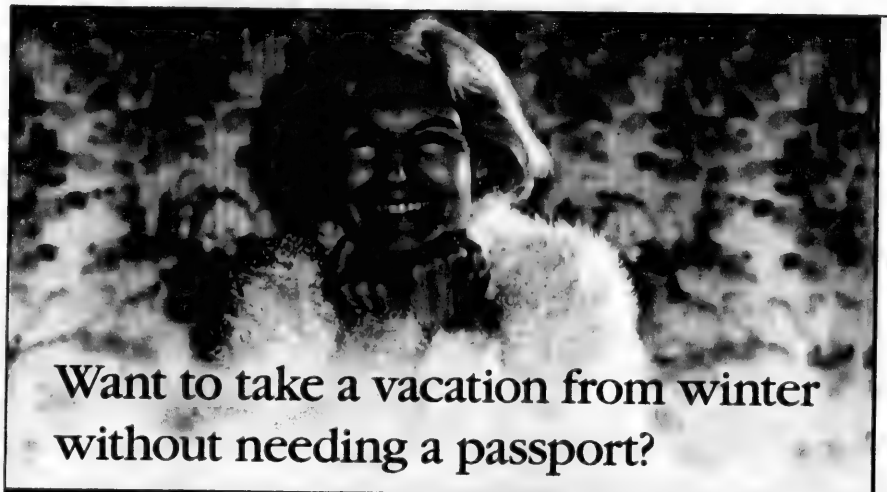
It became apparent to Nehama pretty early on that Muki had unique skills in art. At one point as a youngster, Muki designed a New Year's card on a typewriter, using numerous letters to draw "shana tova" on a sheet of paper.

"It was unbelievable. From then I knew he had talent," Nehama said.

In Toronto, he attended art classes at the Koffler Centre of the Arts, where he took to working with clay. He's also an adept painter. His clay art pieces are featured in the calendar that he sells at Lawrence Plaza.

The money he raises goes to help other people, said Einat Enbar, the foundation's director of marketing, fundraising and programs.

"It's tikkun olam," Nehama said. "It's paying it forward, helping people like him but who don't have his kind of support systems."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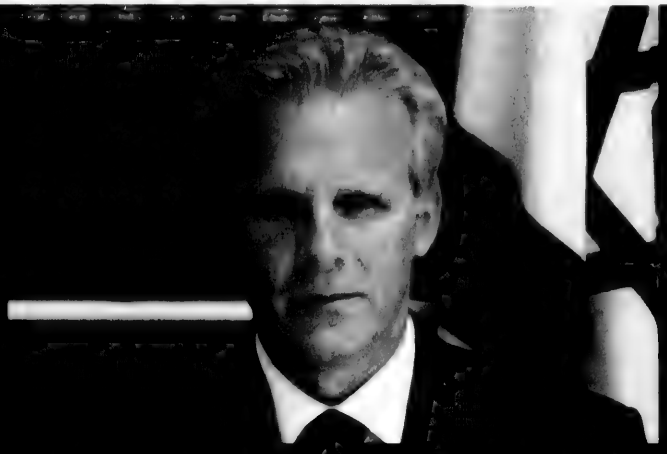

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Sharon recalled as a warrior and peacemaker

JTA

Jewish organizations in Canada and around the world remembered the late Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon as a military leader and a fighter for peace.

David Koschitzky, chair of Canada's Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), said: "This is a sad day for the State of Israel and world Jewry. Israel has lost a leader who captured the imagination of the country and led boldly in both war and peace. Sharon had the courage to make difficult decisions.

"As a general, he led Israel's daring counter-thrust against attacking forces in 1973. As defence minister, he led Israel's struggle against terrorism. As prime minister, he unilaterally disengaged Israel from Gaza and parts of the West Bank in the hope of achieving security for Israel, a courageous move considering how much he loved every inch of a country he helped build and defend.

"We salute prime minister Sharon, for his dedication to the land and people of Israel, for his statesmanship, and for his courage in taking bold steps in the search for stability and peace for Israel and its neighbours."

Sharon died Jan. 11 at 85 after eight years in a coma following a massive stroke.

"Ariel Sharon will be remembered for his dedication to the State of Israel and his years of service, both in the army and during his time in politics," said Frank Dimant, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada.

Ariel Sharon [*Wikimedia Commons*]

"As a general, Ariel Sharon earned the nickname 'Bulldozer' for his no-nonsense attitude and ability to command. He was one of the first to cross the Suez Canal during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, changing the balance of power and hastening the end of the fighting.

"During his time as prime minister, his greatest gamble, unilaterally withdrawing from Gaza, which he had hoped would help push forward the peace process as a sign of goodwill, resulted in the creation of a Hamas-run terrorist enclave. His miscalculation has resulted in almost daily rocket attacks on Israeli civilians in the south and emboldened those who seek to destroy the State of Israel. We regret his loss and look forward to a time when the lives of such men will not be coloured by conflict, but by peace and stability in the region."

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto also mourned Sharon's death. For Toronto's Leslie Gales, a past federation chair and the current chair of UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign, Sharon was a charismatic and charming man who, above all else, loved Israel and the Jewish People.

"I once sat beside him at an event in Israel organized by the Jewish Agency for Israel that welcomed the French who were making aliyah," Gales recalled.

"Most people probably don't realize what a charming and charismatic leader prime minister Sharon really was. I was fortunate to have a seat next to him, and to see the look on his face – one of sheer joy – as he welcomed these people was overwhelming. He was thrilled to welcome them as they started new and proud lives as Jews, at home, in Israel. It was clear from his face, and his words, that everything he did, he did with the best of intentions, and did for the State of Israel."

"He was a bold general on the battlefields of Sinai and a bold prime minister of his beloved State of Israel," said federation president and CEO Ted Sokolsky. "He will never be forgotten as an extraordinary and brave leader of the Jewish people."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper also paid tribute to Sharon.

"On behalf of all Canadians, Laureen and I offer our deepest condolences to the family and friends of former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon and to the Israeli people.

"A renowned military leader, Mr. Sharon pursued the security of Israel with unyielding determination that was recognized by friends and foes alike. He also played a central role in the Israeli government for several years, changing the political landscape through his leadership and vision.

"We join today with those mourning the loss of Ariel Sharon, one of the architects of modern-day Israel and one of the nation's staunchest defenders. Canada values its long-standing relationship with Israel, which is based on shared values, common interests and strong political, economic, cultural and social ties."

Jewish groups in the United States, also mourned with Jewish people everywhere.

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Connect with Joel today:
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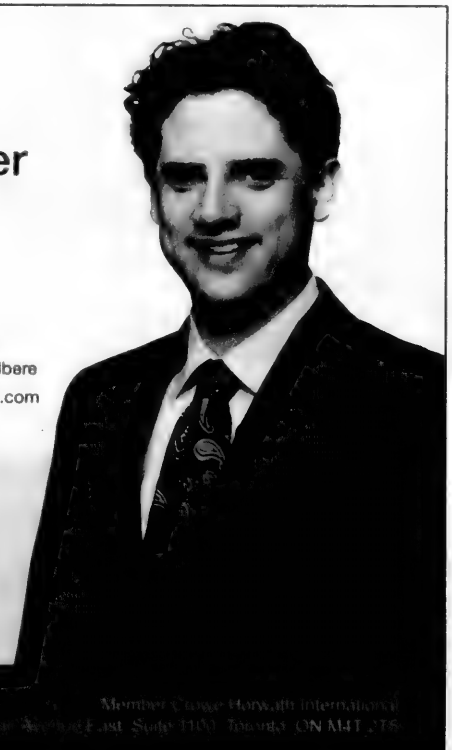

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Unaffiliated alternative shul turns 40

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

The unaffiliated Congregation Beth Haminyan has been around for four decades, and even some of its members can't believe it's lasted that long.

"It's astonishing that a small shul with no building or paid rabbi or chazzan has survived and thrived for 40 years," says president Elaine Posluns.

On Jan. 18, the congregation will celebrate its 40th anniversary at the Fireside Lounge at Baycrest Terrace.

"It will be a freilech event," says Posluns. "There will be music, singing, reminiscences and film critic Shlomo Schwartzberg will show film clips about Jews in the films."

The Minyan, as it's sometimes called, holds traditional Shabbat morning services at West Preparatory School in Upper Forest Hill. The members lead the davening and participate in the tfillot.

Considered a modern Orthodox/right-wing Conservative minyan, it has separate seating on Shabbat, but no mechitzah.

Five times a year, the congregation holds egalitarian services, and more than 300 members attend High Holiday services that are held at Bialik Hebrew Day School.

With an emphasis on continuing education, the members also present lunch and learn seminars and Chumash and Talmud classes throughout the year led by Rabbi Martin Lockshin, Rabbi David Aronson and members.

Elaine Posluns

The minyan was started 40 years ago when the late Ben Grossman, a longtime member of Beth Tzedec Congregation, gathered together a group of friends for a chavurah-style minyan at the synagogue that became known as the "back-room minyan." The following year, Ben and his wife Carrie made aliyah.

The minyan, with its participatory services, continued to expand. The congregation moved to several locations before settling at West Preparatory School.

Posluns told *The CJN* that the members of Beth Haminyan are very involved in community causes in Canada and Israel. "And we take our Jewish learning very seriously.

"Above all, we have built a community that is participatory and we support each other through good times and bad times. But we also want to extend our welcome to others in the community."

She adds that all their members count in their extended family.

"We know what it's like to be without a safety net in a large city like Toronto, so we have a chesed committee made up of volunteers to assist when help is needed, with shivahs, hospital and home visits, errands, transportation and meals.

"But the highlight for all of us is when we come together to observe and celebrate chagim, often the singing is inspiring and the ruach is palpable.

"After 40 years, Beth Haminyan Congregation is continuing to thrive and grow in members, keep traditions, start new ones and overcome challenges."

2 female suspects sought in murder

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Police in Hallandale Beach, Fla., say it's "only a matter of time before we get [a DNA] match," of two females suspected in the murders of Canadians Donny Pichosky and Rochelle Wise.

Police Chief Dwayne Flournoy, who has been leading the investigation since the Toronto couple was murdered in their Florida winter home last year, told reporters that although police have two DNA profiles they obtained from the crime scene, they don't yet have a match.

Pichosky, 71, and Wise, 66, were found dead Jan. 10, 2013. Flournoy said they were bound and apparently died of asphyxiation. The only thing that had been taken was Wise's wedding band, valued at $16,000.

A month after the murders, police released surveillance video of a mystery woman that showed her walking behind the couple's home around the time of the murder. The police have yet to identify her, but they released a forensic artist's sketch of the woman during the Jan. 8 press conference.

The chief said the murder victims lived in a tight-knit community of snowbirds.

"This is not a very transient community. Everyone knows everyone… With her not being identified and being around the home with two female DNA profiles being inside the crime scene, she is particularly someone we want to speak with," Flournoy said.

To read full story, go to cjnews.com

Yad Vashem

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority,
Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate,
The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
and its
National Chair, Fran Sonshine,
Executive Director, Yaron Ashkenazi,
Board of Directors and Board of Governors

extend their heartfelt and deepest sympathies on the passing of

Willie Moll z"l

to his wife, Rachel,
children, Marc and Michelle, Len, and Annette,
and grandchildren, Melissa, Amanda, Stephen, and Alexa.

Willie Moll was a Holocaust Survivor who endured great loss, yet lived a life that was marked by great virtue, strength, dignity, and courage.

Mr. Moll rebuilt his life after the Shoah guided by what he cherished most deeply: his family and the causes to which he generously contributed. Mr. Moll's belief in Holocaust education, evidenced through his generous support of the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, and the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, will leave an indelible mark for generations to come.

May the memory and enduring legacy left by Willie Moll be a source of comfort and inspiration to his family.

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Court approves de-funding of CAF

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

A Federal Court judge has upheld an assessment by the former minister of citizenship and immigration that the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) could reasonably be seen as supporting banned terrorist groups that are anti-Semitic.

The court ruled the minister at the time, Jason Kenney, was within his authority in deciding not to renew funding to the CAF to run an English language program for people new to the country.

The decision upholds a 2009 interim judgment that refused to order the ministry to reinstate funding pending a final outcome in the case.

In February 2009, Kenney became aware that the ministry was providing more than $1 million a year to CAF to run the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program.

Kenney asked his chief of staff to "ask the department to bring forward complete information on the contribution embarrassingly approved by our government for the radical and anti-Semitic Canadian Arab Federation," the court recounted.

CAF had asked the court to review the minister's decision to cease funding, arguing it was owed a duty of procedural fairness, that the minister was biased against it, that its right to free expression was abridged by the decision and that the minister's decision was unreasonable.

The court rejected most of the CAF's positions.

The court cited a series of events and statements by CAF officials that were raised by the minister as grounds for his decision:

- a flyer circulated by CAF President Kaled Mouammar, attacking former interim Liberal leader Bob Rae because of his wife's involvement in the Jewish community;
- CAF-organized rallies supporting Hamas and Hezbollah that equated Israelis to Nazis and which included a sign threatening to kill a Jewish child;
- CAF participation in a Cairo conference attended by delegates from Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations;
- Internet links to Hamas websites that showed Hamas operatives training;
- honouring Zafar Bangash, who referred to Canadians as infidels; and
- sponsoring an essay contest on the "ethnic cleansing" of Palestine, which the minister took as an allegation that Jewish people were engaged in genocide and which made the contest anti-Semitic.

Paul Calandra, parliamentary secretary to the prime minister, issued a statement saying the court ruling was a victory for common sense:

"Our government's position is clear:

Jason Kenney

organizations that appear to promote hatred, including anti-Semitism, or excuse violence and terrorism do not have the right, and should not expect, to receive tax dollars to deliver government services."

Jewish groups applauded the ruling.

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), said, "We commend the court for its decision. Given CAF's clear record of glorifying terror groups and spewing hateful rhetoric, Minister Kenney was right to deny it public funding. It's particularly disturbing to think that an organization that holds views so diametrically opposed to Canada's values was given a mandate to integrate new Canadians."

"The court documents clearly point to evidence that the [CAF] is anti-Semitic and promoting extremist views that are a threat to Canada," said Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

"Newcomers to this country should be educated about Canadian values of respect and human rights, and not be inspired to form anti-Semitic and hateful opinions. The government of Canada cannot be complicit in this effort, and therefore did the right thing by withdrawing funds from the group... We recommend an additional review by the Canada Revenue Agency of this organization's charitable status," he added.

"The CAFs special brand of anti-Semitic and pro-terror propaganda has only served to hinder the multi-pronged fight to safeguard the Canadian public from the ever-growing problem of radicalization and extremism, both at home and abroad," B'nai Brith Canada said in a statement.

In a statement, CAF president Farid Ayad said that his group "is in the process of appealing the decision and will not make any public statements regarding the decision for the duration of this process."

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Don't return to an intolerant Quebec: Goldbloom

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — As Quebec enters another chapter in the debate over the government's proposed values charter, a former Liberal cabinet minister and interfaith dialogue pioneer pleads for the province not to regress to the intolerance of its past.

Ninety-year-old Victor Goldbloom appears in one of two short French-language videos posted earlier this month on YouTube by Christian Jewish Dialogue of Montreal (CJDM).

Over his long life, Goldbloom says he has seen Quebec evolve to "become [an] open and generous and welcoming" society from one of "barriers, constraints and discrimination."

"I would not want to return to the years of constraint that I knew during my youth," he states.

The video, titled *Etre québécois, qu'est-ce que ça veut dire? (What does it mean to be Québécois?)* is a companion to the CJDM's 3-1/2-minute video *Nous sommes québécois*, which features individuals representing a variety of origins, religions and ages affirming their Quebec identity and belief that fundamental freedoms are a cornerstone of Quebec society.

Public hearings on Bill 60, the proposed charter, were slated to begin Jan. 14.

Goldbloom, a doctor by profession, was the first Jewish Quebec cabinet minister in the 1970s and the federal Commissioner of Official Languages in the 1990s. He was among the founders of CJDM in 1971 and was president of Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region.

In answer to the video title's question, Goldbloom quotes the late René Lévesque as saying, "essentially, 'whoever wants to be a Quebecer is one.'"

The Parti Québécois founder and leader of its first government, who died in 1987, is today revered by many as the spiritual father of the sovereigntist movement.

"I am Victor Goldbloom. I am of the Jewish faith. I am Québécois," he concludes.

The longer video opens with a reciting of the individual liberties protected by the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, including that of conscience, religion, opinion and expression.

Marie-Claude Tremblay, who identifies herself as Jewish, appears in the video *Nous sommes québécois*.

Fifteen people with names as diverse as Hersimar Singh, Fa Xiang, Shaheen Ashraf, Avrum Dunsky and Marie-Claude Tremblay introduce themselves as "the voices and faces" of Quebecers.

They include a doctor, professor, entrepreneur, artist, student and housewife with faiths ranging from Muslim and Buddhist to Jewish and Baptist, even agnostic and atheist.

To them, Quebec values are respect, inclusiveness, and justice.

The videos were posted just before Christmas, around the same time the PQ released a pamphlet to members called *Project de loi 60: Charte des valeurs/Des réponses aux questions de votre famille pour les partys des fêtes! (Bill 60: charter of values/ Answers to your family's questions during the holiday parties!)*.

It was intended as a handbook on how to answer troublesome points raised by skeptical relatives about the bill, which was tabled in November.

By Jan. 7 when the CJDM videos were officially launched – one week before the start of the public hearings – *Nous sommes québécois* had had 2,100 views and the Goldbloom followup more than 1,600.

In its brief to the National Assembly committee conducting the Bill 60 hearings, CJDM calls for "a Quebec that is open and welcoming and where Quebecers are free to live their spirituality, whatever form it may take, in their own way."

It expresses concern that the government, in its effort to ensure the religious neutrality of the state, is "trying to silence religions and make them invisible."

CJDM emphasizes that religion should remain an important part of the lives of Quebecers, "inspiring them to work toward peace, social justice and openness towards others.

"These are positive values that should be welcomed in public life, not confined to the private sphere."

CJDM agrees with state neutrality and that employees representing public authority "should set aside [their] religious beliefs in carrying out [their] functions," but it insists that "neutrality and objectivity are in the heart and mind, and in the training received, and not in clothing or religious symbols."

The videos can be viewed at cjnews.com

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Specific skills exemplified by the successful candidate will include:

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- Ability to communicate and work with teachers whose first language is Hebrew
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UJA Federation

Please respond electronically, in confidence, with a letter of introduction, resume and references to hr@bialik.ca. Put "Jewish Studies Search Committee" in the subject line.

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- Ability to collaborate within a senior administrative team and with an active board of directors
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Sincere condolences to the Moll family - he will be greatly missed.
May his memory be a blessing.
JEWISH PARTISAN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Baird names pro-Israel lawyer as next ambassador

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

A staunch supporter of Israel and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – and a strong critic of Arab leadership and the United Nations – has been named Canada's next ambassador to the Jewish state.

In a move few expected, Toronto lawyer Vivian Bercovici was named to the post Jan. 8 by Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird. She replaces Paul Hunt, who had held the post from 2011 until this past June. She will not represent Canada to the Palestinian Authority.

In Ottawa, Baird praised the new appointee as "smart and capable and [who] will be able to represent this government well."

The naming of Bercovici, a non-diplomat, to the sensitive post was seen by many as squaring with the Conservative government's well-known support for Israel.

"It won't be a huge shock to anyone that Canada is a strong supporter of Israel," Baird replied to a question about Bercovici's perceived bias against the Palestinian leadership.

In a statement announcing the posting, Baird noted that "having lived in Israel and written extensively on the region, Ms. Bercovici has an excellent understanding of the challenges facing the country and deep insight into the opportunities provided by the strong links between our two countries."

Bercovici, a partner in the Toronto firm of Dickinson Wright, studied at Hebrew University in the early 1980s and was an adjunct law professor at the University of Toronto.

She also wrote a monthly column for the *Toronto Star* that was unabashedly pro-Israel and often pointed out human rights abuses in the Arab and Palestinian world.

At Wednesday's announcement, Bercovici read from a prepared statement and took no questions from reporters. *The CJN*'s request for an interview was denied.

"My interest in Israel and the region goes back a long way," Bercovici told reporters. "Now is a very important time in the region, as important as ever, and I'm very honoured to be appointed to take on this role. I know that this government's principled stands on various fronts is warmly welcomed and appreciated by both the Israeli government and the Israeli people.

"Canada supports Israel's right to exist in peace and security. Canada stands firm in the international fight against anti-Semitism, including raising awareness of the Holocaust," she said.

"And Canada recognizes the importance of building inclusive and stable societies underpinned by democracy, freedom and human rights and the rule of law."

Reportedly, Ottawa's first choice, former chief of defence staff Walt Natynczyk, turned down the job to head the Canadian Space Agency.

It's not the first time a non-diplomat and a Jew was named ambassador to Israel. Jean Chrétien appointed Liberal MP David Berger to the job, and Brian Mulroney named his former chief of staff, Norman Spector.

Vivian Bercovici and John Baird

Bercovici "is not responsible for relations with the PA and will have no problem representing Canada in Israel," Spector told *The CJN* in an email, though that "could be a problem if there's a change in government" in Israel.

Her "inexperience in diplomacy [is] more than made up for by familiarity with the country to which she is being posted and other career accomplishments," said Spector, who served as ambassador to Israel from 1992 to 1995 and was the first Jewish Canadian to hold the post.

"It's good to see being Jewish [is] no longer the taboo for such an appointment that it used to be in Canada, the U.S. and [most recently] the U.K.," he stated.

According to her firm's website, Bercovici's practice focuses on insurance regulatory matters, corporate governance, risk management, libel and slander, privacy, aboriginal law, and public policy and legislative advice.

She joined the Dominion of Canada General Insurance Company as a legal executive in 1998 and was promoted to vice-president, general counsel and corporate secretary, a position she held until 2006.

Since 2007, she has served as a chief federal negotiator on various claims made by First Nations against Canada.

In March, she was appointed to the board of directors of CBC/Radio-Canada for a five-year term, and was a director of the Canadian Journalism Foundation from 2004 to 2009.

Her sole government experience appears to have been as senior policy adviser to former Ontario finance minister Ernie Eves from 1995 to 1997.

A mother of two, Bercovici graduated from York University with a BA in English and political science in 1984, earned a diploma from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1985, and graduated in law from the University of Toronto in 1988. She was called to Ontario's bar in 1990.

Her appointment came as Prime Minister Stephen Harper is finalizing his trip to the Middle East later this month. Bercovici, whose appointment is effective immediately, is expected to be part of the delegation accompanying Harper.

Shimon Fogel and a majority of Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs' (CIJA) board will also accompany Harper, as will several leaders of B'nai Brith Canada.

In her *Star* columns, she has praised Netanyahu and lashed out against Hamas, the Palestinian leadership and the UN. A sampling:

- The Palestinian Authority and Hamas have a "collective ideological commitment to the total destruction of the state of Israel, which they regard as a blasphemous blight on the Arab and Muslim worlds."
- "It really doesn't matter to [Palestinians] who wins and leads in Israel. There is no willing negotiator on the Palestinian side."
- Western powers "hold on to a misguided fantasy of the Middle East." U.S. President Barack Obama has been "weak" on the Middle East while he "fawned" over Iran.

In a statement, CIJA chair David Koschitzky said, "We offer our warm congratulations to Ambassador Bercovici and are confident she will serve Canada with distinction and honour.

"Ambassador Bercovici is articulate, knowledgeable, and brings a wealth of experience in law and academia. She is well-poised to take the Canada-Israel relationship to the next level for the benefit of both countries, particularly in the areas of trade, energy, science and technology."

Reactions from other Jewish organizations were solicited, but not received.

Israel's new diplomacy

From the Reut Institute

Daphna Kaufman

For the Jewish State, the need to "punch above our weight" diplomatically is not new. A relatively small nation contending with vastly complex challenges, the ability to achieve outsize influence in our global engagement has been crucial to our very survival.

Even when the modern State of Israel was only an idea, Theodor Herzl managed to globally leverage a small and budding movement, which was granted audience with leaders and dignitaries from the Ottoman sultan to the pope.

Upon the founding of the state, scant official diplomatic resources were creatively fortified and amplified. When the foreign ministry of the newly founded modern state first officially opened its doors in May 1948, it boasted just three official employees. Prominent public figures as well as Zionist activists in Diaspora communities were mobilized to represent Israel in some of the most strategic venues to compensate for its limited official diplomatic capacity.

The capacities of the State of Israel have grown immeasurably over time, but so has the sheer complexity of the global environment in which it operates.

Today, we need a vast overhaul of the Jewish state's diplomacy. In fact, a number of developments over recent decades – in Israel and throughout the world – have resulted in change so dramatic that the word "diplomacy" no longer suffices.

These developments have led to a virtual explosion in the numbers and diversity of actors populating an increasingly crowded global stage. A growing number of countries are flexing their political and economic muscle. Non-governmental organizations – from non-profits to corporations – exercise vast influence on global agendas. Transnational organizations, such as NATO, the OECD and the UN, increasingly influence our lives. Publics, en masse, have shown their power, most recently in the massive unrest across the Middle East. And even individuals operating alone, empowered by ever-accessible technology and social networking tools, are able to exert previously unimaginable influence in altering the course of international events.

This dynamic and disorderly reality overwhelms Israel's conventional diplomacy, which lacks the resources and the capacity to effectively pursue the state's interests. Today, Israel needs a global engagement strategy that will harness the diversity and reach of the most potent network in the modern history of the Jewish People.

It's beyond the capacity of the state to build and maintain the necessary quantity and quality of relationships. It's eminently within the reach of a broad network that includes Israeli society and its institutions (for example hospitals, universities and museums); the professionals, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, and volunteers in Jewish communities around the world; and a vibrant Israeli Diaspora that's establishing itself as an influential force in local societies and on Israel.

A global engagement strategy is not a one-way street. Harnessing Israeli society and Jewish communities worldwide to build deep, value- and values-based relationships will influence our very character as well as the way we – the Jewish People – relate to each other. Beyond charting a path for positioning Israel globally, this course may be critical to shape the future of our people.

Who's Orthodox now?

From the Bimah

Rabbi Joe Kanofsky

The truth is that, for better or worse, pretty much all of us are orthodox these days. I know that comes as disappointing news to many, if not most. Still, that's the way it is.

My Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines "orthodox" as "right in opinion," and gives a derivation of the word from two Greek roots: *orthos*, meaning "straight or right" (think of "orthodontia") and *doxos*, meaning "belief or opinion."

So stop thinking for a moment about black hats, beards and protests in Israel. The truth is that, in all probability, you and most everyone you know are in fact orthodox. I find that if I talk long enough with almost any Jew, with very few exceptions, he or she will eventually admit that he or she feels that they're really in the right, and mostly everyone else is missing the boat. Each Jew thinks that he or she has the "straight or right belief or opinion," and that's called "orthodox," according to my OED.

I know what you're thinking. Orthodox *really* means those deeply pious, fervently observant, very religious Jews (usually defined as the entire spectrum to the right of me). Yet if you listen closely to the way people name themselves, most Jews you might call "Orthodox" don't self-identify as such. "Frum," "shomer Shabbos," "haimish," "Torah-true," "dati," and "ehrlich" are more common internal identifiers, much more so than "Orthodox," which was originally invented as a derogatory epithet by 19th-century German Reformers. But that isn't what we're talking about here.

Nor are we talking about the phenomenon of "open Orthodoxy," which has garnered a lot of press recently. Never mind the subtle yet clearly implicit dismissal of the rest of the Orthodox world as "closed," which is a classic straw man argument and a common feint in Jewish polemics. Never mind that most of the rest of the Orthodox world is uncomfortable with "OO" – that deserves a column all its own, if there's anything left to say after the blogosphere has taken up all the oxygen in the room. However, I once saw a shul that self-identified as "open haredi" – now *that* is an interesting proposition.

One of the plagues of contemporary Judaism is our orthodoxy – not big-O Orthodoxy, the common shorthand for Torah-observant Judaism. To the contrary, that, in all probability, is our link to the Jewish future as surely as it's our link to the Jewish past (read the demographic studies if you don't believe me).

No, I'm talking about the triumphalism of each of our own little orthodoxies, the notion that only I have it right, and thus have nothing to learn from the experience or insight of others.

It's very tempting to wrap ourselves in a cloak of self-righteous confidence in the "rightness" of our convictions and our views. I know you think that I'm talking about everybody else – if only that were the case. I know people of just about every denominational and institutional affiliation who are afflicted to some degree or another. Paradoxically, it's quite often those who profess the most "openness" and pluralism who are in fact the most closed to any view but their own.

The talmudic tradition gives us ample evidence of how to hold fast to one's own views and at the same time be able to hear someone else's argument, and as a result emerge a wiser, more fully human, and perhaps even more well-informed person and Jew. It's a model from which we can learn a great deal.

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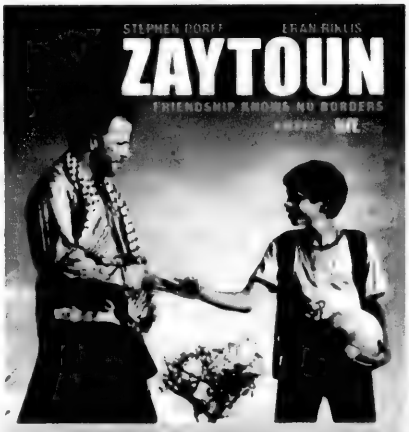

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ZAYTOUN

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Battle of the bands

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

While the recent vote by the American Studies Association to boycott Israel – and the resulting backlash – have been making headlines, another boycott by musicians and artists has been long simmering and is at least as intriguing. Today, a look at the fascinating fight to convince some of the biggest names in show business to visit – or boycott – Israel.

One of the most vocal supporters of a boycott is Roger Waters, former front man of the English rock band, Pink Floyd. "I write to you now, my brothers and sisters in the family of Rock and Roll, to ask you to join with me, and thousands of other artists around the world, to declare a cultural boycott on Israel." **[http://bit.ly/boycott1]**

Some musicians agree: Annie Lennox, Stevie Wonder, Mos Def, Faithless, Santana, Snoop Dogg and Brian Eno. **[bit.ly/boycott2]**

Others have performed in Israel: Lady Gaga, Black Eyed Peas, Alanis Morissette, Alicia Keys, Paul McCartney, Leonard Cohen and Elton John, who said, "Musicians spread love and peace, and bring people together. That's what we do. We don't cherry-pick our conscience." **[bit.ly/boycott11]**

The Pixies, an American alternative rock band, had been scheduled to perform in Tel Aviv in June 2010. They cancelled a week after the Israeli raid on the Mavi Marmara, the Turkish ship bound for Gaza, that left nine activists dead. "The decision was not reached easily," the band said. "We can only hope for better days, in which we will finally present the long-awaited visit of the Pixies in Israel." **[bit.ly/boycott3]**

Apparently those better days are almost here, as the Pixies have announced they will play in Israel this June.

As soon as artists reveal their intention to perform in Israel, online appeals appear to convince them otherwise:

- To The Pixies: "Stay on the right side of history and say no to Israeli apartheid." **[bit.ly/boycott4]**
- To Alicia Keys: "Don't Play Apartheid Israel on July 4, 2013 in Tel Aviv." **[bit.ly/boycott5]**
- To Cirque du Soleil: "No Sunshine in Apartheid. Don't jump thru Israel's hoops." **[bit.ly/boycott7]**

Behind the scenes, organizations have sprung up to lobby musicians to either side of the divide.

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel states that "virtually all Israeli cultural institutions, unless proven otherwise, are complicit in maintaining the Israeli occupation and denial of basic Palestinian rights, whether through their silence or actual involvement in justifying, whitewashing or otherwise deliberately diverting attention from Israel's violations of international law and human rights." **[bit.ly/boycott6]**

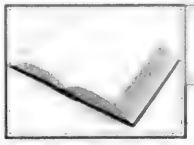
Meanwhile, the Creative Community for Peace presents an online petition with a message that starts, "Dear Artist, We, the undersigned, wholeheartedly support your upcoming tour in Israel and your dedication to your fans across the globe…" There's a "celebrity sightings" page: John Malkovich at Ben-Gurion airport, Guy Ritchie with Israeli President Shimon Peres, Claire Danes at the Kotel, etc. And a page offering assistance to artists considering touring the country. **[bit.ly/boycott8]**

The decision about performing in Israel has cut through the musical community, with colleagues – and even family members – taking opposite stands. Citing "intimidation, humiliation or much worse on Palestinian civilians," Elvis Costello cancelled two performances in Israel in May 2010. **[bit.ly/boycott9]** Costello is married to Diana Krall who performed in Ra'anana two months later. **[bit.ly/boycott10]**

highway@rogers.com

Sephardi-Ashkenazi unity inspires

Rabbi Shalom Spira



Rabbinic Reflections

In his commentary to this week's parashah, Rashi cites the *Mechilta* (Exodus 19:2) that the Jewish People was united at Mount Sinai like one person with a single heart.

This inspiring scene is experienced in many synagogues today where Sephardim and Ashkenazim harmoniously pray together. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (*Iggerot Mosheh, Orach Chaim* 4:33) encourages such multi-ethnic unity, invoking the verse, "I am a friend to all those who fear You and to those whose observe Your commandments" (Psalms 119:63). Pursuant to the fourth chapter of Pesachim, where the Talmud explains how to manage divergent customs among Jews, Rabbi Feinstein explains (in this responsum as well as others) that visitors must conform to the established protocol of the synagogue in all publicly observed conduct. Thus, for example, I follow the Moroccan customs of my synagogue regarding the audibly chanted prayers, whereas I recite the private silent Amidah following my personal Ashkenazi heritage.

Similarly, Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehudah Berlin (*Teshuvot Meshiv Davar* 3:10) envisages the diversity of synagogue liturgy as being subsumed under the rubric of the following talmudic exposition (Pesachim 53b): "'And your people are all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever,' (Isaiah 60:21) – whether they said to light [a candle before sunset on Yom Kippur eve] or whether they said not to light, they both intended for the same goal." Rashi explains that the two contradictory customs are both oriented toward family separation, one of the five mandatory afflictions, on Yom Kippur. So, too, writes Rabbi Berlin: both the Sephardi and Ashkenazi liturgies are righteous and pleasing to Heaven.

The unity experienced by Jewry at Sinai, so palpable in our cosmopolitan synagogues, should not only move us Jews, but should also beneficially influence humanity. After all, the Talmud (Zevachim 116a), in expounding upon Psalm 29, reports that all the nations of the world heard the Revelation at Sinai. A parallel description is provided by the *Shofarot* blessing of Musaf for Rosh Hashanah. To that effect, I personally find it instructive how verse 6 of that psalm reads, "And He caused Lebanon and Syria to dance like a calf." Rashi comments that the Lebanese/Syrian forests and mountains were trembling with excitement when they heard the giving of the Torah.

Accordingly, given the present civil war afflicting Syria, which has also affected Lebanon, it seems to me that the time has arrived for Lebanon and Syria to truly "dance like a calf," much as they did many millennia ago.

Namely, I invite the leaders of the warring sides to reflect as a matter of conscience on the unity that was experienced by Jewry at Sinai. The Syrian government should consider graciously negotiating a diplomatic solution with its opponents.

All it needs for inspiration is to look south of the border and watch with amazement how Sephardim and Ashkenazim pray together in unity. For as both Sephardim and Ashkenazim recite in the High Holiday liturgy, "let them all become a united bundle to fulfil Your will with a full heart."

Rabbi Shalom Spira is spiritual leader of Congregation Kol Yehouda in Cote St. Luc, Que.

Ariel Sharon: man of action

David Horovitz
The Times of Israel

Analysis

It's no accident that they called him 'The Bulldozer.' As a soldier and as a politician, Ariel Sharon was a man of action. Usually for better, sometimes for worse, he was a man who got things done.

Abducting Jordanian soldiers in the 1950s. Crossing the Suez Canal and never allowing himself to be rocked backward in the desperate chaos of 1973. Invading Lebanon beyond the prime ministerial mandate in 1982. Building settlements. Building homes for Soviet immigrants. Dismantling settlements and departing Gaza. And, toward the end, gearing up to do what might need to be done to thwart Iran, and preparing to try to determine Israel's West Bank borders.

If, early in life, the military man of action was impulsive and hard to restrain, Sharon the prime minister was more polished and subtle. No longer a bulldozer, but still, critically, proactive.

And that was the secret of his astounding late-life popularity among Israelis. He had appalled the left by invading Lebanon. He had horrified the right by dismantling the entire settlement enterprise in Gaza, and he had given signs that he might countenance a far-reaching West Bank withdrawal too, if it could be done while maintaining what he deemed Israel's vital security needs. And others had been alienated by the never-proven corruption allegations that swirled around him.

Yet he became a beloved prime minister, a trusted prime minister, a repeatedly electable prime minister, because of that restless determination *to act* to protect this country and its people. The figure once beyond the pale – stripped of his beloved defence minister's job for failing to anticipate and prevent the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre in Lebanon – had metamorphosed into Israel's indefatigable political superman. He was so much larger than life that almost everybody believed him when he instantly returned from the first, minor stroke, assuring us that it was nothing… and no matter that he was 77 and extremely overweight.

It is Sharon the indomitable man of action that so many Israelis feel distraught to have lost now – or, more accurately, eight years ago. He was, late in life, likable and gracious and considerate; he had always been rapier smart and spectacularly courageous. But it is the loss of Sharon's proactive qualities that is most being mourned, because it is these qualities that are in shortest supply among those he has left behind.

He wasn't always right, not even in those last, super-productive prime ministerial years. Unilateralism, most notably, lies buried under the rubble of the rockets that follow Israel when it leaves enemy territory without solid partnerships.

But he was always striding ahead: he got on with the business of leading Israel – pulled out his maps and his plans, charted his course, galvanized others. He exuded competence. He broadcast a spectacularly comforting – if not always justified – certainty that his way was the correct way, and that if Israel fell into line behind him, everything would turn out fine. While all around was hesitation, Ariel Sharon was moving forward.

This is a lousy region. It's full of bloodshed and cynicism and religious extremism. The international community has largely had enough of it. Most of the world understandably prefers to run rather than get sucked into fixing it. And if Israel can be misrepresented as a source, even *the* source, of the Middle East's intractable awfulness, well, that assuages the guilt a little.

So Iran, outrageously, is on the cusp of becoming a nuclear threshold state, its rapacious ideological and territorial ambitions tolerated, its open hostility to Israel indulged, because the alternative is just so awkward and demanding. So Syrian President Bashar Assad gets to survive and keep on massacring his people, while a once-admirable opposition becomes increasingly radical. And the Palestinian conflict lingers on, the relative moderates too scared to defy the single-minded extremists.

Ariel Sharon in 2005 [*Israel Sun photo*]

And our Israeli leaders, when they aren't bickering among themselves or seeking to outmanoeuvre each other, complain bitterly and plaintively and protractedly about the unfairness of it all – the terrible international deals with Iran, the lack of will over Syria, the exaggerated empathy for the intransigent Palestinians. Defensive, reactive, they try to muddle through, to minimize the damage, to find the least bad of the options and the courses that others are imposing upon them.

Whereas Sharon would have said two things: First, "Chevre, look how far we've come." And, second, "Chevre, this is what we're going to do now. Come on. To work."

TimesofIsrael.com

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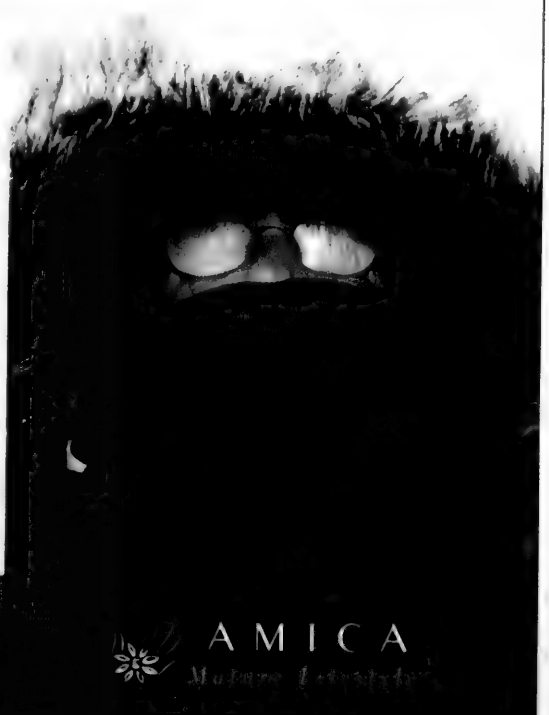

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'One of greatest generals IDF had ever known'

Continued from page 1

He continued: "Arik, you were a rare man. You turned the impossible into great opportunities. Rest in peace, great leader."

Sharon and current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not always agree with each other, Netanyahu admitted during his eulogy, but they served in each other's governments and supported each other "for Israel's sake," he said.

Netanyahu called Sharon "one of the greatest generals that the Jewish People and the Israel Defence Forces had ever known."

Shimon "Kacha" Kahaner, who fought alongside Sharon in the fabled Unit 101 in the 1950s, called Sharon, "my commander, teacher and rabbi.

"Arik's strength came from his love of the land, and from what the land gave him. It was a two-way relationship," Kahaner recalled.

Ze'ev "Zambish" Hever, a settler leader and close friend, called Sharon a "hero of Israel," and called his last two years in office, referring to the expulsion from Gaza settlements, "painful and difficult."

"The questions go unanswered. But as you commanded, we will not give up. We will not give up," he said.

Some 1,000 guests attended the public funeral, including Knesset members, cabinet ministers, the military leadership, and 21 delegations from other countries.

Sharon's casket was taken to the Latrun Armored Corps Memorial Site and Museum, where 15 IDF major generals saluted the late military and political leader.

The convoy then continued to Sharon's Sycamore Ranch in the Negev for a private funeral attended by family and close friends, after which Sharon was to be buried next to his wife, Lily.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Ariel Sharon's grave at Sycamore Ranch
[Kobi Gideon/GPO photo]

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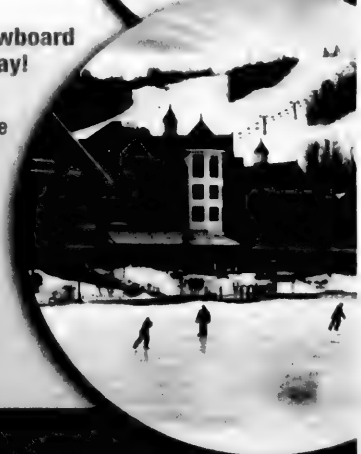

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Is anti-Semitic French comic bringing his act to Canada?

Nazi hunter slams Dieudonné's latest show

Elias Levy
Staff Reporter

"Dieudonné is not a humourist, but a fierce anti-Semite and a propagator of hate," noted French historian and Nazi hunter Serge Klarsfeld says.

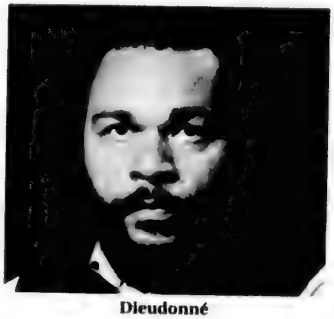
Klarsfeld spoke to *The CJN* last week about the controversial Franco-Camaroon humourist, whose anti-Semitic antics have made headlines recently, as French Interior Minister Manuel Valls took legal measures to ban the comic's new, openly anti-Semitic live show, *Le Mur* (*The Wall*) which he was to perform in some 20 French cities over the next few weeks.

Klarsfeld urged his fellow Frenchmen to demonstrate against Dieudonné's latest show, and the appeal seems to have struck a chord, because *Le Mur* was cancelled by the prefects of several of the cities involved.

"Dieudonné's despicable behaviour shows the virulence of his anti-Semitism and of certain forms of Judeophobia, notably in his mocking the Holocaust, an appalling tragedy that had an important place in Fench and European history," Klarsfeld said in an interview from his home in Paris.

"You can't make fun with impunity of the innocent Jewish victims who were exterminated in the Nazi gas chambers, but Dieudonné says he regrets that [the gas chambers] are no longer running at full capacity," Klarsfeld added.

"I stepped into the breach, because you can't accept in a democracy that a man like Dieudonné, with his offensive show and his multiple convictions for inciting racial hatred… can be on tour in 22 cities in France



Dieudonné

to present a nauseatingly anti-Semitic show that will bring him a lot of money and reinforce the anti-Semitism of those who attend the gruesome performance. [His] shows have only one objective: to break the Jew."

Asked about the how the French justice system is handling the issue, Klarsfeld said, "I think the magistrates already involved in this affair are referring it to the Conseil d'État, the highest administrative court in France… For the moment, one thing is certain – *Le Mur* will not be presented in France and Dieudonné has been silenced. He will be stopped. But if he can't do the show in France, he will present it in other countries, maybe in Canada."

Dieudonné's last attempt to perform in Quebec in 2012 was cancelled at the last minute after the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs protested to the owners of the Montreal theatre where he was scheduled to appear.

"I am delighted that Quebecers showed such good judgment," Klarsfeld said.

There are many who think Dieudonné's latest show shouldn't be banned, because it would be a flagrant attack on free expression and because he would portray himself as a martyr fighting the Jewish, Zionist lobby, but Klarsfeld strongly refuted this argument.

"Everyone knows that Dieudonné is an anti-Jew disguised as an anti-Zionist. Those who defend him in the name of freedom of expression… do so because Dieudonné attacks the Jews so ferociously," he said.

"But let's not kid ourselves. In Dieudonné's case, there is no attack against freedom of expression, because his is clearly a criminal opinion, and… because inciting racial hatred or the denial of a crime against humanity falls under the section of French law forbidding incitement to racial hatred. Thus, if Dieudonné's words are against the law, freedom of expression is no longer in question."

Klarsfeld said the very controversial rally gesture known as the "Quenelle" – an inverted Nazi salute popularized by Dieudonné in his shows that has been adopted by many French athletes and young people – is not an "anti-system" gesture, but is basically anti-Semitic.

Klarsfeld said Dieudonné cynically exploits the economic crisis in France to make Jews the scapegoats who, in the comic's opinion, are responsible for the country's economic and social evils, echoing the atmosphere in France in the 1930s and '40s.

"Politicians on the extreme right and a demagogue like Dieudonné shamelessly manipulate those most affected by the economic crisis, primarily the young immigrant Muslims and blacks living in the suburbs… by hammering at them that the only ones responsible for their existential economic problems are the Jews. The anti-Semitic stereotypes in vogue in the '30s and '40s are rebounding with force today in French society."

Dieudonné's supporters – those who go to his shows – are "radical, fiercely anti-Zionist followers of Islam," Klarsfeld said.

"All the confirmed 'Dieudonnistes' have a common denominator: they are anti-Israel and anti-Jew. They are convinced that the Jewish multimillionaires and powerful Jewish financial leaders are in a plot against the French working classes and the whole world. Their world vision is repugnant and frightening."

Read the full French version of this article at cjnews.com.

Comedian cancels tour

JTA

PARIS — Amid an investigation into his finances and bans on his shows because of anti-Semitic content, French comedian Dieudonné M'bala M'bala said he's abandoning his nationwide tour.

Dieudonné made the announcement Jan. 11 at a news conference in which he appeared dressed in traditional West African garb.

"Today, a page is turned and I am switching to other things," the comedian said in reference to his new show, *The Wall*, which he was supposed to take on tour beginning Jan. 9. The tour ground to a halt after France's highest court upheld a ban on the show imposed by several municipalities.

His announcement also followed reports that French authorities suspect he is hiding revenues to avoid paying $89,000 in fines that have been imposed on him for inciting racial hatred against Jews, an offence for which he has been convicted seven times.

Legally speaking, Dieudonné is penniless and unable to pay the debts, yet his shows at the Main D'Or theatre in Paris are sold out, *RTL* reported.

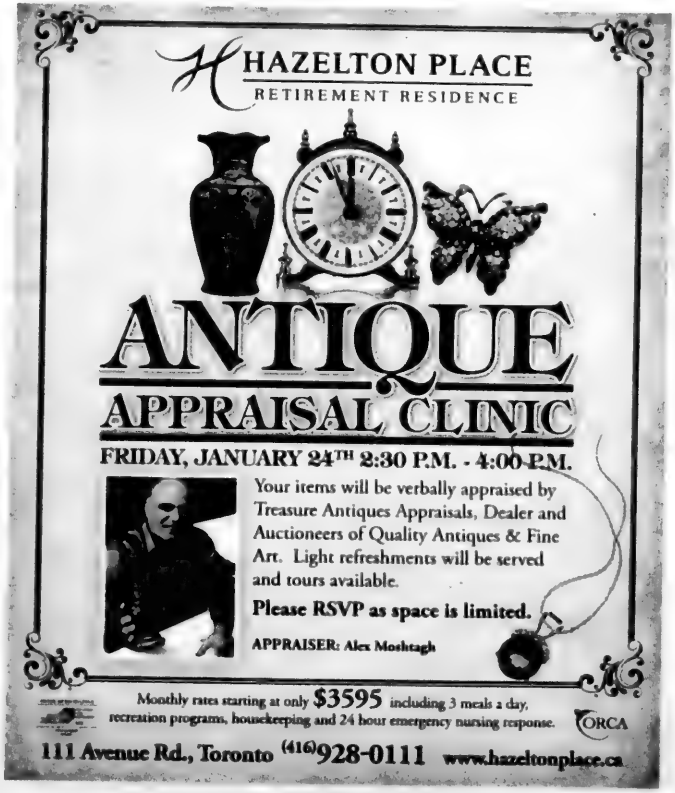
French authorities reportedly suspect that he colluded with associates to give the impression of bankruptcy. In addition, French Interior Minister Manuel Valls was filmed saying on Jan. 7 that Dieudonné "was financed by Iran, after all."

Dieudonné told reporters, "As we are living in a state with laws, of course one needs to conform to the law." He spoke in a serious tone and without the false expressions of regret for spreading anti-Semitic ideas that have become his trademark in past appearances.

"In my work as a humourist, I have tried to push the boundaries of the public debate and of laughter, and the judiciary has expressed its position on this," he said in reference to a ruling on Jan. 9 by France's highest court that banned him from performing in the western city of Nantes.

"I have angered many people and I will continue to do so, through laughter."

Despite his seven convictions for inciting racial hatred against Jews, Dieudonné said, "Clearly, I am not a Nazi. I'm not an anti-Semite."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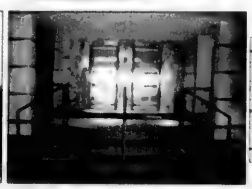

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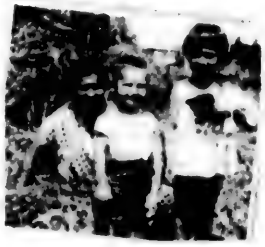
Future Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon in 2003

Sharon meets with U.S. president George W. Bush in 2003.

Sharon with his wife Lily on the tarmac at Ben-Gurion Airport before flying to London in 1978



Sharon as a young boy with his mother Vera and older sister

All photos courtesy of Israel Sun

Sharon and Yitzhak Rabin in 1984

Sharon with soldiers in Lebanon during the 1982 war

A timeline of Ariel Sharon's life

JTA

1928 – Born Ariel Sheinerman in Kfar Malal, near Tel Aviv.

1942-48 – Member of the Haganah, the pre-state Jewish fighting force.

1948 – Wounded while serving as an infantry commander in Israel's War of Independence.

1953 – Founder and commander of the Unit 101 anti-terror force, which carries out raids in retaliation against Arab attacks. One raid by Unit 101 leaves 69 dead in the Jordanian-controlled West Bank village of Qibya and draws international condemnation.

1954-57 – Commander of a paratroop brigade that captures the strategic Mitla Pass during the 1956 Sinai War with Egypt.

1964-65 – The Israel Defence Forces chief of staff, Yitzhak Rabin, appoints him to be chief of staff for the Northern Command.

1967 – During the Six Day War, commands an armoured division in the Sinai Desert and directs a battle that successfully recaptures the Mitla Pass and the corridor to the Suez Canal.

1969-73 – Heads the IDF's Southern Command. After August 1970, focuses on fighting Palestinian terrorism in Gaza.

1973 – Retires from the military to pursue political career and works at establishing the Likud party. With outbreak of Yom Kippur War, returns to active military service to command an armoured division that crosses the Suez Canal.

1973-74 – Elected to Israel's eighth Knesset, under the Likud banner.

1975-76 – Appointed special defense adviser to prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

1976 – Forms the Shlomtzion party. The party wins two Knesset seats, but soon merges into the Likud.

1977-81 – Minister for agriculture and chairman of a ministerial committee for settlement under prime minister Menachem Begin.

1981-83 – Appointed minister of defence by Begin.

April 1982 – Carries out last phase of Israeli evacuation from northern Sinai as part of peace agreement with Egypt.

1982 – With Sharon as defence minister, Israel invades Lebanon in Operation Peace for the Galilee.

1983-84 – Resigns as defence minister but remains as minister without portfolio after a government commission finds Sharon indirectly responsible for the September 1982 massacre of Palestinians by Lebanese Christian forces at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

1984-90 – Serves as minister for industry and trade in national unity government.

1990-92 – Named minister for construction and housing in a Likud-based government formed by Yitzhak Shamir.

1996 – Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu creates national infrastructure portfolio for Sharon in new Likud-led government.

1998 – Becomes foreign minister following resignation of David Levy; helps negotiate Wye River accord.

1999 – Netanyahu resigns as Likud leader and appoints Sharon as caretaker. Sharon later wins the position outright in a party vote.

Sept. 28, 2000 – Sharon visits the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and Palestinian riots erupt, marking start of second intifadah.

December 2000 – Ehud Barak's resignation forces new elections for prime minister. Sharon becomes the Likud party candidate.

2001 – Sharon wins prime ministerial election in a landslide, garnering 62 per cent of the vote to Barak's 38 per cent. He forms a unity government with the Labor party.

2002 – After escalation of Palestinian suicide bombings in the second intifadah, Sharon launches Operation Defensive Shield and Operation Determined Path. Sharon also begins construction of a separation barrier between the West Bank, Gaza and Israel.

Moshe Dayan and Sharon in Sinai near the Suez Canal during the Yom Kippur War

January 2003 – Sharon wins a second term as prime minister, and Likud doubles its Knesset faction to 38 seats.

December 2003 – Sharon surprises his base by announcing disengagement plan, wherein Israel would withdraw fully from the Gaza Strip, relocating almost 10,000 settlers.

November 2004 – Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat dies. Sharon says he will meet with the new Palestinian leadership, but continues advancing his disengagement plan.

July 2005 – The IDF executes the disengagement plan, encountering widespread civil disobedience but little violence from settlers. Sharon addresses the Israeli public.

November 2005 – Facing opposition from the Likud due to the disengagement, Sharon breaks off from his party and forms the centrist Kadima party ahead of the 2006 elections.

Jan. 4, 2006 – Sharon suffers the second of two strokes in quick succession, leaving him in a vegetative state.

Jan. 11, 2014 – After eight years in a coma, Sharon dies from multiple organ failure at age 85.

Entrepreneur helps filmmakers find sets for videos

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

When Hedley showed up to film a music video around the backyard pool of a residence in the Bathurst and St. Clair area, the homeowners kept out of the way, though their curious faces could be seen peering out the window at the shenanigans going on below.

There were lights, camera, supermodels and, needless to say, action, but at the end of the day, when the film crew packed up and loaded their equipment, there was barely any evidence that the home had been the site of a killer video. Oh, and there was a cheque for the homeowners that made the experience that much sweeter.

Though there certainly is excitement to be found at a music video shoot, or for a commercial for that matter, it's the more tangible money in your pocket that Alex Kolodkin is counting on to make his venture a success.

Kolodkin, 24, is founder of Set Scouter, a start-up company whose name tells it all: it's in the business of matching sets with filmmakers. The sets can be, as was the case in midtown Toronto, someone's home, a condo, a commercial office space, and occasionally a farm, but most often they're residential locations. The sets are venues for music videos, commercials, TV pilots and low-budget or student films.

Kolodkin's company is certainly not the only game in town, but he feels he's carving out a niche by catering to small to medium-sized clients and by offering a solution at a fraction of the cost offered by more established players.

He's got the Internet to thank for that. In his business plan, the shidduch (the match) is made online between client and provider, matching supply and demand. These days, demand is far outstripping supply.

People with properties available to rent can list them on the Set Scouter website, along with a photo; businesses can browse the site to see if there's anything that matches their needs.

Fees range from a few hundred dollars to $5,000 per day, making it affordable for Kolodkin's target market.

"Right now, a filmmaker can browse and request locations for free, homeowners can list their location in less than 10 minutes, and they can set price, availability and send in their own photos. We're the Airbnb of the film industry," he said, referring to the online service that matches travellers with people's homes in their vacation destination.

"We're making it easier to match filmmakers with the location owner."

The filmmaker can speak directly with the homeowner and send someone to check out the property in person. But all financial transactions go through Set Scouter.

The company charges the film companies a five per cent service fee, while homeowners receive 85 per cent of their asking price. Set Scouter, which is based out of the Digital Media Zone at Ryerson University, gets 15 per cent from the homeowner to go along with the five per cent from the filmmaker.

"We only get paid when the transaction is complete," Kolodkin said.

Big budget film companies have been scouting locations for eons, but hiring people to do the legwork can cost $650 a day. For smaller companies, indies, TV commercial-makers, Set Scouter offers a reasonable alternative.

Kolodkin, who graduated from Ryerson University with a master of arts in media production, happened upon the idea for his business almost by accident. It seemed the film industry was advancing in so many ways, except when it came to locating sets. In that, it was stuck in the past, cold-calling people and inquiring about availability.

Alex Kolodkin *[Eric Zaworski photo]*

The larger companies had access to expensive catalogues of potential venues, but the smaller players had to rely on legwork or even posting requests on Facebook. Kolodkin came up with the idea for a less costly and more efficient way of finding sets.

Even before, he had found in a variety of jobs in the industry that "my skill set was understanding the business side of TV production and helping producers get their stories funded and greenlit [approved]."

"I said, I'll put one year of tuition into it and treat this as a learning opportunity."

That amounted to some $15,000 of his own money. He incorporated Set Scouter in October 2012 in partnership with Lidia Bit-Yunan, a friend from school, and hired developers to create the website. They launched the service in August 2013.

With the business still in its early stages, it has yet to turn a profit and Kolodkin has gone beyond the one year he was giving himself to see if it would work.

He has signed up an impressive board of advisers of knowledgeable people in the film world, but he relies greatly on his mom, Ella Kolodkina, for advice.

The Kolodkins, who emigrated from Ukraine when Alex was one year old, had always told their son he needed to get a job. But when he discussed the one-year time frame with his mom, she said, "'You're continuing to do this,'" Alex recounted. "'Look at the traction you're getting,' and she said, 'Continue on.' She's giving me her continuing support to execute on what my goals are."

"She immigrated from [the Soviet Union] when I was one. She came to Canada with almost nothing in her pocket and she instilled in me that anything is possible."

The Hedley video marked a good start to the business. The video maker went home happy, the homeowners earned what amounted to "found money" and despite the rather explicit goings-on, nothing was damaged.

And the name of the music video being shot that day couldn't be more appropriate, as far as Kolodkin is concerned. It's for a song called *Anything*, and features a chorus that belts out the message, "I can do anything."

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Klein Halevi's book is a journalistic tour de force

Like Dreamers: The Story of the Israeli Paratroopers who Reunited Jerusalem and Divided a Nation
Yossi Klein Halevi
HarperCollins

Mordechai Ben-Dat
Special to The CJN

What can we learn about a complex structure of nature when we examine only a partial fractal? Indeed, as scientists will attest, apparently, a great deal. Although, they will also caution, not necessarily the entire story. The examination itself, however, can be exhilarating, eye-opening and provocative, yielding dazzling new perspectives about accepted beliefs and assumptions.

The device of science that has proven to be so helpful in matters pertaining to physics, geology and geography for example, has now, thanks to Yossi Klein Halevi, also proven its worth in social and political commentary.

Through the brilliant use – as a diagnostic fractal – of the lives of seven Israeli men, Klein Halevi examines and reports upon the political, cultural, economic, social and other incendiary eruptions of life we know as Israeli society.

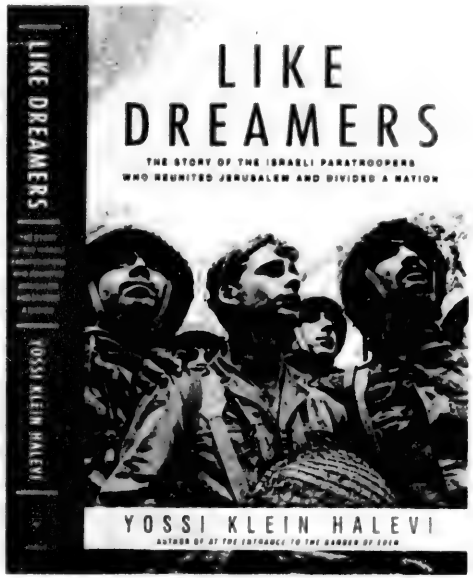
But these are not simply any men. They were all paratroopers who served with the storied 55th Paratroopers Brigade that achieved the reunification of Jerusalem in the Six Day War.

No singular outcome from those memorably fraught six days stirred the souls of the Jewish people—in Israel and around the world—more than the bringing down of the concrete and barbed wire barriers that had divided Jerusalem. When Jewish soldiers in June 1967 stood upon the Temple Mount and at the Western Wall, they restored Jewish sovereignty to the eternal city from which Jews had been forcibly displaced some 2,000 years ago.

Klein Halevi chose this seminal event as his starting point. He also deliberately chose men who were idealists and dreamers. Each in his own way strove to build a utopian place that would be an example of human possibility, social justice and existential purpose for the benefit of the entire world.

Four of the paratroopers are secular kibbutzniks. Three are religious Zionists. "Among the religious Zionists portrayed here," Klein Halevi tells us, "one founded the first West Bank settlement, while another became the settlement movement's great heretic." The third became the movement's public voice.

"Among the kibbutzniks, one helped found Peace Now and then abandoned the movement. Improbably, one former kibbutznik became a pioneer in the transition from a state-run economy to free-enterprise Israel. Another emerged as Israel's leading poet-singer, a bohemian symbol who then became an observant Jew." The fourth, a zealot of his own radical ideology, was charged and convicted of espionage against the state.


LIKE DREAMERS
YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI
LIKE DREAMERS
THE STORY OF THE ISRAELI PARATROOPERS WHO REUNITED JERUSALEM AND DIVIDED A NATION
YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI

Klein Halevi chronicles the men's interconnected lives from that transformative moment in 1967 until the early years of the second millennium. In the process, he also connects these individual intersections to the wider changes that occurred in Israel over that same period. As Klein Halevi observes, "these men not only helped define the political debate of post-'67 Israel but also its social and cultural transformations."

Klein Halevi shines an illuminating light upon Israel's history from 1967 to 2004 as refracted through the very different prisms of the lives of these paratroopers. He makes no claim to writing comprehensive or definitive history. That was not his purpose. Nor, he readily admits, are the individuals he chose for his journalistic enterprise representative of Israel society at large.

Rather, it was because these men in particular embodied two uniquely contending Israeli ideals—the kibbutz Zionist ideal and the yeshiva Zionist ideal—that Klein Halevi chose them. As the author explains, "this book tells the story, through the lives of the paratroopers, of Israel's competing utopian dreams—and how the Israel symbolized by the kibbutz became the Israel symbolized by the settlement."

Klein Halevi writes each man's story, often with surprisingly intimate detail, in a manner that conveys the full personal and professional trajectory of their lives. They clearly invited Klein Halevi into their innermost emotional and intellectual sanctums of thoughts, plans, aspirations, angers and doubts. And true to his purpose, Klein Halevi records them in a forthright, tight manner that lets the information finds its own way to the reader under its own literary weight without his having to steer it aggressively, without subtlety, to the front of the reader's mind.

By the end of the story we feel we truly know the men and many other figures who play major roles in their lives.

Klein Halevi records the men's private and public reactions to so many of the key historical events that took place during the 40 years chronicled by *Like Dreamers*. We see them respond to the four wars Israel fought during those years, Anwar Sadat's dream-like visit to Jerusalem, the unilateral Israeli evacuation from the Sinai, the murder by a Jew of anti-war protester Emil Gruensweig, the intifadah of the late 1980s, the numerous acts of murder and terrorism directed at Israel's citizens, the signing of the Oslo Accords and the assassination, again by a Jew, of Yitzhak Rabin.

More than 10 years in the making, *Like Dreamers* is a journalistic tour de force. With this work, Klein Halevi joins a select company of reporters such as Ben Hecht, John Steinbeck, Martha Gellhorn and Harry Bruce, to name but a few, who depicted current events as literary journalism.

The sheer volume of interview notes and research underlying the four-decade sweep of events must have been massive as well as substantively widely disparate. Yet Klein Halevi has crafted a moving and remarkable masterpiece with it all.

Like Dreamers is primarily about the ongoing struggle by Israelis – indeed, by all thoughtful individuals who care deeply about Israel's future – to reconcile among themselves competing, though not necessarily conflicting, ideas about progress, societal advancement and human redemption.

Klein Halevi concludes that the "new dreams of Zion had each successively faltered." But he does not write that they have failed. For the labour of fulfilling the dreams of a utopian society, of bringing the messiah to a better world, is ongoing. And like Klein Halevi and the paratroopers of whom he wrote, we have not yet lost our hope in doing so.

Like Dreamers is a profoundly engaging and thoughtful book.

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Montreal auctioneer Rogo bids for TV spotlight

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL – Every good auctioneer is a bit of a showman and, after more than 25 years in the business, Eddy Rogo is used to performing in front of large audiences.

But nothing, he says, compares to being one of the stars of the new CBC reality television series *Four Rooms*, where contestants try to get the best price for their unusual and often very valuable items from the four professional dealers on the show each week.

Rogo is co-owner of Empire Auctions which runs monthly auctions, from its Montreal and Toronto locations, of valuables and collectibles, from antiques and art to fine housewares to vintage toys and rare automobiles.

Four Rooms, which debuted Jan. 5, continues for eight episodes on Sunday nights at 8 p.m.

Rogo describes *Four Rooms* as "a cross between *Antiques Roadshow* and *Dragons' Den*," with an important difference.

"On [PBS's] *Antiques Roadshow*, dealers evaluate what an item could be worth or could go for at auction. On *Four Rooms*, our offers are concrete. There is a cheque on the spot," he said.

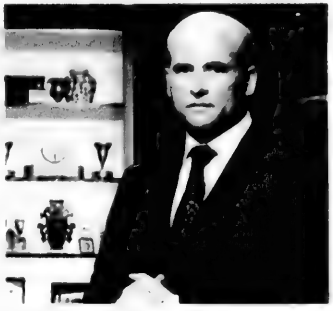
CBC went across the country looking for contestants with interesting things to sell who are also interesting people.

The four dealers did not know in advance what items would be presented to them at each show (all episodes were taped.) From the initial encounter, the canny contestant should judge which dealer is likely to make them the sweetest offer.

Each dealer then shows a bid to the viewing audience that is not seen by their fellow dealers before going into their respective "rooms."

The contestant decides the order in which he or she enters a room. They can accept the first offer, try to negotiate a better offer, or move to another room, or three more rooms.

It's a gamble, because they can't go back to an earlier dealer if theirs was a better offer. If they turn down an offer, it's off the table for good.



Eddy Rogo on the set of CBC's new reality series *Four Rooms* (*CBC photo*)

SHANGHAI GHETTO FOCUS OF PLAY IN NEXTSTAGE THEATRE FESTIVAL

There are still a few days to see playwright-director **Brenly Charkow's** play *On The Other Side of The World* which is in performance in the Nextstage Theatre Festival, at the Factory Theatre Mainspace, 125 Bathurst St., until Jan. 19.

Inspired from the recorded accounts of many Jewish residents of the Shanghai ghettos, the play tells the story of **Ursula Bloomberg**, a Jewish girl whose family sought refuge there during World War II. Shanghai was one of the few places that was not turning away Jewish refugees in that difficult era. Featured actors are **Sam Rosenthal, Nicholas Rice, Dov Mickelson, Jordan Kanner** and **Liza Balkan**; with music by **Bryce Kulak**. $15. www.fringetoronto.com, 416-966-1062.

• • •

Jewish Film Society: The Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Margaret*, **Kenneth Lonergan's** rarely seen epic drama about a Jewish high school student (**Anna Paquin**) coping with the aftermath of a terrible accident. Released 2011 after six years of filming and post-production; also starring **Matt Damon** and **Matthew Broderick**. With guest speaker **Kevin Courrier**. $15 general, $10 young adults. Box office opens one hour before screenings. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday Jan. 19, 4 and 7:30 p.m.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• *Open My Eyes – Peripheral Vision Remix & Video Launch* is a multimedia concert with **Lenka Lichtenberg**, her band **Fray** and **Eccodek**. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. $12 advance, $15 door. Jan. 28, 8 p.m. www.eventbrite.ca

• Short fiction and poetry workshops begin at the Miles Nadal JCC the week of Jan. 20. www.mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 0. Register for conductor **Eric Stein's** Klezmer Music Ensemble, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** hosts "Defining Greatness: Director Steven Spielberg," a series of lectures with film clips on Spielberg's cinematic works. On Jan. 20 he discusses *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, *Jaws*, *E.T.* and *Lincoln*. $90 for eight lectures, $11.25 drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Jan. 20 to March 17, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606 or email esthera@mnjcc.org.

Schwartzberg also hosts "Key Jewish Filmmakers," a series on the works of **Woody Allen, Mel Brooks, Barbra Streisand, Paul Mazursky, Sidney Lumet** and **Steven Spielberg**. Schwartz/Reisman Centre, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. Eight sessions, Jan. 16 to March 6, 1 to 3 p.m. $135, members $120. http://srcentre.ca

• The Centre for Israel & Jewish Affairs has launched a book club and chosen a first book: *Like Dreamers, The Story of the Israeli Paratroopers Who Reunited Jerusalem and Divided a Nation*, (reviewed in these pages) by **Yossi Klein Halevi**. www.cija.ca

• Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre Company's production of *Seven*, by **Ron Rutberg**, continues at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, thru Jan. 19. The play examines the question why two Jewish nationalists in pre-state Israel moved to America shortly after the founding of Israel. teatrontheatre.com

• • •

At the Galleries

• Israeli artist **Sigalit Landau's** show, *Moving to Stand Still*, is a selection of video performance works riffing off the political and environmental realities of her native country. On view Feb. 6 to April 6 at the Koffler Gallery, Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St. Opening reception Feb. 6, 6 to 9 p.m. Free admission. www. kofflerarts.org. Landau speaks about her artistic practice and her role as bridge maker, Ryerson University Image Arts Building, 122 Bond St. Feb. 4, 7 p.m.

• Seven Toronto artists have produced works related to the history of Koffler Gallery's new exhibition space, formerly the library of the Shaw Street Public School. *We're In The Library* is on view until Jan. 19 at Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St.

• *Times and Toys*, paintings by **Rob Croxford**, remains on view in the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery thru Thursday Jan. 23.

• Seating is limited on a free bus tour that departs from the Koffler Gallery, 180 Shaw St., and travels to the Art Gallery of York University, Blackwood Gallery and Doris McCarthy Gallery, Jan. 19, noon to 5 p.m. RSVP to vmoreno@ kofflerarts.org

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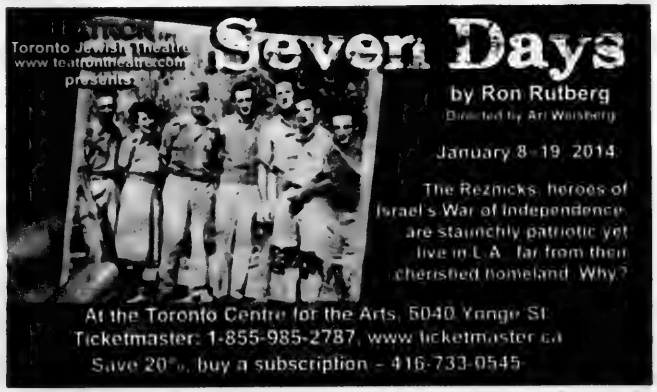
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Sculptor matches her art with buyers' homes

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Lee Lessem has never had to advertise her naked ladies. The papier-mâché sculptures are in such demand, she's been selling them as fast as she's been making them for 20 years now.

"There's nothing more beautiful [than the female body]," she said. "We are perfection, whether we're fat, thin, tall, big-breasted."

The South Africa-born artist speaks about her sculptures as if they're all real women.

"They're all in my head waiting to be born," said Lessem, adding that as soon as she visualizes the figure, she finds a name that suits the personality she sees in it.

These are highly time consuming projects. Each sculpture takes her three months to make.

Lessem, who is also a painter, began sculpting 20 years ago when she moved with her husband to Houston, Texas. While she waited for her furniture to arrive, she stayed in a very small room – not big enough for her to paint on the big canvases that she was used to.

"I didn't know what to do. I *need* to be creative," she said.

She called her mother, who suggested she take up sculpting. Using paper was simple, and great for a small space. Although she had never worked in three-dimensional art before, she decided to take up that challenge.

"You've always got to listen to your mummy," she said.

She started sculpting the figure of a woman by taking small pieces of paper and sticking layer upon layer using homemade glue, massaging the pieces until they were smooth.

While she was working on it, she met an art collector, who asked her how much she wanted for the figure.

"I said, 'It's not even done, it's really bad.' And she said, 'Art is a matter of opinion. I think it is absolutely magnificent,'" she said.

Her success all stemmed from that lucky meeting. That woman showed the sculpture to her friends, who then bought pieces and passed on Lessem's information to their own friends. Soon after, Lessem had a long waiting list of people.

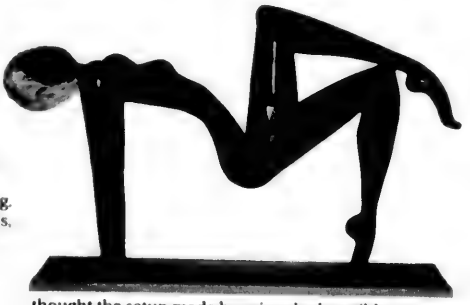
Every time she finished a piece, she would call the person on the top of the waitlist. They would come and see if they liked it, and if they didn't, she would call the next person on the list.

That's been her method of advertising ever since – word of mouth.

Lessem is a self-described dumpster diver. All of her materials for her sculptures are ones she finds and repurposes. Even the candles on *Sofia*, one of her only functional pieces, were ones someone had thrown away.

She called *Katerina's Joy* her most ambitious piece ever. It took her almost five months of work and a lot of perseverance to find a way to balance the figure on a sculpture horse. She said she wouldn't sell this piece, unless she found a collector who would treasure it as much as she does.

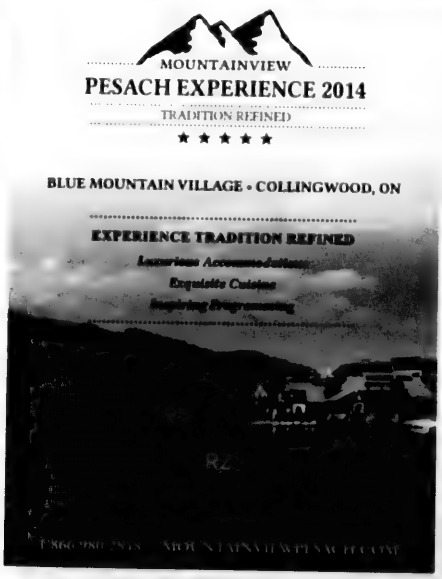
In fact, she sells all of her pieces only after vetting the potential buyer's home and helping them find a position that would enhance the home and the figure. Twice, she said, she turned away buyers because she thought the setup made her piece look terrible.

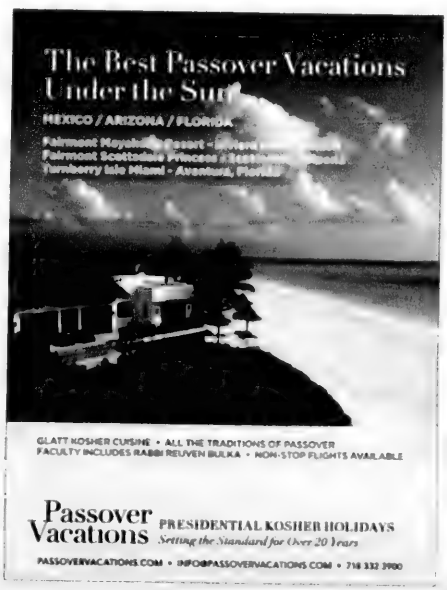


It can be a challenge finding buyers, she said, but still, she needs to make sure her art is cared for with as much love as she put into it.

For more information, contact Lessem at lee.lessem@gmail.com or 416-471-8448.

Lee Lessem with a selection of her pieces in her kitchen where she sculpts them. At top is *Alia*, on left is *Katerina's Joy*, her most ambitious piece to date.

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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Entrepreneur's website is a resource for new moms

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Where does a new mom turn in the middle of the night when she has a parenting question to ask, or just wants to talk to other moms?

She turns to the digital *Pink and Blue Magazine*, which covers "a wide range of topics ranging from fashion, beauty, entertainment and the best parenting advice," founded by 33-year-old entrepreneur Nicole Bloomberg.

Bloomberg, who has dabbled in marketing, public relations, event planning and even jewelry design, started a Facebook forum for new mommies about two years ago when her daughter was five months old.

"The main purpose was to find support from other mothers, revolving around issues such as sleeping, breast feeding, daycare, etc.," said Bloomberg, a native of Hollywood, Fla., who moved to Toronto about seven years ago to be with her husband.

"A lot of pregnant and new moms also want to meet each other. The Facebook forum is an easy way to communicate, and it really took off," she said.

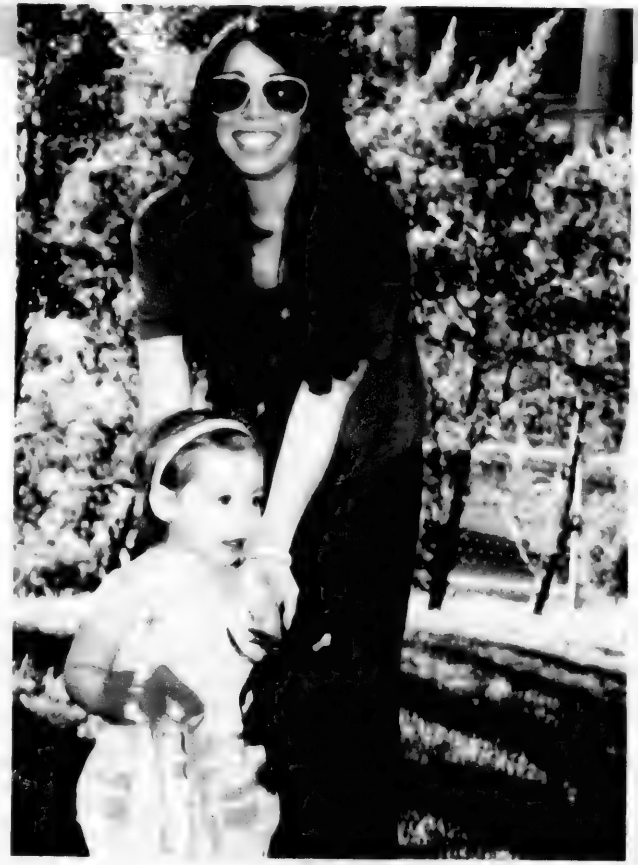
She did not anticipate such a huge response to the forum. To date, there are about 7,700 *Pink and Blue* members, with new members joining each week.

Utilizing her business acumen, Bloomberg turned her Facebook forum into a website.

"Every new parent needs the advice of experts, and I started [the website]... and enlisted these experts to write articles. I then took it to the next level," she said.

Bloomberg is now publisher and editor-in-chief of a free quarterly magazine, which published its first digital, interactive issue in the summer of 2012.

Bloomberg has about 52 experts on her roster including a pediatrician, a certified image consultant, a naturopathic doctor, a kid's nutritionist and a dentist.



Nicole Bloomberg and her daughter Iyla Sofie

"Every mom needs an expert [at their fingertips]," she said.

While the forum is made up mostly of new moms, the magazine is also geared toward kids and early teens.

Bloomberg said she has always had an interest in magazines, and when she was studying for her master's of business administration at Nova Southeastern University in Florida, she did a large project on a magazine.

"It has always been my dream to start a magazine, but [*Pink and Blue*] evolved naturally. It was never a definite plan," she said.

Before diving into the publishing world, Bloomberg was a jewelry designer who had created her own line. A portion of the proceeds from her handmade pieces went to charity.

"I've always wanted to do something I believe in. When I was in Florida, I created jewelry and gave some of the proceeds to Holocaust education," she said, adding that it was important to her to support a Jewish cause because her father is a Six Day War veteran, and her grandfather was an Israeli rabbi.

But now, much of her energy is focused on her two babies – her two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, and her magazine.

Bloomberg works long hours in her home office with the help of an assistant and an intern, and she employs writers, graphic artists and photographers.

"Sometimes I work from 9 a.m. until 11 p.m., but I have learned to balance my time. I am passionate about my work. I monitor the forum myself, and that alone is a full-time job. New moms trust the advice they get from experts and from other mothers," she said.

Bloomberg attributes the success of the magazine to its simplicity and accessibility.

"It is such a simple concept. Readers log in and upload our articles. Moms all over the world tell me that they have become addicted to it," she said.

"We're there for them day and night. They can come to one place, instead of searching all over the Internet for an answer to their questions."

Although she hasn't yet turned the magazine into a money-making venture, her work is about much more than selling advertising, she said.

"I'm building a community, and it's something I believe in. I feel like I'm giving back. I don't have a sales team yet, something I would love to have, but that would be taking it to the next level," she said.

"That's where the growth needs to happen. I'm not thinking about a print magazine – my market is online."

For more information, visit pinkandbluemag.com.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of Jan. 30 is Jan. 20. The deadline for the issue of Feb. 6 is Jan. 27. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Jan. 16

JAZZ IN JANUARY

Bruce Cassidy, Jackie Richardson and **Sophia Perlman** perform at a benefit concert for the Stephen Lewis Foundation, 8:30 p.m., Hugh's Room, 2261 Dundas St. W. $45.

Friday, Jan. 17

TU B'SHVAT

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a Tu b'Shvat seder, 7 p.m. RSVP 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Oraynu's Tu b'Shvat seder for young adults will be held Jan. 19 at 7 p.m. Call **Rabbi Denise Handlarski** at 416-854-0133, or email denise.handlarski@gmail.com.

Saturday, Jan. 18

LASER TAG

Canadian Young Judaea welcomes students in grades 9-12 to a night of laser tag, food and fun. Email anniegamliel@gmail.com.

BNAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel, a Conservative, egalitarian congregation, meets today. www.bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

TU B'SHVAT FUN

PJ Library celebrates Tu b'Shvat with arts and crafts and treats at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free, but register at www.srcentre.ca.

Sunday, Jan. 19

ISRAEL AND ARAB WINTER

David Goldberg discusses "Israel in the Midst of the Arab Winter," Beth David Synagogue, 9:15 a.m. $8 includes breakfast. 416-633-5500.

'A MEXICAN CONTROVERSY'

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky discusses "A Gringo's Guide to a Mexican Controversy: A discussion on halachic disasters in Jewish history," 8:45 a.m., Bnai Torah Synagogue. $5 (includes breakfast).

Monday, Jan. 20

TU B'SHVAT TALK

Ryan Dyment discusses "The Economy of the Future: Connecting the Economy and the Environment," Temple Sinai, 7 p.m.

JEWISH DEMOGRAPHICS

Rabbi Micah Streiffer discusses "Where are all the Jews going? And does it matter?" in a 3-week series, 7:30 p.m., Temple Kol Ami. 905-709-2620.

ADULT EDUCATION

Goldie Plotkin teaches a 6-week course on "Women of the World," starting tonight at 8 p.m.

Rabbi Avraham Plotkin teaches "Talmud for Women, Part 2" starting Jan. 21

"Men and Wisdom," resumes 8 p.m., Jan. 21. All classes at Chabad of Markham. 905-886-0420, ext. 221 or www.chabadmarkham.org.

Wednesday, Jan. 22

FAMILY LAW WORKSHOP

Lorne Fine, a family law lawyer, discusses "Division of Assets." Call the legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women, 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org. Free.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Real Messiah," second in a 6-part counter-missionary series, 8 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. Free. To register, call 416-789-0020 or email toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Jan. 23

BROADWAY GOES YIDDISH

David Gale leads a Yiddish theatre workshop focusing on "Broadway Goes Yiddish," 7-9 p.m., Jan. 23-March 27. To register, visit www.committeeforyiddish.com, or call **Barbara**, 416-631-5843.

Upcoming Events

CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW

Conversational Hebrew, ulpan method, with **Yael Lev** is offered at Pride of Israel Synagogue. Learn modern vocabulary and discuss current events, for intermediate students (Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.) and advanced students (Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.). Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

ISRAEL ADVOCACY

Join Israel advocacy trainers and learn how to defend Israel in the media and among colleagues and peers. Speakers include **Mordechai Kedar, Jacques Gauthier, Mark Vandermaas, Solomon Benzimra, Yudit Shier-Weisberg, Jan. 26,** Village Shul, 1072 Eglinton Ave W. To register, visit bit.ly/israelday.

Continued on page 33

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Forward your résumé and cover letter no later than January 24, 2014 to HR@tanenbaumchat.org

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Continued from page 32

SHORESH CONFERENCE

Register now for the Shoresh Food Conference, **Feb. 2**, 10 a.m.-6 p.m, Miles Nadal JCC. Join rabbis, farmers, foodies and activists to explore the intersection of Jewish tradition and contemporary food ethics. www.shoresh.ca.

JEWISH REFUGEES

Mordechai Kedar discusses "The Untold Story of Almost a Million Refugees," **Jan. 25,** 7:30 p.m., Darchei Noam Congregation, part of a series on Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

MORASHA CLASSSES

Shayna Kravetz teaches "Ten Tough Torah Questions – Part II," **Feb. 12-March 12**, 9:45 a.m. , Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum teaches "When the Bible is Confusing: A Dynamic Solution," **Feb. 12-March 12,** 11:15 a.m. To register, call **Loretta,** 416-789-7400.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Have you been through the mental health system? Would you like to be a peer support to others going through the system and soon to be discharged from the hospital? Baycrest is starting a new support program. For more information, call **Janis Sternhill** at 416-785-2500, ext. 2575, or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2 to 10. Starts Jan. 27, 7 p.m.

Mind-Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Jan. 29 at 35 Madison Ave., 2 p.m. or Jan. 30, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage-preparation group for couples who are going to be married in the coming year. Starts Jan. 29, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244 or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Adult 55+, Miles Nadal JCC Tu b'Shvat celebration Jan. 23, 1:30 p.m. with JNF shlichah **Hadar Epstein.** Pre-registration required, 416-924-6211, ext. 0, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. Jan. 21, **Miriam Shechter** discusses "Masterpieces of Opera and Ballet: *Romeo and Juliet*,"10 a.m.; Jan. 22, Variety Show for Aspiring Seniors, 1 p.m.; Jan. 23, "How to Access Government Funding for Mobility Products," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Jan. 22. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet A. Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Beginners mah-jong and bridge classes begin this week.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com., or call ext. 4103.

The film *The Policeman* will be shown Jan. 20, 12:45 p.m. A casual discussion will follow the film.

Kevin Courrier presents "Produced and Abandoned," films that Hollywood ignored or audiences never saw. Wednesdays starting Jan. 15, 1 p.m. To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211; www.mnjcc.org

Register now for winter fun and learning. Hebrew travel skills workshop Jan. 19, Jan. 26; Hebrew Institute begins Jan. 20; fiction and poetry workshops start Jan. 20.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Margaret*, 4 and 7:30 p.m., Jan. 19. Guest speaker **Kevin Courrier.** Box office opens one hour before show time.

Times and Toys, paintings by **Rob Croxford,** is on display in the gallery until Jan. 23.

Register now for film studies with critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** focusing on the work of **Steven Spielberg**, Mondays 7-9 p.m., Jan. 20-March 17.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Health and fitness: MELT Method for hands and feet, helps alleviate arthritis, bunions, carpal tunnel and more Mondays to March 17, 2:30 p.m.; MELT Method-full body, Meets Tuesdays 7 p.m. to March 18 or Wednesdays to March 26, 11a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org or 416-898-1818, ext. 574

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Film series continues for Toronto 'twins'

Samira Kanji
Azeezah Kanji
Barbara Landau
and Karen Mock
Special to The CJN

On Jan. 18, Temple Emanu-El and the Noor Cultural Centre, an Islamic educational and cultural organization, will continue their ongoing dialogue through the vehicle of film.

The first film in the Muslim/Jewish series was held in November during the annual Weekend of Twinning of synagogues and mosques, conceived by the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding (FFEU) in New York, N.Y., and co-ordinated in Canada by the Canadian Association of Jews and Muslims (CAJM). Since it began in 2008, the twinning program has expanded worldwide to Jewish and Muslim communities who get together to build connections of understanding and friendship.

In November, members of Toronto's Jewish and Muslim communities gathered at Temple Emanu-El to watch *Arranged*, a beautiful tale of unlikely friendship based on a true story, in which Rochel – an Orthodox Jew – and Nasira – a conservative Muslim – meet as new teachers in a Brooklyn, N.Y., public school. Both are in the process of having their marriages arranged (or more accurately, of being introduced to potential partners by family and community members.) Their similar journeys to betrothal, and their shared experiences as religiously devout women in a secular environment, unite them.

This month, the Jewish/Muslim Film Series continues at the Noor Cultural Centre with an award-winning Lebanese movie, *Where Do We Go Now?* which received Ecumenical Special Mention and the Francois Chalais Prize at the Cannes Film Festival (2011), and the People's Choice Award at the Toronto International Film Festival (2011). This humorous and insightful film promises to stimulate a dynamic and fruitful discussion of how neighbours from different faith communities can diffuse tensions through various means when political strife threatens peace and friendship.

Samira Kanji and Azeezah Kanji are with Noor Cultural Centre (www.noorculturalcentre.ca). Barbara Landau and Karen Mock represent the Canadian Association of Jews and Muslims (www.cajmcanada.org), founded in 1996. For more information on the film series and/or to participate in further activities of the CAJM, please check their website.

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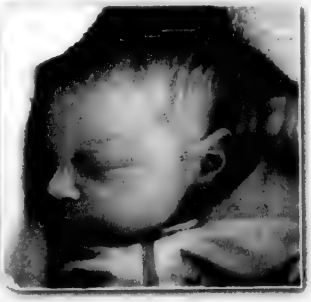
Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Myrna & Seymour Weiner proudly welcome their new grandson, Levi, born Nov. 7. Thrilled parents are Carly Weiner & David Chisholm

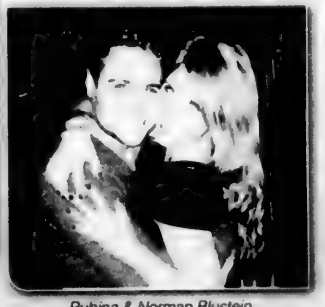
Bella welcomes her brother Callum. Parents are Allison & Kevan of B.C., grandparents, Elaine & Arnie Rose, Pat & Russ Heughan, and great-grandmother Clara Tobias

Miriam Gartenberg & Stuart Herman announce the arrival of Maxwell Simon, Dec. 5. Grandparents, Bryna Gartenberg, Bonnie & Bill Herman; aunts, uncles, cousins are excited.



Meet Noah Isaac Cole, born Dec. 14, to parents Leora & Avi, sister Abigail, and grandparents Josephine & Michael Cole, Michelle & Lawrie Apple

Mazel tov Melanie & David on your engagement! Summer 2014 wedding planned! Love, Mom, Melissa, Josh, Shoshana, Sheldon, Ashley and Joshy, Marlene, Larry and Caryn!



Rubina & Norman Blustein, Lisa & Mark Freed are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Franny & Mitch. A fall wedding is planned.

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on "**Family Moments**"

Exercise is good for brain and body

Senior Side of Life
Michael Gordon

We've all heard it before. There have been government programs promoting exercise. The Participaction program was originally launched by the federal government in the 1970s to promote healthy living and physical fitness, but was shut down due to cutbacks in 2001. It was revived in February 2007 with a grant from Ottawa. It's just one of many governmental efforts at all levels to promote healthy lifestyles among Canadians. The public and individual health impact of poor exercise habits appears increasingly to point to the need to do something to encourage and maintain healthy exercise practices among people of all ages.

Those of us who have "been around" know that the quest for, and acknowledgement of, the benefits of exercise for people of all ages is not new. I recall a wonderful program in Scotland, where I studied medicine, in which a group leader, standing on a centrally placed small stage and surrounded by literally hundreds of seniors, led a routine of dance and movement steps accompanied by very compelling Scottish country music themes. The musical themes and beat, as well as the "group" involvement, resulted in an outstandingly successful exercise program that was beneficial and great fun at the same time.

It's important for Canada's seniors to understand that exercise – whether walking, running, dancing, biking, swimming or cross-country skiing – is not just for the young, but for all of us throughout our lifetimes. Although the nature of the exercise might change, the importance of it in terms of long-term health benefits continues.

According to a number of recent medical journal reports, exercise and physical activity are important for older individuals as part of the recipe for remaining healthy and active. According to one study in the venerable *Journal of the American Medical Association*, "Limited mobility is a telltale sign of functional decline in aging patients. The key to healthy aging and independence, therefore, lies in retaining one's mobility." The U.S. study, authored by Cynthia Brown and Kellie Flood of the University of Alabama in Birmingham, "confirmed that increased physical activity and exercise are extremely important for healthy aging... A decline in mobility seems to quickly lead to an across-the-board decline, including the routine activities of daily living."

We know from other studies that heart and brain health and function are also enhanced by continuous physical activity.

According to one review of their research, "Brown and Flood recommend that physicians should ask their senior patients two questions: whether they have difficulty climbing up 10 steps or walking a quarter of a mile; and because of health or physical reasons, have they modified the way they do these two things. Any modification of a task such as climbing 10 steps raises a red flag... However, if identified early enough, appropriate corrective measures can be taken."

To complement this recent addition to our knowledge and understanding of the benefits of exercise and physical activity in older populations is a recent study from Denmark that shows moderate exercise is even greater motivation for a healthy lifestyle than more intensive exercise. This is important to understand for seniors, and people who promote and organize exercise programs for seniors, who often still believe that the goal should be the "maximization" of effort. Such inordinate exercise goals are often not tolerated by many elders, who, therefore, drop out of the programs or sometimes unfortunately sustain injuries from the excessive intensity of the exercise.

Find the
PERFECT CAMP
in our January 23 issue

Add sparkle to your Tu b'Shvat seder

Mollie Katzen
JNS.org

Winter fruit might seem less spectacular than the much more valued offerings of summer, but oranges and pears in particular, while quiet and common, can be the unexpected stars of simple savoury dishes.

This is perfect for Tu b'Shvat, the Jewish New Year for trees, which is a relatively unsung holiday. Sparkle up your Tu b'Shvat seder with an easy but surprisingly delicious sweet potato-pear soup, which goes perfectly with a winter salad featuring crunchy, colourful leaves refreshingly coated with orange sections and a yogurty-orange vinaigrette, and exuberantly dotted with pistachios (also from trees). Finish the meal with an old-fashioned cake brimming with apples and walnuts, and studded with cranberries.

CRANAPPLE WALNUT CAKE

Originally printed in the *Moosewood Cookbook*, this recipe now appears, adapted slightly, in *The Heart of the Plate*. You will likely want to serve this à la mode with some vanilla ice cream. If you anticipate this need, be sure to have the ice cream on hand before you begin.

The cake is quite sweet as is. If you are going to serve it with the ice cream, you might want to reduce the sugar a notch or two – maybe to 1-1/2 cups. If you buy extra-fresh whole cranberries in season and freeze some, you can enjoy them year-round. No defrosting necessary. Use nonstick spray.

1 3/4 cups (packed) light brown sugar
1/2 cup grapeseed or canola oil
2 large eggs
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 cups whole wheat pastry flour (also called "white whole wheat"), or you could use unbleached all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/2 tsp. salt
2 medium apples (about 1/2 lb.), peeled and thinly sliced
1/2 cup chopped walnuts (chopped to the size of peanuts)
1/2 lb. fresh (or frozen) whole cranberries

Lightly spray a 9x13-in. pan with nonstick spray. Heat the oven to 375.

In a medium-large bowl, beat together the sugar, oil and vanilla. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each.

In a second bowl, combine the flour with the other dry ingredients until thoroughly blended. Add the dry mixture to the wet, stirring until combined, folding in the fruit and nuts as you go. The batter will be very thick.

Patiently spread the batter into the prepared pan (take your time spreading it in place) and bake in the centre of the oven for 40-45 minutes, or until the cake pulls away from the sides of the pan, and the top surface is springy to the touch. Serves about 8.

WINTER SALAD WITH RADICCHIO, ORANGES, PISTACHIOS AND YOGURTY-ORANGE VINAIGRETTE

Romaine and arugula join forces with radicchio and fresh orange sections, and an orange-laced yogurt dressing coats the leaves, allowing a scattering of pistachios to adhere at random. If you choose to form a bed of couscous or extra yogurt underneath each serving, you will be rewarded with an extra layer that both absorbs the delicious trickle-down juices and also boosts the volume of the dish, herding it into light main-dish terrain.

You can wash and spin the salad leaves (keeping them cold and very dry), prepare the vinaigrette and section the oranges well ahead of time. Dress and finish the salad immediately before serving.

The tangy vinaigrette, free-standing, will keep very well – for weeks – in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator. Shake well or stir from the bottom, before using.

Vinaigrette ingredients
1 heaping tbsp. finely minced shallot
1 tsp. agave nectar or honey
3 tbsp. orange juice
1 tbsp. cider vinegar
1/4 tsp. salt (rounded measure)
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup plain yogurt (regular or Greek)
Salad ingredients
1/2 lb. very fresh radicchio (any type)
handful of small arugula leaves
about 6 perfect, crisp romaine leaves
2 oranges, sectioned
1/2 cup lightly toasted pistachios
Optional enhancement
Spread a bed of yogurt and/or couscous on the plate underneath the salad, as a bed to catch the dressing.

Vinaigrette:

Combine the shallot, agave or honey, orange juice, vinegar and salt in a small bowl, and whisk to thoroughly blend.

Keep whisking as you drizzle in the olive oil, keeping up the action until it is completely incorporated.

Stir/whisk in the yogurt and mix until uniform. Cover and refrigerate until use.

Salad Directions:

Have the cleaned, dried salad leaves in a large enough bowl. Break them into bite-sized pieces as desired. Add about 6 tbsp. of the vinaigrette, tossing as you go, to thoroughly coat all the leaves. Add the orange sections toward the end, mixing them in gently so they don't break. Sprinkle in the pistachios with the final toss, and serve pronto. Makes 4 servings.

SWEET POTATO-PEAR SOUP

Fresh pears and sweet potatoes are puréed together and finished off with touches of cinnamon and white wine. This unusual combination is slightly sweet, slightly tart and deeply soothing. My original version (published in *Still Life with Menu*) included milk or cream. This version is vegan-friendly, using oil instead of butter.

Use any wine that you enjoy drinking. And perhaps serve the rest of the bottle with the soup. Be sure to use the moist, orange variety of sweet potato, not the drier, starchier white type.

2 medium-sized sweet potatoes (1 pound)
4 cups water
1 3-in. stick cinnamon
1 1/2 tsp. salt
3 large ripe pears (any kind but Bosc, which are too grainy)
1 tbsp. unsalted butter – or grapeseed or canola oil
1/4 cup crisp white wine
1 to 2 tbsp. fresh lemon or lime juice (to taste)
cayenne or white pepper (optional)

Peel sweet potatoes, and cut into small (about 3/4-in.) pieces. Place in a large saucepan with water, cinnamon stick and salt. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer until tender (about 10 minutes). Remove the cover and let it simmer an additional 5 minutes over medium heat. Remove and discard the cinnamon stick, and let the sweet potatoes rest in their cooking water while you fix the pears.

Peel and core the pears, and cut them into thin slices (about 1/4-in.).

Melt the butter (or heat the oil) in a heavy skillet over medium heat and swirl to coat the pan. Add the pears and cook, stirring often, for about 5 minutes or until quite soft. Add the wine, cover and simmer about 10 minutes longer over lowest possible heat.

Transfer the pear mixture to the sweet potatoes-au-jus, then purée everything together until smooth with an immersion blender. You can also use a stand blender in batches, and then return it to the pot.

Add lemon or lime juice to taste, plus a touch of cayenne or white pepper, if desired, and serve the soup hot. It reheats well, if necessary. Makes 5-6 servings.

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'We want to go backwards'

Lev Tahor youngsters gather outside at the group's compound on the outskirts of Chatham in southwestern Ontario. The group has been dogged by allegations of child abuse, though its spokesmen say the children are loved and treated well.

[Paul Lungen photo]

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Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

CHATHAM, Ont. — About halfway through our interview, Uriel Goldman received a call on his cellphone. Family service workers from Chatham-Kent Child Services had appeared at his home for a surprise visit. His attendance was required.

Goldman left to meet the two investigators, returning 30 minutes later. The unscheduled visit was nothing new, he explained. In fact, it was the third such visit that day. Since the group of 250 members of Lev Tahor, an ultra-Orthodox sect seeking to live a "pure" Jewish lifestyle, relocated to Chatham-Kent from Quebec in November, the visits have become an almost daily occurrence.

The Lev Tahor, Hebrew for "pure heart," families are asked about their treatment of their children, their living conditions are investigated and, in at least one case, the child-care workers asked to see a mother change her baby's diaper and then checked the infant's body for bruises.

In addition, Chatham-Kent police have visited the community several times to reassure themselves and child protection officials that the children are appropriately cared for.

Special report: Lev Tahor

Nothing has ever been found, Goldman said, referring to the charges of child abuse or neglect that have dogged the group, first in Israel, then in Quebec and now in Ontario.

The complaints levelled by Quebec child protection authorities have included neglect, girls having fungus on their feet, physical abuse, giving children melatonin (an over-the-counter sleep aid) to calm them, and even a suggestion of mass suicide if they faced the prospect of losing their children.

Recently, an Ontario court held a hearing to determine whether the court had jurisdiction to uphold a Quebec court ruling to remove 14 children from three Lev Tahor families. On Nov. 27, 2013, a Quebec judge ordered the children be placed temporarily in foster care, undergo medical examinations and receive psychological support. But by then, community members with children had moved to Ontario.

Judge Stephen Fuerth of the Ontario court of justice will announce his decision on Feb. 3. Chris Knowles, the lawyer for Lev Tahor, suggested to reporters there might be an appeal against an adverse finding.

Lev Tahor members reject allegations of abuse or a suicide pact. Goldman and his colleagues, Mayer Rosner and Yakev Weingarten, laughed at the absurdity of the idea that the group would do themselves in. They say the allegation was based on the uninformed speculation of former Lev Tahor member Adam Brudzewsky, whose suggestion was repeated in court Nov. 27. His identity and testimony were only made public last week after a publication ban was lifted Jan. 16.

"Continued on page 15

Mishpatim
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Greater Toronto Area

Scholarship launched to remember son

Please see page 9

UNESCO exhibit cancellation upsets Israel, U.S. — please see page 19

CANADA

Complaint Dismissed

CALGARY — Calgary police dismissed a complaint from a pro-Israel group accusing an ex-student activist of hate speech. Ala'a Hamdan, former head of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights at the University of Calgary, made posts to her Facebook page that she called "emotional and humanitarian reflections about the lives of Palestinians." One highlighted by Calgary United With Israel (CUWI) is written from the perspective of a mother speaking to a son. "Just know that if I'm alive the moment I loose [sic] you, I will cry rivers of tears but tears of happiness. I will soak a koffiah with your blood and save it to show your siblings," it said. "I will be named the mother of the martyr." CUWI called the posts hate speech that promote violence, but a police spokesperson told *The CJN* they "are protected as free speech, even if they are considered offensive to some."

Quebecer Deported

MONTREAL — A Quebec man was deported from Israel on Jan. 16 after being arrested by the Israeli army on charges of obstructing a military action and trying to assault a border police officer on the West Bank. Vincent Mainville, 26, a native of Gaspé, and Fabio Theodule of Italy, both members of the pro-Palestinian International Solidarity Movement (ISM), were arrested Jan. 8 in Khalil, near Hebron, and held in a Tel Aviv prison. Mainville is banned from Israel for 10 years. The ISM said the men were trying to stop soldiers from firing on and tear-gassing Palestinians who were throwing stones at them

WORLD

Oren Joins CNN

WASHINGTON — Michael Oren, former Israeli ambassador to the United States, is joining CNN as a Mideast contributor. The U.S.-born historian was ambassador from 2009 until this past fall. He splits his time between Israel, where he lectures at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, and the United States, where he's a fellow at the Atlantic Council.

Leader Resigns

BERLIN — Stephan Kramer has resigned as secretary-general of the Central Council of Jews in Germany after serving for 15 years. In his appointed position, he helped with the development of an immigration law in 2005; with the re-orientation in 2008 of the work of federal commemoration sites for Nazi victims; and in 2012 with the German circumcision debate.

Filipina Caregiver Wins *X-Factor Israel*

JERUSALEM — A 47-year-old Filipina caregiver won the *X-Factor Israel* reality show.

Rose Fostanes

Rose Fostanes belted out the Frank Sinatra standard *My Way* accompanied by the Ra'anana Symphonette Orchestra to beat out three other finalists Jan. 14.

Fostanes has been working as a caregiver in Tel Aviv for the past six years and lives in a small apartment there with seven other Filipinos. She has been working abroad since she was 23 to send money to her family and partner. Prior to arriving in Israel, she worked in Egypt and Lebanon. She has not been home to see her family in two years.

Her sister, Nancy, told a newspaper in the Philippines that Rose was 15 years old when their father left the family, and Rose was left to raise her two sisters. Prior to the finals show, Fostanes was reunited with Nancy and longtime girlfriend Mel.

She thanked all her voters, especially in the Filipino community. Fostanes has said she hopes her appearance on the show would raise awareness of Israel's foreign workers, including about 20,000 Filipinos who mostly work long hours as caregivers for low pay.

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Ex-envoy urges changes to Foreign Affairs website

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Friends of the State of Israel – as well as its foes – have long acknowledged that the Canadian government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper is one of the Jewish state's biggest supporters.

Then why, asks a group of Canadian lawyers and a former Israeli ambassador, does the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Affairs (DFAIT) not reflect that?

In a recent article in the *Jerusalem Post*, published shortly before Harper's visit, Alan Baker, a former Israeli ambassador to Canada, writes, "Despite the ostensible warm and supportive relationship evinced in the verbal statements by Canada's leaders, the DFAIT website reflects and echoes the standard and clichéd anti-Israel UN General Assembly resolutions, as well as the viewpoints of European countries regarding what they see as the rejection of any concept of Israeli control over the territories and the unlawfulness of Israel's settlements – subjects that are under active negotiation."

Alan Baker

Baker notes that Canadian lawyers associated with the Legal Forum for the Land of Israel presented Foreign Minister John Baird with a letter "suggesting that Canada amend its official website determinations regarding Israel and the territories and bring its official policy in line with the expressions of support for Israel and its positions so consistently voiced by Canadian leaders."

In outlining "Canadian Policy on Key Issues in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," the DFAIT website states, "Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over territories occupied in 1967 (the Golan Heights, the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip). The Fourth Geneva Convention applies in the occupied territories and establishes Israel's obligations as an occupying power, in particular with respect to the humane treatment of the inhabitants of the occupied territories. As referred to in UN Security Council Resolutions 446 and 465, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace."

Under the heading "The Barrier," referring to the West Bank security fence, the website states, "Canada recognizes Israel's right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks, including through the restriction of access to its territory, and by building a barrier on its own territory for security purposes. However, Canada opposes Israel's construction of the barrier inside the West Bank and East Jerusalem which are occupied territories. This construction is contrary to international law under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Canada not only opposes Israel's construction of a barrier extending into the occupied territories, but also expropriations and the demolition of houses and economic infrastructure carried out for this purpose."

Continued on page 36

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Two insightful pieces about a Jewish warrior

For someone who'd been in a coma for the last eight years, out of sight and virtually without mention, former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon attracted a massive amount of international media attention around the time of his death.

A proper summary of just the Canadian coverage isn't feasible in the brief space available here, other than to say that, with some exceptions, it was quite balanced and fair.

Let's focus instead on two very instructive pieces that appeared in print the same day, Jan. 14, one from Israeli author Yossi Klein Halevi in the *Globe and Mail* and the other from the *National Post*'s Jonathan Kay.

Under the headline, "Sharon the builder, the destroyer," Klein Halevi focused on what he called the "paradoxical legacy" of Sharon's career filled as it was with mistakes, even failures, as well as triumphs.

The paradox refers to the fact that the man who, dismaying the left, was centrally responsible for the settlements, ended up as the one who, outraging the right, eventually destroyed all the settlements in Gaza (and four in the West Bank).

Many reporters and commentators referred to Sharon's 2005 unilateral withdrawal from Gaza as his way to create peace. Yet as Klein Halevi points out, in the preceding years of terrorism that plagued Israel (following Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat's rejection of then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak's Camp David offer in 2000 of Palestinian statehood), Sharon was convinced that since Israel lacked a negotiating partner committed to peace, it had no choice but to take unilateral action.

Moreover – and this was Sharon's conversion from his previous pro-settlement position – he came to believe that Israel had to preserve itself as a Jewish and democratic state against what he saw as a demographic time bomb if it remained in control of millions of Palestinians.

As Klein Halevi observes: "Even as Mr. Sharon was consolidating a consensus around the war against terrorism, he was articulating a new political ground. He was the first Israeli politician to understand that the old left-right schism was being replaced by a centrist majority that agreed with the left about the need for a two-state solution and an end to occupation, but agreed with the right about the absence of a credible Palestinian partner for peace."

Unilateralism was a gamble that, according to some, opened space for the possibility of peace based on a two-state arrangement. Yet, at the same time, it allowed the rulers of Gaza – soon to be Hamas – more room to launch rockets into southern Israel instead of seizing the opportunity to act with pragmatic political responsibility. Many Israelis warned of the increased security dangers looming.

In his column "Ariel Sharon's masterstroke," Kay notes that "When Sharon ended the settler presence in Gaza ['Just 9,000 Israeli settlers – comprising about one-200th of Gaza's population'], his opponents predicted that the densely-populated, religiously devout territory would become a base for Islamist terrorists seeking Israel's destruction. And they were correct… But those costs must be set against the extraordinary, albeit intangible, benefits of the withdrawal."

Kay is blunt, arguing that "by evacuating Gaza, Sharon helped put the lie to [the idea that a responsible state would rise there]. Indeed, to this day, the hot mess called Gaza serves as Exhibit A to anyone who advocates an immediate, unconditional pullout from the West Bank that does not incorporate legitimate Israeli security needs."

Today, many western pundits expect that this is precisely how Israel should act, ignoring the fact that Israel is under no internationally binding obligation to do so. (In fact, international agreements call only for negotiations, not for Israeli unilateralism.)

Sharon's heroic struggle was to find a way forward that would preserve Israel's unique identity while ensuring its security. This remains the country's struggle and explains why Klein Halevi ends his piece by paying respect to Sharon this way: "Israelis across the spectrum mourn a man who devoted his life to defending Israel, and who had the courage to discard his own most cherished policies when those proved ineffective in keeping the Jews safe."

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

SHARON TRIBUTE

Canadian Immigration Minister Chris Alexander lays a wreath on behalf of Prime Minister Stephen Harper and all Canadians at Ariel Sharon's grave at the former prime minister's Sycamore Ranch in the Negev following Sharon's funeral earlier this month.

[Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs photo]

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Stephen Harper gets it

As Prime Minister Stephen Harper returns to Canada from a tour of the Middle East, he brings with him an improved understanding of Israel and its conflict with the Palestinians, and confirmation that his principled stand with the Jewish state has been, and continues to be, the right thing to do.

In many ways, what Harper saw in Israel would have reminded him of home. Israelis and Canadians may speak in different tongues, but they share a common language of democracy, progress, opportunity and equality. Both peoples hold these values dear, and both countries have proven their willingness to fight to preserve them. (And after the epic snowstorm that hit the Middle East last month, Israelis now have a pretty good sense of what winter is like in this country, too.)

True, there is one significant way in which Canada and Israel are different – only the latter is hemmed in by enemies who threaten its very existence on a day-to-day basis – but Harper clearly grasps Israel's security concerns, and when he considers what the Jewish state has accomplished in 66 short years, all the while fighting for its life, he is suitably impressed.

The prime minister also spent some time meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, but how could he possibly have related to what he saw and heard in Ramallah, where the forlorn Palestinian people continue to be ensnared by a culture of victimhood and violence despite myriad opportunities to join the modern world? Harper's visit to the West Bank came off as an inconvenient detour, and that was just as well: there isn't much good to see there, and no leader to talk about peace with – certainly not the weak-kneed Abbas, who spent the days before Harper arrived reaffirming he would not recognize Israel as a Jewish state and then applauding as one of his government's ministers called for renewed jihad against Israel.

Harper's first official Mideast trip highlighted the region's great potential, as well as the dark forces conspiring to quash it. A positive future, if there is ever to be one in that area of the world, relies on a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But in order for that to occur, Israel needs a willing partner, and one has not emerged yet.

The Canadian prime minister gets it – and that makes you stop and wonder why so many other world leaders don't. Too many of them continue to insist on calling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict straight down the middle, even as Israel does all the giving and the Palestinians all the taking – how do they not see that?

Another question: why don't the Palestinian people see it, either? How long will they allow themselves to be stifled by inept and corrupt leaders – not to mention Hamas – before they say enough is enough? A better life is within their collective grasp. They need only shove aside their overlords and reach for it.

When that day finally arrives, the Palestinians will truly begin their liberation, and the likes of Mahmoud Abbas will have much to answer for. Then we can really start to talk about peace.

Dry Bones TEL AVIV

THOUSANDS OF AFRICANS WHO GOT TO ISRAEL THROUGH EGYPT
WE DEMAND JOBS!
WHEN ASKED WHY THEY DIDN'T MAKE DEMANDS WHILE STILL IN EGYPT
WE'RE NOT CRAZY!
©H Kirschen

Harper's Israel trip criticized

Twenty-one spiritual leaders of the Jewish community are accompanying Prime Minister Stephen Harper on his trip to the Middle East. Independent Jewish Voices Canada is discouraged to see Jewish communal leaders, in contradiction to Jewish ethical principles, lending their tacit support to a prime minister who has dismantled much of the Canadian social safety net, leaving Canada's most vulnerable citizens even further marginalized.

Accompanying the prime minister also trumpets support for the government of Benjamin Netanyahu which was elected by fewer than 24 per cent of Israeli voters. While the current government of Canada is uncritically supportive of Israeli policies, this stance does not reflect the opinions of all of Canada's Jews. We can only hope that the Jewish participants of this delegation will attempt to reflect the diversity of opinion among Canada's Jewish population and decline to be used as political pawns.

Sheryl Nestel
Independent Jewish Voices Canada
Toronto

Gaza tarnishes Sharon legacy

The editorial about former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon ("Sharon's final lesson," *The CJN*, Jan. 16) is shockingly false and disingenuous.

How can you applaud and equate Sharon's "fighting spirit" with the 2005 war of expulsion he waged on the Israelis of Gush Katif, which, contrary to your view, did nothing to advance the cause of peace and did not "force peace," but in fact did the opposite, with all of Gaza becoming a new forward launch-pad to terrorist rocket attacks?

And how thoughtless is it to suggest that Israel survived the disengagement when 1,800 families were left without a viable plan for the rebuilding of their jobs, businesses and housing, most of whom suffered for years and some of whom still feel the effect?

Contrary to what you say were the lessons learned from Sharon's strength with his "bulldozer" approach, the lessons learned from the Gush Katif/Gaza expulsion are the exact opposite of what you claim – that we cannot again risk it all for no expectation of success.

David Bronfman
Toronto

Mandela was no friend to Israel

A recent editorial, ("Netanyahu's lame excuse, *The CJN*," Dec. 19) lambasted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for his no-show at the memorial service of Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg, South Africa. The writer maintains Mandela was a friend to Israel. The facts show otherwise.

On Oct. 20, 1999, nine years after his release from prison, Mandela travelled to Gaza and spoke before PLO leader Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Legislative Council. To applause, Mandela said: "If the only alternative is violence, we will use violence!" Notice he used the word "we," associating himself with the Palestinians in their use of violence and terrorism against Israel.

Unfortunately, Mandela maintained a fondness for those who used violence to achieve their aims. In November 2004, when Arafat died, Mandela mourned his old friend saying that "Yasser Arafat was one of the outstanding freedom fighters of this generation." The editorial said that Mandela preached reconciliation for all of his post-presidential years. Is advocating violence part of this effort? When it came to the Jewish State of Israel, Mandela obviously had a change of heart.

Rabbi Mordechai Bulua
Montreal

Jewish learning is not affordable

Thank you Rabbi Jay Kelman, ("Pushing the door on tuition wide open," *The CJN*, Dec. 19) for your article on tuition fees.

As immigrant families in the 1970s, we made sure to send our children to Jewish schools. Now these children, although they are hard-working adults, cannot afford to send their own children to Jewish day schools. We can't afford to limit the study of the Torah to the part of the community who can afford it.

We as a community should come together to ask retired teachers to volunteer their time and ask our high school and yeshiva students to earn credits by volunteering two hours a week to teach children of middle-income families.

There have never been better times for the Jewish community than now, when we are free to study the Torah and practise our Jewishness. The only obstacle is that many young families cannot afford it.

Our community is rich enough to help Jewish day schools absorb more students. There is no value to money without Jewish education.

Gloria Lasry
Toronto

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Crossing over: how is *Dark Lullabies* like *Romeo and Juliet*?

Irene Lilienheim Angelico

It was in the summer of 1983, the night before we were supposed to interview the granddaughter of the vice-commandant of Auschwitz, that I decided we could not proceed. In a moment of clarity, I realized I was betraying my parents, all the survivors of the Holocaust and all those who had died at her grandfather's command. What the heck did I think I was doing?

It had taken five years to get to this moment in Berlin. Much of the time was spent raising money for the documentary we were trying to make – *Dark Lullabies*, an examination of the effects of the Holocaust on the children of survivors and the next generation of Germans. The Jewish community was against the very idea – most of us would not even buy a Volkswagen, much less travel to Germany to speak with the children of perpetrators of the Holocaust.

And yet somehow, the next morning, I found myself sitting with Antje Mulka.

Antje was in her 20s, a classic, blonde, blue-eyed German. She was as nervous about the interview as I was.

Until she was 13, Antje said, she always loved her doting grandfather. Then one day, a friend said to her, "Your grandfather – he was the vice-commandant of Auschwitz."

I asked her how she dealt with the crushing weight of this legacy. She said she began years of daily psychotherapy.

After the interview, my co-director/husband, Abbey Neidik, and I took Antje out for lunch, along with our crew. As we were finishing up, I decided to go to the post office, and Antje offered to walk me there and act as translator. No, thank you, I thought.

But she insisted.

The postman refused to mail my card because I had written all around the space where the stamp was supposed to go. "Tell him to sell me the stamp and I'll mail it myself," I told Antje.

The postman still refused, then instructed us to go to the stationery store, buy an envelope, put the card in, address it properly and come back. Then he would sell me a stamp.

Abbey and our crew of four were finishing lunch when they saw us returning – the daughter of concentration camp survivors and the granddaughter of the vice-commandant of Auschwitz, laughing together at the absurdity of the post office episode as we walked up the street.

Thirty years later, the Stratford Festival invited Abbey and me to show *Dark Lullabies* at the inaugural season of The Forum, a series of events the festival designed to connect the plays it performs to the issues of the day. The theme was "Communities divided and the role of the outsider."

I was to connect *Dark Lullabies* with *Romeo and Juliet*.

Romeo and Juliet is about the effect of an ancient conflict on two lovers from feuding families. When the teenagers dare to cross over the divide, they have to negotiate their loyalties to family and community with their newfound love for each other.

Shakespeare never tells us why the Montagues and the Capulets hate each other – the cause is not important. He is focused on what Romeo and Juliet must do now, and what the community has to do to end the feud.

When Romeo sneaks into the Capulets' party, he is crossing the great divide into the enemy camp. Like many an outsider, he builds the bridge that he and Juliet must cross. Their families are eventually willing to cross, too, but only after the tragic deaths of the young lovers.

The writer in Berlin. (Abbey Neidik photo)

Irene Lilienheim Angelico, left, cites Elie Wiesel to Antje Mulka in the documentary *Dark Lullabies*.

Like Romeo, I crossed over against the will of most of my community and found myself right in the heart of the enemy camp. There were answers, or at least clues there, that I could not find on my side of the divide. For the next generation of Germans, especially the children and grandchildren of Nazis, the bridge was even more difficult to build.

But bridges must be built and crossed if wars are to end.

In many ways, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Dark Lullabies* are utterly different. The feud between the Montagues and the Capulets is between "two households, both alike in dignity" and equally alike in guilt. While there was dignity in the Jewish innocence and resistance during the Holocaust, there was virtually no dignity on the German side.

But *Romeo and Juliet* and *Dark Lullabies* are similar in that both emphasize the need to cross over. That's the only way to fully understand what needs to be known, and the only way, as Shakespeare so eloquently and powerfully dramatized, to live in love, dignity and peace for all.

I saw Antje again in 1986, three years after our first meeting. *Dark Lullabies* was being screened by special invitation at the Berlin Film Festival and I invited her to attend.

After the screening, we went out for ice cream.

Irene Lilenheim Angelico is a film director, producer and writer, the recipient of numerous international awards including a Gemini Award for best writing in a documentary. Her work was included in The Fifty Greatest Documentaries of all Times *at the National Film Board's international Salute to the Documentary.*

Dark Lullabies *screens in Montreal, Jan. 27 to 30 at Cinéma du Parc, 3575 Avenue du Parc.*

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Cloning just feels wrong

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

In my book club, we read some books with Jewish themes or authors, as well as others that have no Jewish connection, yet we always end up in discussions relating to community issues, religious tenets or our own lives.

The former category includes *The Midwife of Venice*, *The Dovekeepers*, and *People of the Book*.

The Midwife of Venice gave a glimpse into the way Jews lived in the Venetian ghetto. With Geraldine Brooks' *People of the Book*, we looked at my facsimile copy of the Sarajevo Hagaddah with fresh eyes, wondering how in its travels from Spain to Sarajevo it acquired its present characteristics.

We compared Alice Hoffman's fictional account of the Masada zealots with Yigal Yadin's account of excavations at Masada. Given Yadin's conclusions – if you read both books, check his theory about skeletons found near the palace with Hoffman's fictional reason – you see how she creates a different scenario.

But a real challenge looms with the book I will present this year – an example of one with no direct Jewish connection – *Never Let Me Go*, by Kazuo Ishiguro, on a timely and delicate subject: human cloning.

From a Jewish perspective, what are we to make of clones being created and used for spare parts by their "models?"

I never thought that cloning humans, even for infertile couples, could be halachically permitted, or ethically, either, for that matter. My thought – even before reading the book – was that cloning an individual is monstrous. We're all unique: even identical twins, with identical DNA, grow up as different people. There is so much more to us than our DNA: the sum of all our experiences and the way we filter those experiences through perspectives created over a lifetime. So when I went to Rabbi Google for a Jewish perspective, I was shocked.

Here's some of what I found.

Rabbi Moshe Tendler, in a 1997 *New York Times* letter to the editor, wrote that in the instance of a Holocaust survivor (for an example) who had no family left, it could be permissible for that person to be cloned so as ensure continuation of a family line. He saw no halachic problem with this, at least in his short letter.

Rabbi Michael J. Broyde agrees (*Cloning People and Jewish Law: A Preliminary Analysis*). He argues: "I am essentially unaware… of any substantive violation of Jewish law that… occurs when one clones cells from one human being into the egg of another and implants that fertilized egg into a gestational mother… [W]here the clonor is a man such that he fulfils the obligation to be fruitful and multiply… and he cannot fulfil the obligation otherwise… cloning can be classified as a good deed (*mitzvah kiyumi*); in those circumstance where the clonor is a woman, cloning can be classified as… neither prohibited nor a mitzvah, simply permissible."

But wait! What about creating clones for spare parts? Or having a second child as a bone marrow or kidney donor for a first child? This rabbi sees no difficulty in the latter, and leaves the former for "ethical" considerations apart from Halachah, quoting the Maharal, who wrote that people were put into this world to participate in creation, to "bring to fruition things that are not found in nature." Cloning, Rabbi Broyde concludes, "is but one example of that conquest, which when used to advance humanity, is without theological problem in the Jewish tradition."

I was uncomfortable with this, to say the least. So, onward to Eitan Fiorin's article "The Case Against Cloning" (*Torah u-Madda Journal*, 2000).

He argues that in ethical terms, "there are technological heights to which humanity ought not ascend, and I would include human cloning among these." I guess that would translate as "just because you can do it, doesn't mean you should."

The strict halachic view may say yea, but should we not include an ethical imperative in our considerations? Can you say *The Boys From Brazil*?

There are already signs that a rosy picture of continual human technological advancement is stuttering: what about militaries investigating the possibility of a cloned army, in order to save lives – human lives, that is. And the replacement child? How would you feel about being one?

We have the right to save a life, and we possess the ability to create things not found in nature.

But cloning? It just feels wrong. Let's see what my book club thinks.

What does it mean to be 'religious'

Norma Raumel Joseph in Montreal

What does it mean when someone says, "I'm not so religious"?

People often say that to me, and I find it baffling. These people seem like good, moral people. They're active in their synagogues or work for the Jewish community.

What image of religion do they have? What are their standards, and to whom are they comparing themselves?

Often they are deeply "spiritual." But what does that word tell me other than that people have an aversion to the word religion?

Why?

Scholars of religion spend an inordinate amount of paper and time defining the word and concept of religion. They argue about many nuances and shades of meanings. Most agree that human beings practise religion communally and that it is a social institution. It's not a purely individual activity, although individuals vary in their attachment and personal share or stake in it. Individuals also carve divergent connotations and even practices into, or from, shared patterns. Importantly, all religions combine narratives, stories in texts and oral versions that are held to be true and/or sacred with practices, rituals that shape the annual and life cycle of the community. Religions contain a people's cultural heritage.

Given this view of the category, you can understand my confusion, and even dismay, when people say to me, "I'm not so religious." Do they disown their own Jewish heritage? Are they giving it up to those they think practise it better? Hidden in this seemingly innocuous phrase is the possibility that some are letting others own, and, therefore, control, not only a religious doctrine or practice, but their entire heritage.

And, of course, that's unacceptable.

So let me parse this out.

There are many ways of being religious. Keeping the Sabbath is, of course, a prime example. So is helping the widow and the orphan. Those who work for the community are religious. Those who act in such a way as the name of God is praised in the world, performing kiddush HaShem, are religious. Those who defile the name of God (chillul HaShem) are not being or acting religious. On an important level, there are many who act with civility in the larger world, leading people (non-Jews) to say, "What a goodly people they are." That brings about kiddush HaShem.

There are also some Jews who may appear to keep many rituals, but act in the world in a way that brings about disgrace to Jews and God, and that can't be considered religious. So we need to be more careful with our terms and understanding.

I know that quite often, it's humility that causes people to say, "I'm not so religious." People see others whose piety is astounding. There are people who walk and talk with Jewish awareness and guidelines all the time. Their ways are holy, and their religiosity is awesome. But there are many ways to be religious, not all of which are visible on the outside.

Some people afraid to use the word religious say they're spiritual. Why lose the category of religion. It's our heritage. I don't want to let you give it up, or give it away to one sect of Jews, the visible ones. Just because someone dresses a certain way doesn't mean they're the only ones who are religious. Sixteenth-century Polish clothing does not a Jew make.

Comparing one Jew to the other is not helpful in this labelling game. There's no rule that only a few can be religious, or that it's a title belonging to only those who don't drive on the Sabbath. If someone doesn't drive on Shabbat, but steals or beats his wife, is he religious? I think not. So be careful with giving away both the title and our heritage. And most vitally, don't relinquish control over that heritage because someone looks a certain way or sounds a certain way.

Yes, I would wish that all Jews were religious, fully believing and practising, with all levels of our heritage engaged. But we're not living in messianic times, so I'll continue to use the word religious judiciously, since many in our community are truly religious, and they offer me confidence in the future.

Leading Weizmann researcher speaks in Toronto

Scientist's discovery advances stem-cell research

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Thanks to a major breakthrough by one of the Weizmann Institute of Science's most promising researchers, clinical trials based on stem cell research – which could lead to technologies that can repair damaged tissue, treat autoimmune diseases and even grow transplant organs – could be underway within the next 10 years.

Dr. Jacob Hanna was in Toronto last week as the guest of honour at a Weizmann Canada event held at the Beer Academy called "Revealing a Piece of the Stem Cell Puzzle," where he shared the latest news about his team's discovery of a protein that makes the process of converting adult stem cells to embryonic stem cells dramatically more efficient and stable.

In an interview with *The CJN*, Hanna explained that his research builds on the work of Shinya Yamanaka, a Japanese stem-cell researcher who won the Nobel Prize for medicine in 2012 for his discovery that adult cells can be converted to stem cells.

"He was able to show that we can take a skin cell and by putting in four genes that are normally expressed in the early embryo, we can reprogram, convert the cell all the way back to the start… to what we call the embryonic stem cell state," said Hanna, a 34-year-old Arab-Israeli from the Galilee who has been working at the Weizmann Institute as an independent scientist since 2011.

Dr. Jacob Hanna, a Weizmann Institute scientist, was in Toronto last week to talk about his groundbreaking research on stem cell technology. [*Gil Tamin photo*]

Embryonic stem cells are crucially important, because they have yet to be programmed to become a specific type of cell.

Hanna said that while the current process of producing induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells solves a lot of ethical issues, because the process doesn't require using an egg or fetal material, it's very inefficient – it can take up to four weeks to produce an iPS cell and the success rate is about 0.1 per cent. Scientists have also found that it's very difficult to keep iPS cells in their unprimed state.

Because the process is so slow and inefficient, Hanna and his team realized that resetting the cells to their embryonic state wasn't enough.

In the Sept. 18 issue of *Nature*, Hanna outlined an important breakthrough discovered by his team to address those issues.

"We identified a protein called MBD3. This protein acts like a brake in a car," said Hanna, who has won numerous awards and was named one of the top 35 young innovators in 2010 by *Technology Review* magazine.

Hanna and his team discovered that removing the protein from the adult cells dramatically sped up the process and improved efficiency.

"When we dismantle this brake, we can get up from 0.1 per cent to 100 per cent… in six days," he said.

"This brings us closer to a vision of a patient who shows up and we need to quickly make cells and they quickly need to be high quality and then we can use them. So, I really think this is a step forward in an important direction," he said.

"As the population is aging more and people live longer, and we have new diseases, and people want to have a higher quality of life, there is a great need for tissue replacement. The idea is, how do we come up with a reproducible, accessible source of tissues for replacement that will also not be rejected [by the body] – basically, genetically identical to the patient?"

By reprogramming mature, adult stem cells to create iPS cells, which would be grown in the lab to be differentiated into many different cell types, these iPS cells can be used to treat autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis and could potentially grow transplant organs.

Because the process requires the use of a patient's own mature cells, it would drastically reduce the chances of the body rejecting a transplant.

When asked how long it could take for the general public to be able to benefit from this technology, he laughed, saying, "I'm not a prophet. But considering the rapid pace of this field, within the next five to 10 years, we could start seeing valid and serious clinical trials based on these technologies."

Another important element of Hanna's research, which was also featured in his recently published paper, is working to understand why mouse embryonic stem cells are easier to preserve in their unprimed state than human ones.

"We are for the first time, able to make mice, animals that are chimeric [composed of two or more kinds of genetically distinct cells]… with human tissue," he explained.

"You now can have a mouse who has low levels of human liver or human blood cells in that mouse, and I think that is very exciting because it gives us a platform perhaps to look at human tissue formation in a living organism. I think that is one of the next frontiers for our field."

Family creates scholarship to memorialize son

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Shortly after Matthew Ginsburg passed away in 2012 at age 28, his parents headed to the University of Ottawa to accept an award in child and adolescent psychiatry on his behalf.

Ginsburg, who is originally from Grimsby, Ont., was doing his psychiatry residency at the Royal Ottawa Hospital when he died five months after he was diagnosed with cholangiocarcinoma, or bile duct cancer.

He was set to receive the award while he was still alive, but unfortunately he passed away before the ceremony. When his parents arrived to accept it, they found out just how well respected their son was by his peers.

"Everyone was there, everyone who had anything to do with Matthew, even if they dealt with him for an hour," his mother, Karen Ginsburg, said.

That's when she and her husband decided they wanted to make sure he left his mark on the school.

"We thought this was a place we'd like to leave his legacy," she said.

Working with the psychiatry department, the family has set up a scholarship in his honour. They hope to raise enough money to set up an endowment fund so that Matthew's memory will live on for years to come as new students apply for the award, which will likely be worth from $800 to $1,000 and go to students who most embody his spirit.

"Everything that Matthew was… His honesty, integrity, loyalty, kindness, empathy," his mother said, adding that he was also a very positive person, even in the face of illness. "He never let it get in his way."

In order to endow the award, the family needs to raise $25,000, which would be invested through the Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health. Each year, students would submit applications to the university, which would then select finalists. From that group, the family – including his parents, grandparents and three brothers, as well as a wife and daughter – would pick the winner.

Karen Ginsburg said her son's illness was extremely hard to deal with. He was diagnosed with a form of ulcerative colitis when he was nine years old, and in 2012, he was found to have cancer of the bile duct, a rare complication of ulcerative colitis.

She said it's normally a slow disease, but in her son's case, "it went so quickly, there was no time to catch your breath."

His daughter, two months old at the time of his death, was even delivered early so she would have the chance to meet her father.

"He's missed more than anything. It's hard to go on," his mother said. "This is the only way we could honour him."

For more information about the Matthew Ginsburg Scholarship Fund, contact foundation@theroyal.ca.

Archives gets audiotapes of 1970s leaders

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

An irreplaceable collection of more than 100 audiotapes of notable figures in the Toronto Jewish community, many no longer alive, was recently donated to the Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA).

Sam Hoffer, president of Second Encounter, a group that presented seminars on a variety of topics in the mid-1970s, said the tapes include such personalities as Joseph B. Salsberg, Prof. Emil Fackenheim, Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut, Basya Hunter, Ben Kayfetz, Rabbi Stuart Rosenberg, Vivian Rakoff and many more.

"I am delighted to have donated the tapes to the Jewish Archives," Hoffer said. "They can now not only be properly preserved, but also hopefully digitized and made available to future generations."

The former Toronto Jewish Congress (TJC) and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) jointly sponsored Second Encounter, along with the TJC's Holocaust Remembrance Committee.

"We are absolutely thrilled to add the Second Encounter collection to the Ontario Jewish Archives," said OJA director Dara Solomon.

"The audio recordings of this speaker series, which includes the most important community leaders, scholars and thinkers of the era, will be an invaluable resource to the OJA's community of researchers.

"Through this series, we have the opportunity to explore further the issues of the post-Holocaust period. We look forward to processing this material and making it accessible to our community."

In 1976, Hoffer was studying at OISE and decided to put his learning to work.

Sam Hoffer

He and a group of friends launched Second Encounter as an educational program for the community.

He said the Second Encounter group wanted to do something meaningful to engage young adults. The name was derived from the belief that the Holocaust was so cataclysmic that each generation would have to confront the reality of what had occurred.

The initial program focused on the Holocaust. Over time, seminar themes expanded to include a broad range of subjects.

Second Encounter presented eight events over four years. Some of the seminar topics were "Holocaust," "Exploring Canadian-Jewish Experience," "An Encounter with Israel," "Perspectives on Anti-Semitism," "Judaism, Religion and Identity" and "Survival of a People."

The concept immediately struck a chord in the community, starting with the very first event, and the programs attracted hundreds of people, young and old, from across Toronto and beyond, Hoffer said.

After four years, OISE decided to charge for the use of its facilities, which, along with other financial constraints, led to the program being discontinued.

Speaking of the OJA, Hoffer said he was delighted "that such an institution exists in our community, one that can preserve and more importantly make accessible to future generations, our invaluable treasured voices.

"The recordings of these remarkable keynote speakers and seminar leaders of the community will hopefully be a worthy legacy and a lasting contribution to our community," he added.

To hear a 1977 lecture by Joseph B. Salsberg, visit cjnews.com

OPENING ACT: Netivot HaTorah Day School's south campus choir was the opening act for The Maccabeats on Jan. 11 at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation for an audience of more than 1,000 people.

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Kids' basketball tourney raises funds for charity

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Hallie Rodney, now 13, has played basketball since she was six. When she began to learn the sport with the Steve Nash Youth Basketball Program, Hallie was the only girl on the team. She took this in stride and now aspires to represent Canada at the Maccabiah Games in Israel in a few years.

Hallie Rodney on the basketball court

But at the moment, despite her busy school life, playing competitive basketball and practising to reach those dreams, she also has room for charity. The Thornhill, Ont., teen is the brainchild behind Hoops Kids, a basketball tournament for students from grades 3 through 8 that raises money for Jewish causes.

The youth tournament, heading into its third year, began as Hallie's bat mitzvah project. Hallie and her mother, Julie, looked online for a charity that merged two of her loves: basketball and Judaism. They found the Toronto-based Hoops (previously Hoops 4 Israel) for adults, and it was Hallie's idea to make a sub-tournament for kids only.

"For charity, people will obviously donate. But if people actually get to participate in charity, I feel like it will be more engaging toward them," Hallie told *The CJN*.

Hoops and Hoops Kids used to send donations to at-risk Ethiopian Jews in Bat Yam, Israel, but the fundraising focus shifted this year to local Jews who need financial help.

Through UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, funds are going to Jewish Family & Child to help limit the effects of poverty on more than 20,000 Jewish men, women and children. The funds will cover basic needs like food, clothing, housing and transportation, as well as items like beds and dental care.

Hallie's road to becoming involved in the community began when she was in Grade 6 and she represented her school at We Day, organized by the charity Free the Children. The daylong event focuses on charitable causes in the local, national and international community and helps young people learn to effect change.

"[We Day] really made me think about how people around the world aren't as privileged as me," she says. "I was thinking, maybe I can do something that will help a global cause."

Hallie's good example has since inspired her younger brother, 11-year-old Mitchell, to do some of his own charity work. He went around his neighbourhood asking for cozy winter clothes for his own personal cause, Warm Up with Mitchell. Mitchell brought the clothes he collected to Temple Har Zion, for the Out of the Cold program.

The idea to give back to the community was self-motivated, said their father, Jordan, who runs an human resources consulting business with his wife. "Our philosophy is that leaders are not born," he said. "You have to work hard to be a leader. It's about equipping Hallie with the tools to demonstrate leadership skills at a young age to hopefully carry her through her life."

Julie has similar praise for her daughter's initiative and hopes that other kids learn by Hallie's example. "It's really important for parents to make sure that their kids get involved in charity," Julie said. "You have to make it a priority."

Organizing Hoops Kids is very much a family affair. Julie helps to market the event and spread awareness. Hallie's grandfather, who was a gym teacher for 40 years, helps with operations. Her grandparents also fundraise before the event and on the day of Hoops Kids. Meanwhile, close friends of the family show up to be referees and timekeepers.

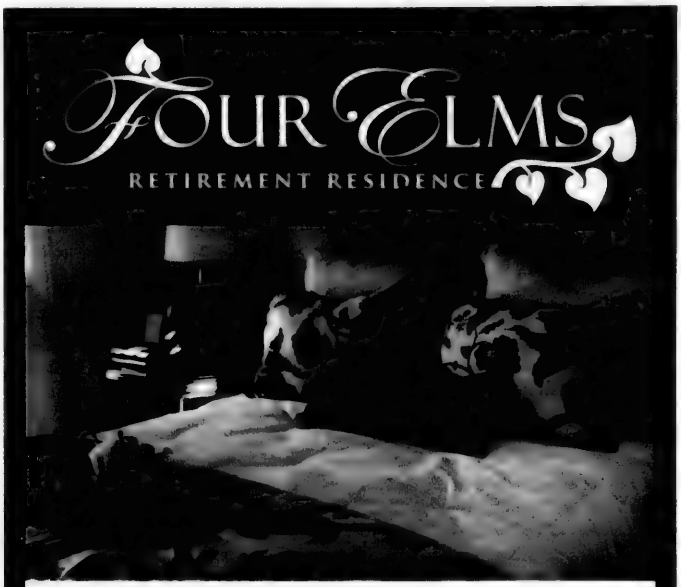
"[My parents] give us a lot of tips and ideas on what we can do," Hallie said. "They help me organize it a lot. I don't think I would really be able to do it by myself. They're always there carrying all the boxes and everything, and I really look up to them because they support me a lot."

Unlike the three-on-three tournament for adults, Hoops Kids is a round-robin competition. Since its inception in 2011, the fundraiser has raised nearly $7,000, but has also been on a different date than the adult event.

This year, Hoops Kids will be same day as Hoops – Sunday, Feb. 23. The event begins at 5 p.m. at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel Family Education Centre in Vaughan, Ont., after the adult tournament finishes. The Rodneys said they hope this scheduling will bring in more money and participants.

Young volunteers can also start their own fundraising page this year, which could help spur bigger donations. In the past, kids only had to pay a small entrance fee. To participate, youths can now register at https://hoopstoronto.com/kids.

Although Hallie is the leader of this initiative, she may pass it forward to her younger siblings, Mitchell and seven-year-old Layla, in the future. "I want to make this an annual thing," Hallie said. "When I get too old, I will still organize it, but I won't participate."



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Israeli scholar to discuss 'untold story' of Jewish explusion

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

About two years ago, Hebrew University professor Shmuel Moreh wrote a book for an Arab-speaking audience that appeared online. It was titled *The Jews of Iraq, Concerns and Hopes*, and it looked at the contribution made by the country's Jews to Iraqi society in the 1930s and '40s, when Moreh was growing up there.

The book spawned plenty of comments and responses from readers, and Mordechai Kedar, a scholar of Middle Eastern cultures at Bar-Ilan University, made a point of reading them all.

What he saw wasn't pretty.

They could be broken down into two categories, he said.

"One group was saying, 'Look at those Zionist Jews. They went to Palestine, kicked out the Palestinians and now they have a vicious, racist state. That exposes the real face of those Jews who lived with us for thousands of years. Good thing we kicked them out, and inshallah we'll go up to Palestine and kill them all.'"

The other group lamented the loss of the Jews, seeing them as important to the fabric of the nation. They say, "We didn't treat them nicely. They went to their homeland and we're left with jihadists who kill us day and night. We wish they would return to bring some normalcy to our lives," said Kedar.

Of course, Jews are in no hurry to return to the Arab world, though at one point, almost one million made their homes there. But beginning in the late 1940s, country after country, from Morocco to Iraq, made life intolerable for Jews, leading to a mass exodus. Only a few thousand remain.

Kedar will speak on the untold story of the expulsion of the Jews at Congregation Darchei Noam on Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7:30 p.m. His lecture is Part 2 of a five-part series presented by the synagogue on "The Jewish Exodus from Arab Lands."

The expulsion of nearly one million Jews is linked directly to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and is attributable to a cultural flaw prevalent in the region, Kedar said in a telephone interview from Israel.

"There is a basic problem in the Middle East about 'the other,' the 'big O,' whomever it is," he said. "It could be from another tribe, ethnic group, religion or sect."

Unlike individualistic western societies that have integrated people from all around the world, "the group is the basic unit of [Arab] society," he said.

Since the Middle East is largely arid, water resources are scarce "and if you don't fight, you're a dead man, because another tribe will come and take your spring or well. This culture is engraved with that, and in the culture of the region, the other is always the enemy," he said.

Mordechai Kedar

"Jews have lived in these societies as a small group, so they were not viewed as a threat. But once they had a state, they were viewed as people with power, and this is when they became dangerous in the eyes of the Middle East."

That meshes with "the Islamic view that Jews have no right to a state, to be independent… That is why they cannot and will not recognize Israel as a Jewish state," he added.

Kedar, who served for 25 years in Israeli military intelligence, pointed out that Haj Amin al-Husseini, the leader of the Palestinian national movement in the 1940s, "was actually a friend of Adolf Hitler who went to the Balkans to recruit Muslims from Bosnia to serve as soldiers to guard bridges of trains that took Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz. Husseini was part of the German Nazi extermination machine."

Palestinian nationalists "sent messages across the Arab and Islamic world to incite them against Zionists, to collect money and to buy weapons and to bring in fighters," he added.

The result was the forced exodus of nearly one million Jews. Though the vast majority were settled in Israel, their story remained largely untold, as the Palestinian narrative grabbed the public's attention. The fact is that more Jews left their homes and they left behind vastly more property than the Palestinians, Kedar said.

In recent years, however, advocacy organizations have publicized the Jews' plight, with the U.S. Congress taking up their cause. Late last year, the foreign affairs committee of the House of Commons issued a report, *Recognizing Jewish Refugees From the Middle East and North Africa*, that in part called on the federal government to raise the issue of Jewish refugees when Middle East refugees are discussed in international forums.

For its part, Israel largely ignored the issue for years.

"We Israelis did not make an issue of it, because to a large extent we took the line that we are building a new life in Israel, the life of a free people and we turned our back on the miserable history which we had. Even the Holocaust… We tried to shape a new mentality of a Jew who is detached from the misery of exile. This is why we didn't make the miseries into a public discourse," said Kedar.

LEARNING ABOUT ISRAEL: Shinshinim, young emissaries from Israel, Saar Ben Zion and Shir Keren, share their experiences of Tu b'Shvat in Israel with students in senior kindergarten at Bialik Hebrew Day School. Through games on the map, the children learn how the funds collected through the Jewish National Fund's blue box are used to support the environment by planting trees, constructing bike trails and having parks for family picnics, among other activities.

A new chapter in Canadian Jewish activism

Opinion

David Koschitzky

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's trip to Israel this week is a milestone for Canada's Jewish community. The fact that Harper is only the fourth Canadian prime minister to visit Israel while in office is, as many commentators have rightly noted, a visible demonstration of his strong personal support – and that of his caucus – for the Jewish state. Indeed, after years of consistently expressing empathy for Israel at times when many western states failed to do so, the prime minister's delegation has been met with the warmth that signifies a reunion of old friends rather than diplomats.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs was honoured to be part of this historic delegation, which included diverse representation from across Canada's Jewish community. From the perspective of Canadian Jewry, this trip is more than validation of a strong relationship, it's an opportunity to open a new chapter in Canadian Jewish activism.

Unprecedented Canadian goodwill toward Israel comes at a time of extraordinary change and uncertainty in the Jewish world, even setting aside the myriad security threats confronting Israel post-Arab Spring and pre-Iranian nuclear weapons capacity. The Jewish state faces shifting diplomatic challenges while the Jewish People struggle to transmit Jewish (and Zionist) identity to the next generation. In many ways, what appear to be distinct problems – anti-Israel campaigns and challenges to Jewish continuity – are rooted in a single imperative: to foster activism among Diaspora Jewry in innovative, compelling ways.

Just as there is no single way in which to express one's Jewish identity, we must recognize that Jewish and pro-Israel activism is most dynamic when it reflects the aspirations and inspiration of the individual.

For some, Israel advocacy is a matter of engaging elected representatives, organizing events, sending emails and – increasingly – spreading the good word on Facebook and Twitter. As important as these tactics are, the next phase in Canadian Jewish activism should be to expand the Canada-Israel relationship into unconventional areas. With political support at an all-time high, we would be remiss to ignore the opportunity to build ties with Israel across Canadian society – including in business, academia and civil society. This is one of the keys to ensuring that the Canada-Israel relationship weathers the uncertainties of future governments and the shifting tactics of anti-Israel activists.

While we should continue to mobilize young Jews to become active in conventional Jewish advocacy, we must recognize that many will never march in the streets as their parents once did for Soviet Jewry. But they can be – and many already are – inspired by Israel's environmental breakthroughs, reputation as the "startup nation," progressive approach to LGBT rights and grassroots passion for social justice (as seen in the peaceful socioeconomic "tent protests" in 2011).

This energy should be harnessed for the benefit of Jewish identity and advocacy alike by encouraging the next generation of Jewish Canadians to bring Jewish values and Israeli solutions into those areas of Canadian civil society that most inspire them. Fostering their desire to engage with Israel on their own terms will not only strengthen their love of Israel and Judaism, but also put them at the forefront of broadening Canadian support for the Jewish state.

David Koschitzky is chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

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Bill 60 public hearings underway in Quebec

Charter threatens ability to recruit staff: hospital

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Jewish General Hospital (JGH) says its ability to recruit and retain staff, especially doctors, nurses and researchers, will be in jeopardy if the bill banning religious symbols in Quebec's public sector becomes law.

The Montreal hospital was one of three Jewish organizations that weighed in last week on the province's proposed secularism charter last week as public hearings on Bill 60 opened at the National Assembly Jan. 14.

In addition to staffing issues, the JGH is also concerned that it may not be able to serve kosher food exclusively.

In its brief, the Lord Reading Law Society, an association of Jewish lawyers, said the charter is unconstitutional and should be withdrawn. It also said it hopes to be invited to make an oral presentation to the committee, which is slated to hear from 250 groups before proceedings wrap up at the end of March.

The JGH, however, has chosen not to appear. "The hospital has submitted a concise brief on Bill 60 which it feels stands on its own," spokesperson Astrid Morin said.

Meanwhile, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) criticized Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville, who is spearheading the charter, for his "intransigent" position and his "undermining" of the public consultation process. Drainville's statement on the opening day of hearings that the government won't make changes to the bill is "a cynical manipulation of Quebec's democratic institutions and a waste of public funds for partisan ends," said CIJA Quebec vice-president Luciano Del Negro.

Bernard Drainville [*Wikimedia Commons*]

The JGH said in its brief that the charter's effect on hiring would be very serious, since it recruits many of its health-care workers from elsewhere in Canada and the world. It also fears existing employees may consider leaving Quebec.

One longtime staff member has already made up his mind. The brief quotes physician Ronald Schondorf, an observant Jew who wears a kippah at all times, as saying: "If the charter is adopted in its present form and is enforced, I will leave the province, never to return.

"By doing so, I realize I am depriving many Quebecers of my expertise. There are, however, lines that cannot be crossed, and I will not tolerate an era where individual groups are blithely deprived of liberties."

The JGH reiterated that it would neither abide by the charter's ban on staff wearing overt religious symbols nor apply for any exemption for health-care institutions provided for in the proposed law, whether short-term or indefinite.

Such a prohibition is "profoundly discriminatory and deeply insulting," the hospital said, which has a highly diverse workforce of more than 5,200.

Rather, the JGH said it would join with other institutions in launching a legal challenge to the bill.

The hospital rejected Drainville's suggestion, made before the bill was tabled in November, that because of its distinct history and characteristics, the JGH might be permitted a longer transition time to implement the charter or be able to apply for, effectively, an unlimited number of exemptions.

"Neither of these options is acceptable to the JGH. The JGH would not seek a more gradual or convenient way of easing into legislation with whose principles the hospital fundamentally disagrees," it said.

"The position of the board of directors is that since the bill is inherently prejudicial and contrary to the JGH's values, there is no point in taking advantage of any article that would grant temporary, short-term relief."

The JGH board believes it should retain the power to handle any request for accommodation by staff or patients, although it says it has not received a single complaint from the public about an employee's religious attire. Moreover, it noted, the exemption offered only applies to employees' apparel, not the institution's obligation to be religiously neutral.

The brief also said the charter could prevent the JGH from serving only kosher food to patients and in its main cafeteria, as it has throughout its history.

The proposed charter's entrenchment of gender equality may also mean religious patients would "lose the privilege of having a same-sex doctor, nurse or other health-care professional assigned to their care, where possible," as is the JGH's practice.

Lord Reading said the proposed law represents a reversal of the full political rights granted to Jews and other religious minorities more than 180 years ago. It was referring to the Lower Canada legislature's 1832 passage of a law giving Jews the same political rights as Christians.

'Café' puts death on the agenda

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Congregation Shaarey Zedek played host to the city's first Death Café earlier this month.

While new to Winnipeg, the Death Café concept is widespread throughout Europe and the United States, says Rena Boroditsky, executive director of Chesed Shel Emes, Winnipeg's non-profit Jewish funeral chapel. The program's format allows people to come together to talk about death and dying in an informal social setting.

"We had a very positive response to the evening," she said. "We thought maybe 15 people might show up. We had 60 people participate."

"In our society, people don't often have the opportunity to talk about death and dying," said Brenda Borzykowsky, who chaired the organizing committee for the evening.

Borzykowsky first learned about the concept last spring when she saw a story about it in a Toronto newspaper – both of her sons live in Toronto with their families. She subsequently watched a feature on the subject on *60 Minutes*. Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto holds regular Death Cafes in its boardroom for groups of about 12 to 15 people, she noted.

"I thought it would be a wonderful thing to bring the Death Café concept to Winnipeg," she said.

In November, Borzykowsky contacted Boroditsky about having the program here, and was asked to go ahead. She enlisted a small group of people, several with health-care backgrounds, to serve on an organizing committee.

The format for the initial Death Café here had participants sitting around tables, eight to a table including a facilitator/organizer, talking about their views of death and dying and the world to come.

"I started the conversation for my group by asking what brought them to the café," Borzykowsky said.

Among the subjects that came up, she noted, were the difficulty of talking about death and preparing for death with family members, spiritual beliefs and becoming incapacitated.

"By talking about my own death, I am becoming more comfortable with it," she said.

Winnipeg's Death Café may have been the first in Canada to be hosted by a Jewish community, Borzykowsky said, although the program was not intended only for Jews.

"The feedback was fantastic," she added. "People appreciated being able to speak freely in a non-threatening environment.

"A lot of people were asking when we can do this again. Our committee is thinking we will have a second Death Café some time in the spring."

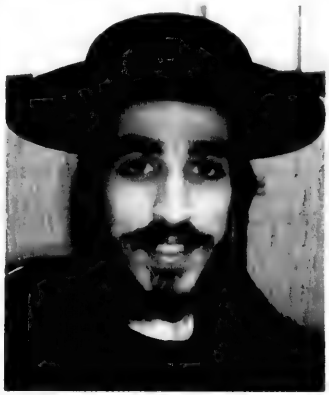
Ontario provided best educational opportunity

Continued from page 1

That former member is not credible at all, they said. Lev Tahor provided *The CJN* with an 11-page letter signed by four members of the Weingarten family, who knew Brudzewsky before they joined the group. The letter's allegations about Brudzewsky, dating back to their acquaintance in Monsey, N.Y., bring his testimony into question, they say.

As for fungus on the feet, a Montreal dermatologist spent several hours at the Lev Tahor community in Ste. Agathe, examined 61 children and found nothing out of the ordinary. The minor skin conditions she discovered were nothing more than what you'd find in any population, she said.

Referring to another child worker's allegation – that children were given melatonin – Weingarten said not every parent used the hormone, which is used to help them sleep, not to calm them. "You can see how ridiculous" the allegation is, he said.



Yakev Weingarten

As for other charges, which originated in Ontario, not Quebec, an Ontario judge has already overturned a removal order that had placed two children in foster care. In that case, a toddler was taken into protective custody over what appeared to be bruising on the face. It was nothing more than the remains of a permanent marker and the efforts of the parents to wash it off, the group's spokesmen said.

In a 2-1/2-hour visit earlier this month to the Lev Tahor shtetl, located on the outskirts of Chatham, I found dozens of smiling children, curious about the newcomer and eager to have their photos taken. Boys were in school, studying Judaic subjects. Boys and girls are educated separately.

The children seemed happy and well-fed and showed no signs of fear or distrust. The boys wore the same sort of black garb, crowned with a type of pillbox hat.

The girls, from a very young age, were dressed in black robes and head coverings that have led some to dub Lev Tahor the "Jewish Taliban."

The men wear long black coats and wide-brimmed hats, similar to those of other ultra-Orthodox groups. The women's clothing was designed by Lev Tahor members after they researched traditional European Jewish clothing, Weingarten said. Bringing up some images on his laptop, he showed groups of European Jews wearing similar long-flowing robes, perhaps from the 19th century.

For Lev Tahor, those were the good old days. "We're more old-fashioned," Goldman acknowledged. "We go to the sources. We don't believe in any compromise. We think it's authentic Judaism. We want to go backwards. We understand that our great-great-grandparents were smarter than us.

"We can see in the old literature that the people were very, very clever. They saw that to serve HaShem, there's no need to make a compromise."

It was that refusal to compromise that drove Lev Tahor to Ontario, they explained. At the heart of the issue was their desire to educate their children as they saw fit, without being forced to include subjects anathema to them – evolution and homosexuality.

"There's one curriculum that every child in Quebec must study, and there's no exception. It's against the Jewish religion and it's not just our problem," Goldman said, referring to other religious groups in the province.

Though Lev Tahor had been living in Quebec for nearly 20 years, their lives changed after a CBC radio documentary aired in October 2011.

"They said our schools don't go the same way as the Ministry of Education. That invited the government to come. We knew we [couldn't] comply exactly with them," Goldman said.

"Evolution, homosexuality, that goes against our religion. Evolution means there's no Creator. We can't teach that," he said.

The group researched other Canadian jurisdictions and determined that Ontario provided the best opportunity to homeschool their children, teach them the required material while not violating their religious beliefs.

"Absolutely," Goldman said when asked if the children are taught secular subjects. But they do "mix in Torah together.

"The Torah talks about a lot of subjects," including geometry, mathematics, biology. "We do learn secular subjects in a religious way," he said.

In April 2013 – long before the November court ruling in Quebec – the group hired a real estate agent to find a suitable location, Rosner said. A site in Chatham-Kent was found, consisting of a row of 15 to 20 bungalows, side by side. Community members with school-aged children settled there; others rented apartments in town, in close proximity to each other. The other members remained in Quebec.

Uriel Goldman [*Paul Lungen photos*]

The spokesmen reject suggestions Lev Tahor has the characteristics of a cult. In a cult, people "have been brainwashed to accept beliefs and practices, not in a logical way, [through] mind control," said Weingarten. "Our message is open, and so, clean of all kinds of influences. We don't hide anything. We're so open with one message and it's that we want to keep the Torah as given.

"People can understand it… with his own logical opinion, can accept or reject a part, but it's a message that is clear." He said there is no charismatic leader, no appeal to emotions or to irrationality.

"Here it's clean and open," he said. "It's the Torah message."

The group prepares all its own food from scratch. Lev Tahor members buy kosher beef directly from the slaughterhouse. They don't trust the kashrut of meat sold in retail outlets, Goldman said.

The group's members rely largely on contributions from outside supporters for their subsistence.

Asked to explain the bad press the group has received over the years, the spokesmen said it goes back to the group's formative years in Israel. The group is openly anti-Zionist. They believe only the Messiah can establish a Jewish state.

That obviously goes against the grain in Israel and among Jewish communities around the world, for whom Israel is a centrepiece of their identity, they say.

When they first moved to Quebec about 20 years ago, an Israeli official expressed concerns to the Quebec media over the welfare of Lev Tahor children. The group's founder, Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, had been convicted in New York of kidnapping a 13-year-old boy he had been tutoring. He served two years in jail. He returned to Israel and the group coalesced around him.

Goldman said Israeli authorities opposed the group because it is anti-Zionist. They are also angry that Rabbi Helbrans was granted refugee status by Canada.

As for their reception in Chatham, it's been only positive. "We've been received wonderfully," Rosner said. "During Chanukah we invited [our neighbours] to join us and to say hello. Many came daily to say, 'We support you.'"

"They feel we're being persecuted," Goldman said, adding locals from Chatham have attended court to show their support.

For more on Lev Tahor, please see an additional story at www.cjnews.com.

One of Uriel Goldman's six daughters

'There's no mind control'

For more on Lev Tahor, go to cjnews.com

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AUTHORS & POETS

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E-mail submissions to

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Deadline for submissions is March 10, 2014.

We can only accept e-mail submissions.

Where are our tzedakah-giving Buffetts?

Money Matters
Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

Maimonides, the greatest codifier of Jewish law and the greatest of Jewish philosophers (not to mention the leading doctor of his age), writes that we are obligated to be meticulous in the mitzvah of tzedakah more than any other positive commandment, "as charity is sign of the righteous, the children of Abraham."

Thankfully, even many who are far removed from religious observance demonstrate their link to Abraham by their charitable giving. Abraham is the "father of many nations" and our society benefits greatly from the generosity of Canadians in so many fields each and every day. The $9.7 billion that Canadians donated in 2009 can and does accomplish much.

Yet if we dig a bit deeper, the numbers are not as encouraging. The Fraser Institute recently reported that 22.9 per cent of Canadians gave charity in 2011 (and that's down from 25.1 per cent who made donations in 2005). That, of course, means that 77.1 per cent of Canadians did not give. Furthermore Canadians gave 0.64 per cent of their income to charity. And sadly, but not surprisingly, Canadians are the second-most generous people on earth, second only to Americans, 26 per cent of whom gave an average of 1.33 per cent of their income to charity.

Jewish law considers two basic approaches to charitable giving. The first approach is that as long as there is poverty in the world, one should give away all of one's wealth, less one's basic living expenses. How can we indulge when so many go to bed hungry each night? Yet Jewish law rejects this approach – it's not any one person's obligation to solve the world's problems. Rather, one must donate between 10 and 20 per cent of one's income to charity and enjoy the blessings that God has bestowed upon us.

Those who are exceedingly wealthy and can easily afford to give more than 20 per cent should donate more. I'm not sure which of the two approaches Warren Buffett – who is giving away 99 per cent of his more than $50 billion in wealth – is following, but whatever it is, it should be the model for the multimillionaires of our community. His (along with Bill Gates') Giving Pledge Initiative, which urges the very wealthy to donate at least half their wealth to charity, is righteousness at its best. The wealthiest 100 Canadians have an estimated combined wealth of $230 billion. Imagine what kind of society we could create if each gave half of their wealth to charity?

Sadly, no such initiative exists in the Jewish world. It's both gratifying and frustrating to read the reports this week that the State of Israel will be investing billions of dollars to promote Jewish identity in the Diaspora over the next 20 years. By doing so, Israel is recognizing its responsibility to Jewish communities around the world. No longer will charity go only one way.

Yet as I have often noted – and it needs constant repetition – our Diaspora community is blessed with many people who are candidates for the Giving Pledge Initiative. Even if they gave "only" 10 per cent of their wealth to the Jewish community, the billions of dollars this would garner would transform not only our community, but the future of the Jewish People.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

ROBINS—Justice Sydney L.

Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University (CFYU), the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, and the Yeshiva University Family, mourn the recent passing of our honourary alumnus, Justice Sydney L. Robins, of blessed memory, in whose honour The Sydney L. Robins Canadian Chair in Human Rights was established, and under whose auspices the Justice Sydney L. Robins Lectureships in International Law and Human Rights were conducted by the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law of Yeshiva University in the United States, Hungary, Hong Kong, Moscow and Maastricht. He was distinguished and revered as a wise, gentle and kind jurist, who was universally respected by his judicial colleagues and the general Jewish community-at-large. Dr. Michel Rosenfeld currently serves as the Justice Sydney L. Robins Professor at Cardozo. Sincere condolences are extended to his beloved wife, Gloria Robins, and the entire Robins family, as well as to his many colleagues and friends. He will long be remembered with reverence and appreciation.

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Dr. Michel Rosenfeld
Justice Sydney L Robins Professor of Human Rights
Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University
Stuart Haber, National Director
Jeremy Magence, President

How goodly are thy tents – and cabins

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

The weather outside is blustery, but in a few short months, students will close their schoolbooks (and laptops, hopefully), and transform into campers piling into Jewish overnight camps. If you're looking for a camp, now is the time to choose. Here's help.

Where to start? The Association of Jewish Sponsored Camps has surveyed 175 camps, which you can filter for factors such as Jewish ritual observance, emphasis on sports and arts, and staffing ratios. **[http://bit.ly/jcamp101]** Doing Jewish in Toronto lists more than a dozen overnight camps in Ontario alone **[bit.ly/jcamp102]**, while MyJewishLearning has six in Quebec, and others in B.C., Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia. **[bit.ly/jcamp103]**

Overnight camp isn't cheap, but there is some assistance available to first-time campers through the One Happy Camper program. **[bit.ly/jcamp104]**

Consider seven key factors when choosing, says Steve Eller of Maryland's Beth Tfiloh Camps: general and special programming, staffing, dietary requirements, Hebrew language and Israeli culture, and the campers themselves. While Beth Tfiloh Camps hold Shabbat services that are "kosher-style," executive director Ed Cohen says parents looking for a strong Jewish camping experience should send their children elsewhere. **[bit.ly/jcamp105]**

Which brings us to a central question: how Jewish should a Jewish camp be? Writing in the *Forward*, Rebecca Spence wonders how kids are "supposed to cut loose when they're spending so much time learning to be observant Jews." Adds parent Barry Posner, "I just want the kids to be kids… They're very deeply steeped in Jewish values, heritage and learning, so for one or two months a year, let them have a vacation."

Rabbi Mitchell Cohen disagrees. Cohen is director of the National Ramah Commission, which operates camps affiliated with the Conservative movement. "Families who spend a fortune on day school education and then send their kids to non-religious programs in the summer in some ways are wasting their investment… The kids are getting all the academic knowledge critical for a Jewish education, and then not applying it with friends in a warm, fun atmosphere." **[bit.ly/jcamp106]**

How do Jewish camps shape campers' identities for a lifetime? Amy Sales is co-author of *How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences*. "Each camp has a very strong and intentional culture, camp by camp. Camp's power to socialize young Jews –How do I be a Jew? How do I be a member of the Jewish community? – depends on this culture." **[bit.ly/jcamp107]** The study, "Camp Works," from the Foundation for Jewish Camp, suggests that campers eventually have more Jewish friends, become members of synagogues, and are somewhat more likely to marry a Jewish partner. **[bit.ly/jcamp108]**

When's the right time to send your own children off to camp?

Ellen Nash, former director of Ontario's Camp Northland-B'nai Brith, says "around age nine or 10 is ideal for many kids… Twelve is sort of the top end." Ask yourself: "Do they like being with groups of kids? Are they comfortable sleeping over at other kids' houses? Those are good signs." **[bit.ly/jcamp109]**

The Family Education website has great articles about talking to your kids about camp, homesickness and even camp packing tips: "Send nothing to camp (except your child) that you can't afford to lose." **[bit.ly/jcamp110]**

highway@rogers.com

What is our message?

Rabbi Nevo Zuckerman

Rabbinic Reflections

The world we live in today sends us messages constantly – they appear everywhere we turn and never seem to stop coming. What messages do we want to pass along to those around us and instil in them for future generations? Are we aware that our actions become the models and our messages the expectations that we set for those around us?

I was once present in a synagogue where there was to be a scholar-in-residence. As the rabbi rose from his seat to introduce the presenter, I observed a room of 300 praying individuals deplete by 50 as adults stood and walked out of the room. After a lovely introduction, the scholar-in-residence approached the congregation.

He began, "What message does it send to our children in the congregation that when the rabbi speaks, it is permissible to leave?"

Clearly I wasn't alone in my observation.

This is a question that has been resonating with me for years. As Jews, it is our obligation to open our eyes to the messages around us so that we can set an example and instil positive *midot* (character traits) in those around us. Each of our messages is different based on many factors. Often, our physical intention and mental direction put our action into auto drive, but we must recognize that this is observed by others as an example of our own midot. Each and every action must be done using a thought process to ensure our models and their messages come from the humblest of places.

Something also resonated with me while flipping through the radio the other day: a song called *Wake Me Up* by Avicii. I found the entire song to be meaningful and full of questions to ask ourselves. Here is a short part of the song:

"So wake me up when it's all over

When I'm wiser and I'm older

All this time I was finding myself, and I

Didn't know I was lost."

We go through our lives with no real thought as to who we are or the messages that we want to pass on to future generations. Yet, often, we don't even know that we might be lost from our path. Shouldn't we consistently wonder, am I the role model that I want to be? Our Torah exemplifies how our models and messages are transmitted, through the actions of Moses.

Just a few weeks ago, it was Shabbat Shirah in the Book of Exodus. In this parashah (portion of the Torah), the Jewish People are standing between the sea and the Egyptians. God says to Moses, "Why do you cry out to Me?"

Moses stands for a few moments, then he models that the Jewish People must have *emunah*, (faith) in God. It is only then that the miracle of the parting of the sea takes place.

Let HaShem guide us, that we can answer our questions, choose our messages and wisely act upon them as well.

Rabbi Nevo Zuckerman is the spiritual leader of Beth Jacob Congregation in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont.

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Pressure Russia on gay rights

From the Bimah

Rabbi Catharine Clark

The 2014 Winter Olympics open in Sochi, Russia, on Feb. 7. Russia will attempt to present itself on the international stage as a modern, democratic country. The truth, however, is far less pretty.

In June, the Russian parliament overwhelmingly passed a law barring "propaganda" about "non-traditional sexual relations" to minors. It is now illegal to speak in any public forum about being gay or lesbian as a normal expression of sexuality and family life. The very dark side of forcing LGBT Russians back into the closet is as predictable as it is dangerous. In the months since the law went into effect, human rights and LGBT advocates in Russia have documented an uptick in workplace discrimination, hateful attacks in the media and violence against gay men and women.

Homophobia in Russia is a Jewish issue. From a religious perspective, the principle of *kvod habriot*, human dignity, is violated by the vicious silencing of LGBT Russians.

The view through the lens of history is just as sharp. Fomenting hatred of a minority group to shift attention from a troubled economy and repressive government is a long-wielded political tool. Such scapegoating of a minority group is dangerous. More than a century ago, it led to pogroms against Jews. It would be a tragedy if Russian history were to repeat itself with a different minority group in the role of victim.

Jews also know the risk of the international community glossing over human rights violations by an Olympic host nation. In 1936, Germany hosted the Olympics. Hitler saw the Games as an opportunity to showcase the racist ideology of the Nazi regime. German Jewish athletes, with one token exception, were not allowed to participate. The world did not stand up against Hitler at the Olympics, and what happened in the next decade is the worst possible outcome of such indifference and cowardice.

This time must be different. Many typical forms of Olympic protest, such as a boycott or participant protests, are not possibilities. The International Olympic Committee is insistent, hypocritically and as always, that the Games are non-political. In fact, athletes are being warned not to express political opinions at the Games.

Thus, our actions to support LGBT Russians must be creative. One good option is to promote the Principle 6 campaign. Principle 6 is a provision of the Olympic Charter prohibiting discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

A number of athletes have already signed-on to the Principle 6 campaign and will be affirming non-discrimination in words and attire. (The IOC can hardly complain when athletes voice their support of its own Charter's provision.) Principle 6 clothing is available online for all of us, not just Olympians. Wear a Principle 6 T-shirt when you get together with friends to watch your favorite Olympic sport. Proceeds will support Russian LGBT organizations.

The most important thing we can do, however, is to tune in to this issue in the months after Sochi. In the international spotlight, there are things even the strongest government can't get away with, but once the Olympics are over, LGBT Russians will need our support and watchdog eyes even more.

Jordan, West Bank also on PM's agenda

Harper welcomed as 'great friend to Israel'

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed Prime Minister Stephen Harper Sunday for a four-day visit, with Netanyahu praising the Canadian leader as "a great friend of Israel and the Jewish People."

Monday was the first full day of Harper's landmark first visit to Israel, accompanied by his wife, Laureen, and a delegation of some 150 to 200 cabinet ministers, community and business leaders, rabbis and media.

The goals for the visit, which is said to have great significance for Harper personally, included not only reinforcing Harper's longtime support for Israel, but establishing warmer relations between Canada and Israel's Palestinian and Jordanian neighbours.

Harper's entourage was greeted at Ben-Gurion Airport on Sunday afternoon by Minister of Foreign Affairs Avigdor Liberman and Vivian Bercovici, Canada's ambassador-designate to Israel.

In an official speech to the delegation, Netanyahu referred to Harper as "a great friend of Israel and the Jewish People."

He also praised Harper at his weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem.

"Today, for the first time, a great friend of the State of Israel, and a great friend of mine, is visiting Israel, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper," he said Sunday at the start of the meeting.

"Canada is a faithful friend of the State of Israel. Under Stephen Harper's leadership, it has taken a moral and steadfast position against attempts to delegitimize the State of Israel. Prime Minister Harper has expressed a clear, brave and moral stand regarding the truth and in regard to the standards that the international community needs to adopt regarding the State of Israel and the conflict here.

"I think that this is worthy of praise and I welcome him on behalf of the government and people of Israel," Netanyahu said.

En route to his Jerusalem hotel, Harper's delegation made a brief stop at the Mount of Olives, a site of significance for all three of the country's major religions.

Monday morning, the prime minister's schedule began with an early-morning trip to the West Bank areas of Bethlehem and Ramallah, where he met with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

There, Harper announced $66 million in new aid for sustainable development and security reforms in the West Bank and Gaza. The money will fund training and technical assistance and help start-up businesses and existing micro, small and mid-sized enterprises. The initiative will particularly target women's entrepreneurship in these regions.

Harper said, "Canada looks forward to a bright future for all Palestinians, one in which security and prosperity are enjoyed in a viable and democratic Palestinian state. The support we are providing today will advance those goals by furthering the peace process, generating jobs and economic growth."

Harper was to address the Knesset later on Monday afternoon, marking the first time a sitting Canadian prime minister has addressed Israel's legislature.

During that address, Canadians living in Israel were planning to rally nearby to show support for Harper's unwavering stance on Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, at podium, praises his Canadian counterpart, Stephen Harper. With them are their wives, Laureen Harper, left, and Sara Netanyahu. *[Haim Zach/GPO]*

Organizer Danny Hershtal told *The CJN*, "Israelis don't follow Canadian politics... they only know what happens in America. This rally is an outpouring of people who really wanted a chance to meet him or at least say thank you for his support."

Harper was not able to meet with the group, but they were hopeful that other delegates would be able to speak with them.

On Tuesday, Harper was scheduled to have official meetings with Israeli President Shimon Peres and Netanyahu before a visit to Yad Vashem, accompanied by Netanyahu, and then on to holy sites including the Western Wall.

On Wednesday, he was slated to head north to the Upper Galilee to inaugurate the future site of a bird sanctuary in the Hula Valley being named in his honour. He was also to receive an honorary doctorate from Tel Aviv University (TAU) and participate in a moderated question-and-answer session there with students.

Following the session at TAU, on Wednesday evening, Harper was to fly from Ben-Gurion Airport directly to Jordan for the remainder of his stay in the Middle East.

To honour Harper's visit, the Israeli Philatelic Service issued a commemorative postmark to recognize the shared values and strong economic, political and social ties between Canada and Israel.

Meanwhile, delegates with B'nai Brith Canada, which is normally a strong supporter of Harper and the Conservative party, circulated a media release Sunday complaining that its members had been excluded from a "private pre-dinner meeting" between Harper and Netanyahu.

"The strong voices of independent grassroots Jewry must not be excluded from official functions," said B'nai Brith CEO Frank Dimant, expressing concern that in their absence, there would be no strong advocate for a continued Jewish presence in the areas of Judea and Samaria.

Also over the weekend, Canadian media decried the up-to-200-member delegation travelling at taxpayer expense with Harper.

Back in Canada, the *Globe and Mail* called Harper's trip to Israel "one of the largest Canadian delegations mounted for a foreign visit." The delegation is reported to include six cabinet ministers, lawmakers, political staff and diplomats, as well as business people and leaders of Jewish community groups and other non-governmental organizations.

About 30 of the business and community leaders travelled on Harper's official airplane, while others flew commercially. Most will stay at hotels paid for by the government, the newspaper reported.

Among those in the delegation are business executives David Asper and Albert Reichmann, as well as Air Canada CEO Calin Rovinescu.

"It is a significant delegation. This is an important trip, and it's one that's generated a lot of interest," Jason MacDonald, Harper's communications director, said at a news briefing Jan. 17.

Ottawa has also paid for private participants in other large prime ministerial delegations, including on visits to China and India, according to the newspaper.

With files from JTA and JNS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper inspects an honour guard with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shortly after Harper's arrival in Israel. *[Haim Zach/GPO]*

UNESCO exhibit cancellation slammed

JTA

WASHINGTON — The Barack Obama administration is "deeply disappointed" with a decision by UNESCO, the United Nation's cultural arm, to cancel the opening of an exhibition on the Jewish presence in the land of Israel and is seeking to have it rescheduled "as soon as possible."

Irina Bokova
[Wikimedia Commons]

Complaints by Arab states led the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to cancel the exhibition, organized by the Simon Wiesenthal Center along with the governments of Canada and Montenegro. It was slated to open Jan. 20 at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

"The United States is deeply disappointed and has engaged with senior levels at UNESCO to confirm that the action to postpone does not represent a cancellation and to underscore our interest in seeing the exhibit proceed as soon as possible," a State Department official said, speaking with customary anonymity. "We trust that UNESCO will approach this issue fairly and in a manner consistent with the organization's guidelines and past precedent."

UNESCO director-general Irina Bokova said Wednesday in a letter to the Simon Wiesenthal Center that the exhibit, titled *The People, the Book, the Land – 3,500 years of ties between the Jewish People and the Land of Israel*, would be postponed indefinitely. She said the decision arose out of UNESCO's support for peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

"We have a responsibility in ensuring that current efforts in this regard are not endangered," she wrote.

The cancellation followed a letter sent to Bokova on Jan. 14 by the Arab group at UNESCO. "The Arab group is deeply disturbed by the exhibition, which it condemns," said the letter from the group's president, Abdullah Elmealmi.

"This cause is championed by those who oppose peace efforts," Elmealmi said. "The media campaign accompanying the exhibition will inevitably damage the peace talks, the incessant efforts of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and UNESCO's neutrality."

The State Department official said the exhibition comported with UNESCO's mission of cultural preservation and education. "UNESCO was designed to foster just this kind of discussion and interaction between civil society and member states, and the United States firmly supports the right of civil society in member states such as the Wiesenthal Center to be heard and to contribute to UNESCO's mission," the official said.

In an email, the Simon Wiesenthal Center's director of international affairs, Shimon Samuels, wrote that the centre was outraged by Bokova's decision. He called for an email campaign opposing cancellation.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also slammed UNESCO for cancelling the opening of an exhibition on the Jewish presence in the land of Israel.

"The explanation given was that it would harm the negotiations," Netanyahu said Sunday at the start of the weekly cabinet meeting. "It would not harm the negotiations. Negotiations are based on facts, on the truth, which is never harmful."

Knesset bill would create one chief rabbi

JTA

JERUSALEM — A Knesset committee has voted to approve a bill that would create one chief rabbi position instead of the current two.

The Knesset ministerial committee for legislation voted Sunday to approve the legislation, proposed by Justice Minister Tzipi Livni of the Hatnua Party, and co-sponsored by Religious Affairs Minister Naftali Bennett and lawmaker Eli Ben-Dahan of the Jewish Home Party.

The bill must be approved by cabinet, then pass three readings in the Knesset in order to become law. It would take effect after the 10-year terms of the current chief rabbis, Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi David Lau and Sephardi Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef, expire.

"In a state where there is only one president, one Supreme Court president, one prime minister and one chief of general staff, there is no way to justify the doubling of the position of chief rabbi," Livni said. "We have to rid ourselves of the old-fashioned division of ancestral congregations and start bringing the country together."

The new law also would make the rabbinical courts independent of the office of the chief rabbinate, rather than the current situation in which the two chief rabbis alternate serving as the head of the Rabbinate Council and as chief religious court judge, of the Higher Rabbinical Court.

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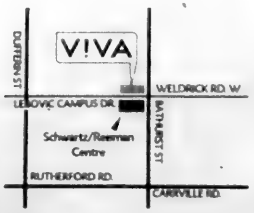

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UN to host March of the Living exhibit

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

"I never had a chance to say goodbye to my mother. We didn't know we had to say goodbye... And I am an old woman today and I never made peace with the fact that I never had that last hug and kiss.

"I am only asking you to work for a world where nobody will ever have to live memories like mine ever again. Please heal the world."

For 25 years, teenagers have been travelling to Europe on the International March of the Living (MOL), visiting once vibrant Jewish communities and the Nazi death camps where millions were murdered.

Survivors have joined the March in recent years, among them Judy Weissenberg Cohen, a native of Hungary who never said goodbye to her mother.

Weissenberg Cohen last saw her mother at the selection process alongside the train tracks in Birkenau in May 1944. The sharing of her memories and the admonition to create a world where memories like hers cannot happen again have been incorporated as part of the theme of an exhibit that will be hosted at the United Nations beginning on Jan. 28.

Titled *When You Listen to a Witness, You Become a Witness*, the exhibit features images taken over the lifespan of the International March of the Living, poems and prose by young participants, testimony by survivors and an interactive component in which visitors will be asked to record their own commitments to make the world a better place.

Those pledges will be input onto iPads and transcribed onto plaques that will be posted on the MOL website and planted in the grounds at Birkenau, along with thousands of other plaques of visitors to the death camp.

"The centre point of the exhibit is the contrast between the death marches of 70 years ago and the March of the Living march today," said Eli Rubenstein, national director of MOL Canada and one of the creators of the exhibit. Some survivors who participated in the MOL actually experienced the death marches of 1945.

One of the best-known is the one from Auschwitz-Birkenau. As Red Army forces approached from the east, the Nazis evacuated the camp. Those prisoners able to walk were force-marched west to other camps. Many died en route. The exhibit is scheduled to open on Jan. 28, one day after International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the annual day of commemoration established by the United Nations that coincides with the day in 1945 that Auschwitz was liberated.

The exhibit was created by a panel of MOL executives and includes a substantial Canadian contribution. In addition to Weissenberg Cohen, other Canadian survivors featured in the exhibition include Nate Leipciger, Bill Glied, Mayer and Rena Schondorf, Max Illand and Anita Ekstein.

Images snapped by five Canadian photographers are included, while the poems and prose of Canadian teenagers feature prominently as well.

The images and the written words highlight just how emotional and difficult it can be for survivors to relive their painful experiences, Rubenstein said. For many survivors, it means visiting the scene of so much pain and heartache. For the students, "for the first time in their lives they're coming across ultimate evil."

Rena Schondorf, left, with two students from Montreal

Since its inception, March of the Living has brought more than 200,000 students to Europe, along with thousands of survivors. "The survivors tell their stories in the very places where the tragedies unfolded, and the students listen," Rubenstein said.

Many of the students return to their homes dedicated to community service, he added.

The exhibit will run through the end of February.

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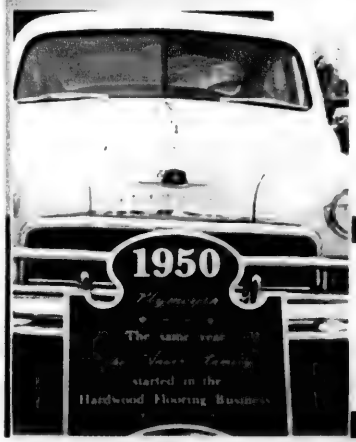
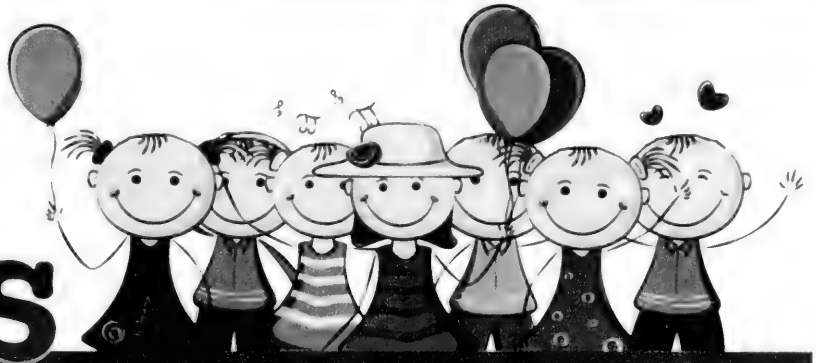


Dickinson Wright is pleased to announce that Lawyer Vivian [illegible] has been appointed as Canada's new Ambassador to the State of Israel. As a partner in our Toronto office, she was also a member of the boards of CBC/Radio-Canada and the Canadian Journalism Foundation, as well as an adjunct professor at the University of Toronto in the Faculty of Law.
We congratulate Vivian on this outstanding honour, and wish her well in her new endeavor.
DICKINSON WRIGHT

CAMPS



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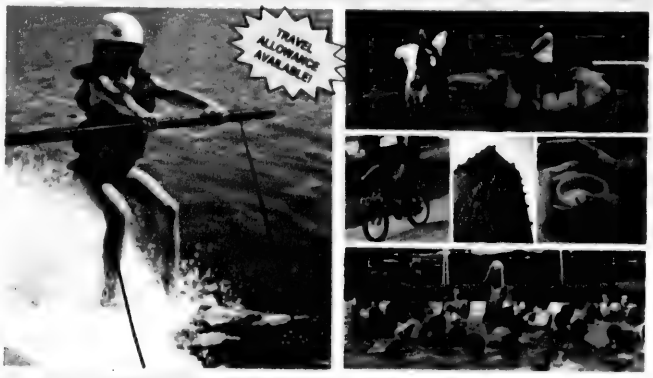

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Lighting designer's show honours his mother

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Itai Erdal

Itai Erdal is about to take his 2010 one-man-show back on the road with performances from the Yukon to the Maritimes.

A few years ago, the 39-year-old lighting designer's mother was diagnosed with lung cancer. Hearing that she had just nine months to live, he headed to his native Israel to spend time with her and document the last year of her life.

"She had a very strong personality, and she was also an atheist. She didn't think she was going to heaven or hell and was very matter of fact about her death… It was kind of her idea to make a documentary," he said.

Instead of a documentary, he ended up incorporating the footage into his show, *How to Disappear Completely*, so although it's a one-man-show, there are several characters on screens, including his mother.

Since 2010, he's taken the show on the road across the continent. He won an award for best direction for his performance from SummerWorks Performance Festival, the largest juried theatre festival in Canada.

He said the show has allowed him to connect with audiences everywhere, dealing with grief and other issues about fatal illness such as the euthanasia debate.

"I've got an amazing reaction from people who tell me life stories about people who died, and that the play has made them face their own grief easier," he told *The CJN*.

Erdal has been working in live performance for decades now, but he's usually not found on stage. Instead, he sits in his lighting booth, subtly changing the show's mood. He is currently in Toronto lighting the Pleiades Theatre's upcoming production of *Manon, Sandra and the Virgin Mary*, which runs until Feb. 2.

He said his love of lighting began when he was a 16-year-old with an interest in photography.

"I'm really into composition and doing pretty things, and lighting is a way to make compositions with lights really," he said. "I always felt it was an intimate part of telling the story."

He said the lighting of a show can drastically alter the performance. It can offer subtle cues to the audience, for example, by changing the temperature of the colours – going from warmer lights to cooler ones, just enough to change the atmosphere without notifying the audience that it's changed.

In each show, he works with the director to determine the best lighting for each scene, though he said his expertise means he can sometimes surprise the direction and take the story to another level in ways the director hadn't imagined.

He said it's all thanks to his career in lighting direction that he was able to make his one-man show.

"I realized I'm in a unique position where I've been doing well as a lighting designer… so I can afford to do a show," he said, adding that he's never acted before, but he's very comfortable on stage.

Since light direction plays a major role in his life, it's only natural that it's an integral aspect of the show, too. He controls his own lighting from the stage, using it as a tool to tell his story.

"It's about lighting, it's about my mom and how she died… It's about every aspect of my life, but mostly about a relationship between a mother and son," he said. "It couldn't be [performed by] anybody else but me."

To find out more, including performance dates, visit itaierdal.com.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Rosenfeld, Abram	Dec. 31/13	205 Cummer Ave
Greenberg, Marion	Jan. 1/14	Private
Krieger, Benjamin	Jan. 1/14	16 Elgin St
Granek, Fred	Jan. 2/14	3 Innisbrook Cres
Wesfield, Richard Michael	Jan. 2/14	9 Kainona Ave
Lipton, Ben	Jan. 2/14	7460 Bathurst St
Grundland, Harry	Jan. 3/14	55 Ameer Ave
Estrien, Stephen	Jan. 3/14	38 Daphnia Dr
Tarek, Usher	Jan. 3/14	89 Skymark Dr
Klaczkowski, Julius	Jan. 3/14	
Zamskaya, Alla	Jan. 5/14	Private
Danzig, Michael	Jan. 4/14	11 Warwick Ave
Stein, Jeffrey N.	Jan. 6/14	3311 Bathurst St
Bottner, Renia	Jan. 6/14	41 Tommy Douglas Gardens
Krayzman, Grigory	Jan. 7/14	Private
Shack, Leo	Jan. 7/14	22 Benner Ave
Cohen, Andrea Lynn	Jan. 6/14	1010 Victoria St
Kuntsman, Arkady	Jan. 6/14	118 Vanguard Rd
Bloom, Selwyn Paul	Jan. 8/14	
Parker, Joseph	Jan. 8/14	Private
Roitman, Froiko	Jan. 9/14	Private
Tilis, Dina	Jan. 6/14	Private
Gertler, Morris	Jan. 9/14	90 Peckham Ave
Pomerants, Lev	Jan. 9/14	10 Trench St
Vajda, Zoltan	Jan. 9/14	5765 Yonge St

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Women's health brand goes global 'overnight'

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Women in the Middle East, Turkey and the Caspian Sea region will now have access to femMED products, a Canada-based line of women's natural health supplements that address a wide variety of health concerns.

In November 2013, femMED partnered with NewBridge Pharmaceuticals, an international company headquartered in Dubai. "We became a global brand literally overnight," said Shawna Page, CEO and founder of femMED.

As a Toronto Bay Street business executive for 20 years, Page felt it was time to step back and pause. "Being an entrepreneur was the furthest thing from my mind," she told *The CJN*.

Shawna Page, CEO and founder of femMed

"When I reached 42 years of age, my hormones were playing havoc with my body. I set out to alleviate my symptoms and soon recognized there was nowhere I could go to get what I needed to help solve my health concerns," she said.

Identifying a market niche, Page hired a broker in November 2007 to get her a time slot with Shoppers Drug Mart where she could present her ideas.

"I had no bottles and no formulas, only a 'concept' of making women's health simple. I left the meeting with four weeks to build the company with my two founding partners: my husband, Steven Page, and Roy Segal. Within that time, we created five formulas, got a name, did all of our branding and developed ideas for driving sales. We returned four weeks later, and left that second meeting with a promise from Shoppers Drug Mart to launch femMED across the country.

"In April 2008, we officially launched," Page said.

The company has grown from a five-product line with an exclusive distribution at Shoppers Drug Mart stores to 13 products available at 3,500 retail locations across Canada, and in the United States through an exclusive deal with the Duane Reade chain, owned by Walgreen's.

Page and her team set out to simplify women's health concerns by developing multi-ingredient products that were simple to understand and easy to self-select from the shelf.

The femMED product range includes solutions for hormonal issues (including PMS, perimenopause and menopause), prenatal concerns, bone health, breast health, hair, skin, nails, energy – the list goes on. The supplements are free of fillers, additives, artificial colours and preservatives.

"The market is filled with single-ingredient products such as the letter vitamins A, B, C, D and E, and minerals such as zinc, calcium and magnesium. No one had taken on the task of formulating a line of products for women that address their most common health concerns, at every age and stage of life. Our formulas have anywhere from eight to 28 ingredients.

"We take the thinking out of it to make it easier to self-select what a woman knows is right for her. The way we do that is how we name our products. For example, sleep: when a woman hasn't been able to sleep or can't fall asleep or stay asleep, that's the name of a product that will resonate with her. She will understand and self-select what is right for her, rather than have to ask a stock person. There are no misunderstandings," Page said.

Since femMED is a private company, Page would not disclose the exact amount of capital invested, but she did say several million dollars was raised.

"I raised my first round of capital – well over a million dollars – on a concept," she said.

Seventy per cent of femMED's advertising is now digital, employing search engine marketing and search engine optimization.

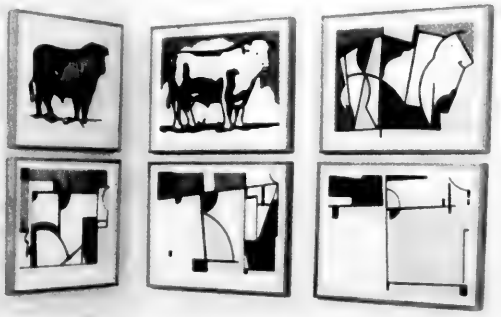
"We do YouTube 30-second spots and TV specialty channels like the Women's Network. We spend a lot of money every year to grow the business and encourage trial, and raise awareness of the brand," she said. "Our sales in the United States are generated through direct response. We go to the consumer using radio advertising, newspaper and direct mail. The radio spot will drive the consumer to our website and they will purchase online.

"I created the line for me, so I had me at the heart of it. When you are putting something in your body, it has to be the best that money can buy. Our products retail for about $30. That's a $1-a-day mentality," Page said.

The company increased its sales by 60 per cent in 2012-13. "This has been a monumental year for us," she said.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, femMED will expand its business to produce formulas for manMED, kiddieMED, teenMED and animal branding – aniMED.

Sotheby's



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Now accepting consignments for our upcoming auctions in New York. Specialists from Sotheby's Prints and Jewellery departments will be receiving appointments for auction estimates on the following dates:

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Van Cleef & Arpels
Sold in New York for $185,000
11 December 2013

Ice Storm Forces Reena Individuals From Their Homes

An Open Letter of Profound Thanks to the Staff at Reena

On behalf of the members of the Reena Board of Directors, we extend a deep and sincere Thank You to the staff who were on duty during the December Ice Storm and to others who interrupted their planned vacations to support efforts to relocate those individuals supported by Reena who were in difficult situations. In total 89 people were moved from 12 locations including our three ElderHomes – an enormous task which, under the direction of Sandy Stemp, Reena COO, was carried out smoothly, effectively, and with a great deal of physical effort!

Many, many people pitched in and did so with total dedication to the care and well-being of the people living in Reena homes. Front-line staff, supervisors, managers, property as well as administration staff – all worked together and accomplished the myriad tasks necessary to move so many individuals to the Toby and Henry Battle Developmental Centre or to the Reena Community Residence where they would be safe and warm.

Some snapshots

- firemen carrying individuals from the second floor of Weldrick and Reena staff trying to pick them up!

- Judaic/Volunteer department buying out No Frills and personally expensing the whole amount since the store didn't accept the company visa!

- Reena Community Residence staff welcoming 33 people to their building, finding spaces and settling everyone incredibly well, taking it all in stride as though they get 33 house guests every day, what a fabulous team at RCR!

- the Supervisor at Reena's home for children advocating for her kids not to move and making plans even through the dark and cold, knowing what works for them

- property staff for delivering cots all over the city and coordinating all the other property deliveries, issuing taxi chits and managing related tasks

- supervisors who were on vacation showing up on e-mail and obviously working

- our incredible On-Call Team who worked non-stop, thinking of all possible issues and putting things in place. They were wonderful, calm, cool, even when exhausted

- all the Supervisors, going to locations, making plans, supporting individuals and staff, figuring out the logistics of who was moving where and how, managing very challenging staffing issues in the peak of vacation time

- wonderful support workers staying late to ensure the individuals were settled after relocating, helping other locations, working extended shifts, taking everything in stride, working in the dark, cold and then packing - bedding, toiletries, medications, supplies, special diets.

- our IT department making late night visits to reboot our computer and phone systems to enable contact within our system

- and most importantly – when it was deemed safe to do so, returning all individuals, and their belongings intact, back to their homes after their great adventure.

It is heartening to know that when there is a need, even with their own families impacted, Reena personnel really come through! We thank them again for showing up, offering assistance and putting in so many extra hours to ensure the continued high level of support of the individuals at Reena.

Reena staff should be very proud of what they have all done for the wonderful people we support.

Hilen Vale, Chair of the Reena Board
Sandy Kreshen, Reena President and CEO

Jewish travel in Poland today

Reviewed by Norman Ravvin

Jewish Poland Revisited: Heritage Tourism in Unquiet Places
Erica Lehrer
Indiana University Press

In my detailed, richly illustrated but 10-year-old Polish travel guide, Kazimierz, the old Jewish quarter of Krakow, warrants barely a mention. Erica Lehrer's recent study offers dramatic proof of the changes in Polish-Jewish networks over the past decade and a half, while asking, too, what impact such changes will have on contemporary Jewish identity and culture.

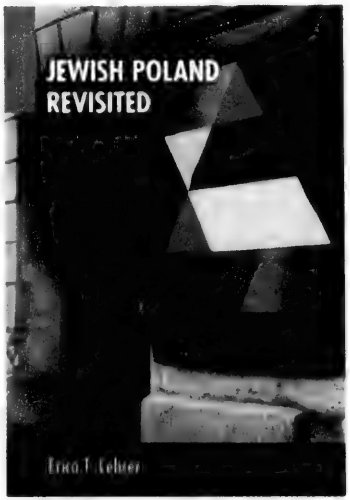
Though Lehrer is interested in broader Polish developments, the focus of her research is Kazimierz, which, centuries ago, was a village on the outskirts of Krakow, but with time became a thriving Jewish quarter and a major portion of the old city. In 1939, its 45,000 Jews made up one-quarter of the royal city's population.

Because the German military command was stationed in Krakow, its Renaissance-era buildings were spared the destruction that befell other major Jewish Polish centres such as Warsaw. However, the post-war decades of Soviet Communism took their toll – Nowa Huta, the monstrous steel plant on the outskirts of the city, was meant to draw workers away from the influence of Polish intellectuals and Catholic leaders.

Under the Polish Communists, Kazimierz's stock of historic synagogues and churches, its prewar tenements, fell into disrepair, while ongoing questions about property ownership, created by the wartime massacre of the local population, left many buildings in real estate limbo, vacant and unsellable. Still, in 1978, UNESCO recognized Kazimierz as a world heritage site, honouring the value of what was an "architecturally intact, historic Jewish town."

Jewish Poland Revisited is a book about present, not past, events in Kazimierz and though it must take into consideration the damage done by German occupation, it means to examine what Lehrer calls "Post-Holocaust reconciliation." By this she means recent developments – most of them beginning in the early '90s, the first post-Communist years – aimed at "reconnection and the creation of new networks that extend across the boundaries generated by group suffering."

This phenomenon has many forms of expression, some of which Lehrer views with wholehearted hopefulness, while others raise questions and critique. She acknowledges that as early as the 1970s, Soviet-enforced censorship of Jewish organizations and cultural activity led to interest among non-Jewish Poles in "Jews and activities on their behalf" as part of a "progressive politics" of resistance to church and government power.



In the '90s, pioneering efforts at cultural reconciliation, highlighted by Krakow's annual Festival of Jewish Culture, along with nascent touring and guiding efforts by Poles, led to a changing atmosphere for Jewish-Polish dialogue.

One of the oddest chapters in the revival of Kazimierz came with the arrival in 1994 of Steven Spielberg and his crew of film technicians and Hollywood stars to make *Schindler's List*. Spielberg chose Kazimierz for shooting his scenes, rather than Podgorze, the actual locale across the Vistula of the wartime Jewish ghetto and the Schindler factory. Re-created Jewish storefronts appeared in Kazimierz's main square, and the neighbourhood attained cachet as a tourist site in part because of film sets left intact after their usefulness as set locations had past.

Now, at the actual Schindler building across the river, there is an excellent museum focused on the war years and Oskar Schindler's activities. In Kazimierz, supported by increased tourism and the success of the cultural festival, there is real interest in the neighbourhood's history, its remarkable architecture and its burgeoning heritage, café and musical culture.

Lehrer is also interested in reconciliation that seems to stand on ambiguous or even troubling ground, and this is most directly addressed in her chapter titled "Traveling Tschotschkes and 'Post-Jewish' Culture."

The "tschotschkes" under discussion are the handiwork of a tradition of Polish woodcarvers, whose toy-sized subjects include a somewhat limited array of Polish Jewish types from the prewar era. Dressed in black yeshiva garb, or decked out with neatly reproduced fur chassidic shtreimlach, these figures predate recent tourism developments and are related to a Polish woodcarving tradition that embraces elaborate beehives and Christmas crèche scenarios. In a recent museum exhibit at the Ethnographic Museum in Krakow, Lehrer's research led to a display of these carvings, alongside substantial in-house and online discussion of how such carvings might (or might not) represent a form of reconciliation between Poles and Jews.

Some visitors respond to the carvings' presence in Kazimierz shops as they might to "black-faced lawn ornaments or tobacco-store Indians." Others are ardent collectors and request purpose-made figures from better-known carvers. One of the carvers Lehrer interviews extensively has found a dedicated venue in the Szeroka Square Jarden bookstore, where he displays his increasing array of carved Jews: a minyan encircled by a single tallit, klezmorim, a man clutching a goose, a "rare couple embracing a row of children."

The carvings can be seen as part of a large array of Jewish remnants on the Polish landscape, which include small- town synagogue buildings now used as libraries; restored cemetery grounds so completely desecrated by the Germans they appear today as rural parks; and, more troublingly, the ongoing discovery of Jewish gravestones in postwar structures and street paving.

The unquiet nature of Poland as a Jewish heritage place is changing rapidly, and Lehrer's *Jewish Poland Revisited* is an up-to-date and detailed guide to the shifting landscape.

Norman Ravvin is co-organizer of the Lodz, Poland-based conference, Kanade, di goldene medine, taking place in April, 2014.

Beggar's Opera coming to York U theatre

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Fourth-year York University fine arts student Sarah Chahley is starring in Theatre @ York's *The Beggar's Opera*, at the Sandra Faire and Ivan Fecan Theatre Jan. 28 to Feb. 1.

Originally staged in London, England, in 1728, this version of the play by John Gay is adapted and directed by Gwen Dobie.

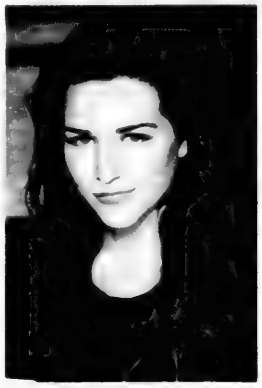
This production unfolds as a play within a play. It tells the tale of corruption, social inequality and wrongdoings.

"*The Beggar's Opera* was written by John Gay as an anti-opera to satirize what his colleagues were doing at the time," says Chahley. "Instead of having beautiful arias, they are much more folk arias. It takes place in a prison, [and] outlines that people with money can get away with anything, even when they are in lock-up. If you have money, you have freedom in this world.

"Gwen Dobie chose to modernize it by making it set in a modern-day jail and having us as prisoners putting on *The Beggar's Opera*, so that we can make it relevant to the financial situation that we are in now."

Chahley plays Mrs. Peachum. She and her husband are the "pimps" of the criminals. "We send out highwaymen and they work for us to bring back money, goods and anything we can make money from on the black market, and as a result, we prevent them from being hanged. So, as soon as they are no longer of use to us, they are on the block to be hanged."

She says the play shows that money doesn't really buy happiness, but the manipulation of money gets you into horrible situations.



Sarah Chahley

Chahley caught the acting bug early, attending local drama programs as a kid. Her first foray into performing in theatrical productions was at Camp Wahanowin in Orillia, Ont., and she appeared in a number of high school productions. At York, she has performed in a range of plays from August Strindberg to Shakespeare.

The actor says being Jewish affects her art a lot. Last year, she played a Polish Jewish girl who has to pretend to be German in the play *Our Class*

"My family are Polish Jews, and I, in the play, as a result of a German officer being fond of me, had to completely let go of all my beliefs, to be a German, essentially."

She says that really brought it all home to her, "just in the realization of what my ancestors went through to get to Canada. I got to bring and offer to the class the real revelation and my grandfather and grandmother's knowledge and experience of that time. *Our Class* wouldn't have otherwise had that perspective."

In addition to her theatrical work, she has also studied film acting, and she was able to work on independent films by the university's film students.

"I realized how much I have to learn about that side of performance," Chahley says. "My first step is to get as much experience on film as possible. I love theatre, but I have a love for the perfection that can be obtained in cinema. I would like to learn and master that as much as I can."

For more information about *The Beggar's Opera*, visit: http://finearts.yorku.ca/beggarsopera.

Spotlight to shine on Israeli culture

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The Spotlight on Israeli Culture, a two-month showcase of Israeli music, theatre, film, dance and visual arts described as the first event of its kind, will be presented in Toronto in February and March.

Organized by the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation, the exhibits and performances will be held in venues throughout the city, including the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company, the Julie M. Gallery for Contemporary Art, the Koffler Centre of the Arts and the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

"There is so much spectacular Israeli culture, so many spectacular performances and art… I think Israel is in a golden age, a cultural golden age," said Cheryl Wetstein, who has been serving for the past seven years as the executive director of the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

"There is so much energy, so much creativity. They talk about Israel as the startup nation, but there is also Israel as the art-up nation."

Wetstein said she's been working very closely over the past year with Rebecca Singh, director of cultural affairs at the Consulate General of Israel in Toronto and Western Canada, to encourage other cultural organizations in the city to showcase Israeli work throughout the months of February and March.

"The idea is to bring together people who are doing their own thing and to encourage people in this time frame to showcase Israelis," Wetstein said.

"The Toronto Jewish Film Festival always has a Chai Tea [film screening] event in February, so we co-ordinated with them that this is when they would do an Israeli film."

Wetstein insisted that organizing the spotlight was very much a group effort.

"We're not producing these shows… The presenters are the people putting this on. Our support has been more in the administrative and in the publicity… but not in the actual production of the shows," she said.

The Israeli culture spotlight includes, but is not limited to:

- the theatre production of *An Israeli Love Story*, a true story about a young girl named Margalit and an idealistic kibbutz pioneer and soldier in the Palmach, named Ami;
- a screening of *Igor and The Cranes' Journey*, an Israeli film presented by the Toronto Jewish Film Festival and the Toronto Jewish Film Society, about an 11-year-old Russian boy who has to start a new life in Israel following his parents' divorce;
- an Israeli jazz showcase, presented by Toronto Downtown Jazz and the Consulate General of Israel in association with The Ashkenaz Foundation, featuring the Gilad Hekselman Trio, the Shai Maestro Trio, and the Toronto-based, Juno award nominated David Buchbinder Ensemble;
- a visual art exhibit called *Harissa, Honey & Hysop: Photos of North African Food*, featuring the work of Nelli Sheffer, Israel's top food photographer, who travelled to North Africa in search of foods that have become an integral part of the cuisine in Israel, where more than half the Jewish population is Sephardi.

Wetstein said the spotlight falls in line with the mission of the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation, which is to present Israeli culture in Canada, and to act as a cultural bridge.

"The idea is to showcase this to the general population, just to show what Israel has to offer," she said.

"I think that Israel gets seen by the general public mainly in terms of the conflict, in terms of the difficulties, and I think it's important for people to see that Israel is much more than that. All of these artists are acting as ambassadors for Israel and showing Israel's cultural side."

For more information, visit www.spotlightonisraeliculture.com.

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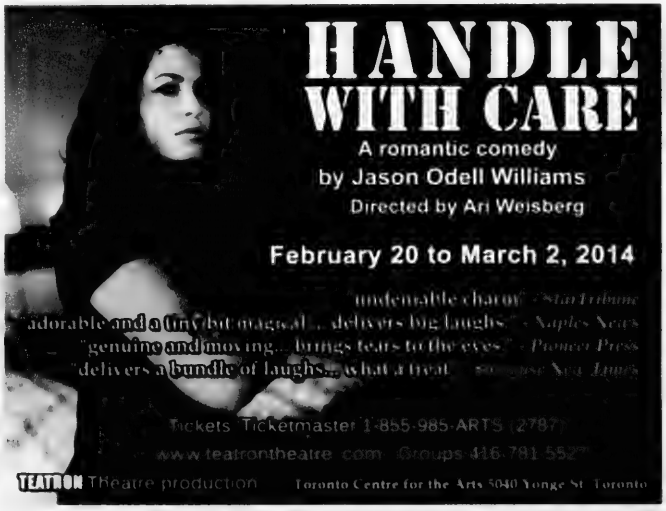
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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

VIDEO PERFORMANCE WORKS BY SIGALIT LANDAU AT KOFFLER GALLERY

Moving to Stand Still, a solo retrospective exhibition by Israeli artist **Sigalit Landau**, is the second exhibition in the Koffler Gallery's new downtown home.

Curated by gallery director **Mona Filip**, the exhibition brings together six video performance works, shown for the first time in Canada, offering a poetic investigation with global resonance of the political and environmental realities of Israel.

In *Barbed Hula* (2000), the artist spins a barbed wire hoop around her bare waist, while *DeadSee* (2005) confronts the ecological consequences of massive agricultural exploitation. The video *Azkelon* (2011) highlights a children's game of borders on the beach between Palestinian children of Gaza and Jewish children of Ashkelon, while *Laces* (also 2011) focuses on a young girl playing beneath a negotiation table while adults discuss potentially serious implications above.

The Koffler presentation of *Moving to Stand Still* is its only North American stop on an international tour that also includes Moscow, Johannesburg, Be'er Sheva, Rome, Gdansk and Tromso. Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St., Feb. 6 to April 6. Opens with a free public reception, Feb. 6, 6 to 9 p.m. kofflerarts.org

• • •

Lichtenberg Joins the Fray: Singer **Lenka Lichtenberg** and her band **Fray** perform a multimedia concert at an "Eccodek Peripheral Vision Remix & Video Launch Party." The concert will feature a full set by Fray,and the unveiling of a new video, *Open My Eyes*.

Lichtenberg sings in six languages – Yiddish, English, Czech, French, Russian and Hebrew – and her repertoire has branched out considerably from her roots in Jewish liturgy and Yiddish poetry. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. Jan. 28, doors open 8 p.m. $12, eventbrite.ca or 416-588-0307 for dinner reservations; $15 at the door. www.lenkalichtenberg.com

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Chai Tea & A Movie: Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents *Igor & the Cranes' Journey*, an Israeli-Polish-German film (2012, subtitled) about an 11-year-old Russian boy of divorced parents who adjusts to life in Israel by tracking the migration of a flock of cranes from eastern Europe to Africa. "In this feature debut, young Israeli-Russian filmmaker **Evegeny Ruman** proves himself dexterous at mixing light humour with a truly heartwarming story." $15. City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Vaughan. Sunday, Feb. 9, tea at 4 p.m., film at 5 p.m. tjff.com

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Theatre Improv: Golden Ages – *The Completely Improvised Musical* is a two-act musical with a twist: it's largely improvisational, based on audience suggestion. The period can be any decade from the 1930s to the present (it changes each time), the seven-piece orchestra improvises the music and the four main actors improvise their characters' backstories. Produced by **Alan Kliffer**. Annex Theatre, 730 Bathurst St., every third Monday of the month (8 p.m.) $10

***Salted Lake* from the *Moving to Stand Still* exhibit by Sigalit Landau.**

Another Kliffer-produced improvised show, *Mixed Company*, features actors who find out their stage partners and scenes when they arrive at the theatre; then they pick out their costumes, props and minimal set pieces. Comedy Bar, 945 Bloor St. W. Runs the last Monday of each month beginning Jan. 27, 8 p.m. $12

• • •

Jewish Book Awards: *Like Dreamers: The Story of The Israeli Paratroopers Who Reunited Jerusalem and Divided a Nation*, by **Yossi Klein Halevi** was named Jewish Book of the Year by the American 2013 National Jewish Book Awards committee. (Reviewed in last week's *CJN*.) Other award-winners include *FDR and the Jews* (Breitman/ Lichtman), *1929: Mapping the Jewish World* (Diner/Estraikh, eds.), *An American Bride in Kabul: A Memoir* (Chesler), and the **Amos Oz** novel *Between Friends* (translated by Sondra Silverston). South African-Canadian **Kenneth Bonert** won in the outstanding fiction debut for his novel *The Lion Seeker* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). For the full list, please visit www.jewishbookcouncil.org

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Arts in Brief

• If you missed **Alan Zweig's** insightful, award-winning documentary *When Jews Were Funny* the first time around, it's returning this week for a few screenings at the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema, 506 Bloor St. W. at Bathurst, Jan. 23, 26 and 28. bloorcinema.com

• • •

• The Swiss-based vocal ensemble **Profeti della Quinta** performs a concert showcasing the music of the "revolutionary" 17th-century Jewish-Italian composer **Salomone Rossi**; the evening also features a screening of *Hebreo*, a short documentary about Rossi. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, Jan. 28, 8 p.m. www.hrcentre.ca, 905-787-8811. Tickets $20 with promo code ROSSI.

Montreal director's film up for Oscar

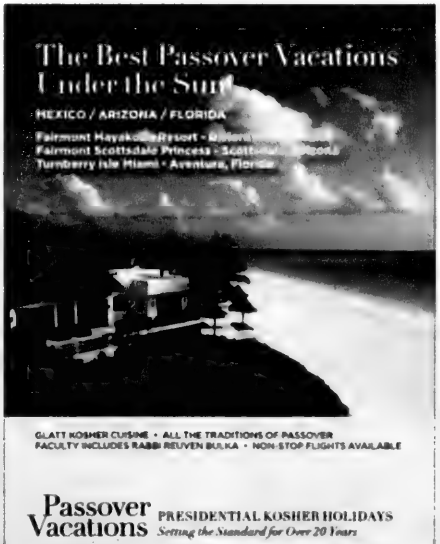
CJN Staff

A film about the world's reputed oldest Holocaust survivor, written and directed by Montreal-based Malcolm Clarke, has been nominated for an Academy Award for best documentary short, it was announced on Jan. 16.

The Lady in Number 6: Music Saved My Life is a British film about 109-year-old pianist Alice Herz Sommer of London. The irrepressible Bohemian native survived the Theresienstadt concentration camp.

The 38-minute film, which premiered in November in London, is described as inspirational and uplifting.

British-born Clarke is a two-time Oscar winner for past documentaries, and his 2002 Holocaust-themed *Prisoner of Paradise* was nominated for best documentary feature by the Academy.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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Kosher caterer chooses local products where possible

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Moshe Oziel, founder and president of Clearwater Catering Inc., said one of the things that separates his company from other kosher options in the city is his emphasis on the farm to table concept, a movement focused on the production of local, seasonal and often, but not always, organic food.

"Today we aren't entirely aware of the way our food is grown, handled and processed," said 30-year-old Oziel, who founded his full-service, kosher catering company (under COR) in 2009.

"There are GMOs [genetically modified organisms] and pesticides, and unfortunately, we're getting away from natural foods, so farm to table is perfect for those who are interested in eating locally grown, seasonal food," he said.

The movement strives to bring the food industry back to the days when people grew most of their own food or bought from local farmers. Today, much of the produce found in grocery stores comes from halfway around the world and is in transit for days before it reaches the dinner table.

The longer it takes for food to get from the farm to your home, the more nutrition and flavour is lost.

"If I can get potatoes that came from a local farm less than 100 kilometres away from here, as opposed to something that has been harvested before its time, shipped over here and ripened on a truck, my product is going to be better and my clients are going to taste the difference," Oziel said.

"I love farming and I love agriculture and I always have a garden at my house... I plant things seasonally. Farm to table is a good way for me to incorporate that into the culinary world, but it's also a lifestyle."

Because farm to table produce has so much natural flavour, Oziel said he doesn't feel the need to mask his dishes with competing flavours.

"I personally enjoy a lot of fresh food, vegan and vegetarian dishes, not using too many ingredients, but using just enough so that the freshness of the ingredients is able to shine through," he said.

"I like to use quality products, such as cold-pressed olive oils, grapeseed oils, the right legumes – it's about using the best products, not just the ones that are readily available at the cheapest price."

Oziel, who calls himself a "self-taught cook," has been part of the kosher catering business for more than seven years.

Although not classically trained, ("I went to the school of hard knocks"), he immersed himself, as much as possible, in the art of food preparation.

"I guess you could say I went to my mom's chef school. My mom is an amazing cook," he said.

"When I was 25, I bought books that had the curriculums of the top culinary schools in the United States, and I would go home after work and study the curriculum on my own to understand the business of cooking and catering and understand food."

His hands-on experience comes from working with talented chefs including Erin Green, currently the executive chef with Taste Culinary Inc., who studied at the Culinary Institute of America, one of the best culinary schools in the world.

When Oziel worked under her, she was the executive chef for Rhonda Litwack Fine Foods, which has since closed down.

"She was a really talented chef and she knew a lot, so she gave me the inspiration to study the art. She made me pay my dues," he recalled.

Oziel also worked alongside Carlo Lazzarino, who is currently the pastry chef for the Terroni group of restaurants.

At Zuchter Berk Kosher Catering, Oziel served as both a chef and a mashgiach, and he also spent more than two years employed by PR Creative Caterers, another Toronto-based kosher company.

Throughout his years gaining experience in the industry, Oziel developed a love for this line of work.

"I love cooking, but more importantly, I love... the satisfaction that you can obtain from a final result. It's something that is really important me. I can cook an amazing dish and then I can experience the fruit from that labour right away. Our lives are based around food," he said.

"To see someone enjoy it is the thing I enjoy most about the whole process."

He said he hopes his full-service company, which provides a team of servers as well as chefs who cook on-site, will alleviate some of the stresses related with party planning.

Clearwater Catering offers a number of set menu choices, but Oziel said clients can customize their menu to reflect their personal tastes, dietary restrictions and budget.

"It's not all about me and the bottom dollar. I believe life is a series of experiences and we have to enjoy it as much as we can."

For more information, visit clearwatercatering.ca.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of Feb. 6 is Jan. 27. The deadline for the issue of Feb. 13 is Feb. 3. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Jan. 23

BROADWAY GOES YIDDISH

David Gale leads a Yiddish theatre workshop focusing on "Broadway Goes Yiddish," 7-9 p.m., Jan. 23-March 27. To register, visit www.committeeforyiddish.com, or call **Barbara**, 416-631-5843.

Saturday, Jan. 25

PARASHAH SPEAKER

Allen Cooper discusses the parashah of the week, 10 a.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

ANCIENT JEWISH SOCIETY

Naftali Cohn, professor of Jewish history at Concordia University, discusses "Ancient Jewish History," as Beth Tikvah Synagogue's scholar in residence at morning services.

JEWISH REFUGEES

Mordechai Kedar discusses "The Untold Story of Almost a Million Refugees," 7:30 p.m., Darchei Noam Congregation, part of a series on Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

IRISH AND JEWISH

Denis Taylor provides a light-hearted look at growing up Jewish in Belfast and Dublin, 7:30 p.m., Or Hadash Synagogue, 451 Botsford St., Newmarket.

Sunday, Jan. 26

CEMETERY RESTORATION

Howard Nightingale discusses the challenges of the Poland Siedlezcka Cemetery restoration, 7:30 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue.

ISRAEL ADVOCACY

Join Israel advocacy trainers and learn how to defend Israel in the media and among colleagues and peers. Speakers include **Mordechai Kedar, Jacques Gauthier, Mark Vandermaas, Solomon Benzimra, Yudit Shier-Weisberg**, Village Shul, 1072 Eglinton Ave W. To register, visit bit.ly/israelday.

VE'AHAVTA DISCUSSION

Ve'ahavta is holding a volunteer appreciation party, 3 p.m., followed by a panel discussion at 4:30 p.m. on "Should we give a homeless person a coin?" 200 Bridgeland Ave. Unit D. RSVP 416-964-7698 or volunteerinfo@veahavta.org.

JEWISH IDENTITY

Rabbi Karen Levy discusses "Jews on the Edge and Edgy Jews," with Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 7 p.m. $15. RSVP for location, **Roby** 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

'A MEXICAN CONTROVERSY'

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky discusses "A Gringo's Guide to a Mexican Controversy: A discussion on halachic disasters in Jewish history," 8:45 a.m., Congregation B'nai Torah. $5 (includes breakfast).

Monday, Jan. 27

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

The film *Gatehouse to Hell*, the story of Auschwitz survivor **Felix Opatowski** will be shown to commemorate UN International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 7:30 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. RSVP 416-633-3838.

Tuesday, Jan. 28

BOOKS AND MOVIES

Janna Nadler reviews the book *What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank*, by **Nathan Englander**, 8 p.m.

The film *Disobedience: The Sousa Mendes Story* will be shown at 2 p.m.. Both at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Wednesday, Jan. 29

JEWISH GENEALOGY

Simon Kreindler discusses "A Genealogist's Journey: from Galicia, to Barbados, Guatemala, Montreal and Toronto," with the Jewish Genealogical Society, 8 p.m., Temple Sinai. www.jgstoronto.ca.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Real Messiah: Part Two," third in a six-part counter-missionary series, 8 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. Free. To register, call 416-789-0020, or email toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Jan. 30

NIA CLASS

Women and men are invited to enjoy a NIA class, Temple Har Zion, 8 p.m. $5.

Upcoming Events

SHORESH FOOD CONFERENCE

Register now for the Shoresh Food Conference, **Feb. 2**, 10 a.m.-6 p.m, Miles Nadal JCC. Join rabbis, farmers, foodies and activists to explore the intersection of Jewish tradition and contemporary food ethics. www.shoresh.ca.

Continued on page 37

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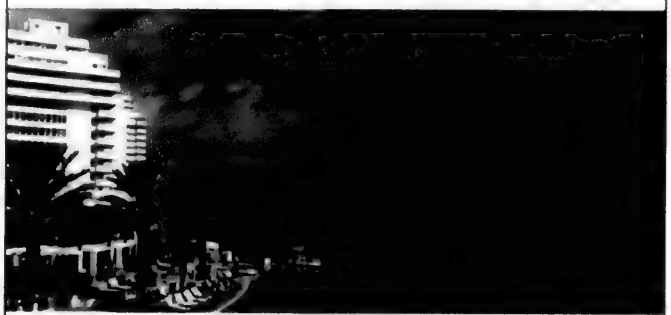

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Territories belong to Israel, says Baker

Continued from page 3

Baker, the head of the forum's international action division, has argued that not only are the territories not occupied, they rightly and under international law belong to Israel.

The forum, a volunteer organization of more than 300 lawyers from around the world, cites Jews' indigenous rights to the land dating back 3,000 years. "Jews have legal, historic and indigenous rights, long before anyone else," Baker said.

The modern legal case for Jewish sovereignty can be traced back to the Balfour Declaration, the San Remo agreement, the mandate given the British by the League of Nations to hold the land in trust for the Jews, and the ratification by the United Nations of those rights, Baker argues. That includes the entire area west of the Jordan River.

"What we said is that Israel has the right to build settlements in Judea and Samaria," that the territories are not "occupied," but belong to Israel as of right, he told *The CJN* during a visit to Toronto last year.

Baker, who served on the Levy Committee, which reported two years ago on Israel's legal claim to the West Bank, wrote that the DFAIT website should not prejudge issues being negotiated between Israel and the Palestinians, including settlements and the disposition of the disputed territories.

"In this way, the policy statement would express Canada's support for the peace process in general terms, in the hope it will lead to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement, but without entering into the negotiating issues," he wrote in the *Jerusalem Post*.

In an email response to *CJN* queries, Rick Roth, director of communications for Baird, stated: "The prime minister and minister Baird have articulated Canada's policy on Israel and the Middle East at great length since 2006.

"Israel has no greater friend in the world than Canada, and it is through our actions, not just words, that this rings true," he said.

Continued from page 36

MAZON SKATING PARTY

Mazon Canada holds a skating party, **Feb. 17,** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Upper Canada College.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Act to End Violence Against Women (formerly Jewish Women International of Canada) is seeking to expand its board of directors. The group, which works mainly in the Jewish community, is looking for women with knowledge of the issue of violence against women who have fundraising, legal and financial experience. Email resumes to penny@acttoendvaw.org, or call **Penny Krowitz** 905-695-5372.

OPEN HOUSE

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School is holding an open house **Feb. 4,** 10 a.m. RSVP to **Sheri Rapp**, 416-928-3537 or sheri@djds.ca.

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Women Fully Clothed, four female comedians, will perform at Hadassah's Tamid Chapter's Girls Night Out, 7 p.m., **Feb. 27**, St. Michael's College School, 1515 Bathurst St. $40. For tickets, call 416-630-8373, or email info@toronto.chw.ca.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Russian, Hebrew, and English-speaking volunteers are needed to support clients or family members with life-threatening conditions. Next training session in February-March.

Volunteers are also needed to spend time with seniors in the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

Jonathan Spyer, Middle East analyst and author, is the scholar in residence at Beth Emeth Synagogue, Jan. 31-Feb. 1. Call 416-633-3838 for details.

LOOKING FOR HOOPSTERS

Looking for three guys over 35 to play basketball in UJA's charity basketball tournament. Call **Michael**, 416-300-9239.

FAMILY CAREGIVERS

A support group for people caring for parents with cognitive or physical impairments will meet Thursdays, 7 p.m. starting Feb. 20 at Day Centre for Seniors, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

MORASHA CLASSSES

Shayna Kravetz teaches "Ten Tough Torah Questions – Part II," **Feb. 12-March 12**, 9:45 a.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum teaches "When the Bible is Confusing: A Dynamic Solution," **Feb. 12-March 12,** 11:15 a.m. To register, call **Loretta,** 416-789-7400.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Have you been through the mental health system? Would you like to be a peer support to others going through the system and soon to be discharged from the hospital? Baycrest is starting a new support program. For more information, call **Janis Sternhill** at 416-785-2500, ext. 2575, or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A four-session group for parents of children ages 2 to 10. Starts Jan. 27, 7 p.m.

Mind-Body Connection for Women: An eight-session group for women to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Jan. 29 at 35 Madison Ave., 2 p.m. or Jan. 30, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A five-session marriage-preparation group for couples who are going to be married in the coming year. Starts Jan. 29, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Adult 55+, Miles Nadal JCC Sing with **Jordan Klapman** when he presents "The Magic of Rodgers and Hammerstein," Feb. 6, 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.). $4. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. Jan. 28, **Miriam Shechter** discusses "Masterpieces of Opera and Ballet: *Pagliacci*" 10 a.m.; Jan. 30, **Afi Peykani** discusses, "Frauds and Scams Targeting Seniors," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Barber/hairdresser Jan. 30, 10 a.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Parenting expert **Nanny Robina** discusses toddler and preschool shenanigans, 7:30 p.m., Jan. 28. Call **Kailah**, ext. 0 to register.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com., or call ext. 4103.

Kevin Courrier presents "Produced and Abandoned," films that Hollywood ignored or audiences never saw, Wednesdays starting Jan. 15, 1 p.m. To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Benjamin Hackman teaches "The Art and Craft of Poetry Writing," Thursdays, starting Jan. 23, 7-9 p.m.

Shari Goldberg teaches about Beruriah, the Talmud scholar and Aisha, the Islamic female scholar, Jan. 26, 2:30 p.m.

Harissa, Honey and Hyssop, photos by **Nelli Sheffer,** is on display in the gallery Jan. 28-Feb. 24.

Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses the work of **Steven Spielberg**, Mondays 7-9 p.m., until March 17. Jan. 27: *The First Decade*.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Health and fitness: MELT Method for hands and feet, helps alleviate arthritis, bunions, carpal tunnel and more. Mondays to March 17, 2:30 p.m.; MELT Method-full body. Meets Tuesdays 7 p.m. to March 18 or Wednesdays to March 26, 11 a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org or 416-898-1818, ext. 574

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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The movie *The Frisco Kid* will be shown Feb. 24, 1 p.m., with a discussion following.

Book Club Fridays begin with the book *An American Bride in Kabul: A Memoir*, by **Phyliss Chesler,** Feb. 28, 10:30 a.m.

Emergency First Aid and CPR taught Feb. 2, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Social Singles Night and movie for adults 35-50, March 8, 7:30 p.m.

Social Singles Night for adults over 50, with live music, March 1, 7:30 p.m.

To register for programs, call **Andrea,** ext. 3006 or email adaiam@srcentre.ca.

מזל טוב

Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Happy 10th birthday Emma-Belle
We are so proud of you and all
that you've accomplished. You're our star!
Love, Mom and Dad

Mazel tov and best wishes
from the family on the engagement
of Isaac Rudik to Amanda Leah Jackson.

Gabriel Finn Lewin, born Sept.26
in New York. Parents, Dana Finesilver &
Robert Lewin, sister Alice Mia. Mazel tov
from proud grandparents, and
great-grandmothers.

Leah Vininsky-Oakes, granddaughter of Eva
Vininsky, daughter of Elaine Vininsky &
Andrew Oakes, joined the Canadian navy
and completed her inaugural
voyage on HMCS Victoria.

Mazel tov to Miriam & Sydney Pinchuk
who will celebrate their 60th wedding
anniversary on Feb 14
With love from your children, grandchildren
and great-grandchildren.

Happy birthday Mom!
Love, Jonathan & Bentley

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca**
or go online to **www.CJNews.com**
and click on **"Family Moments"**

From a parent of a sick child

Ask Ella
By Ella Burakowski

Dear Ella,

This year hasn't started out all that well. The day before the ice storm last month, Emily, my nine-year-old, took sick. She was lethargic, pale and confused, so I took her to the hospital while my husband stayed home with our seven-year-old.

Testing revealed a blood disorder. The next couple of weeks were brutal. I called work and said I wouldn't be back for a while, and my husband held down the fort at home, coming down to visit and relieve me every few days. I basically moved into the hospital with my daughter, who was scared and wanted her mommy.

As I write this, Emily is sleeping in her own bed, her red blood cell count has improved dramatically, and the doctors are hopeful that she'll be fine.

Our family sure could have used some friendship and support throughout this ordeal, but some of our friends were away on holidays and most who were in town were afraid to "bother" us. Are you kidding me? I needed a friendly visit, phone call or even a supportive text message.

My sister helped when she could, mostly on weekends, but she lives far away and has her own family. We have a large circle of friends, but with the exception of a couple of them, most wanted to "give us our space."

I'm hoping that by writing this, it will alert people not to be afraid to call when someone is in crisis. You're not bothering. I sure could have used a friendly face or a change of scenery, even if it was just company in the lobby for a coffee.

Friends are not supposed to be only for good times. I'm not going to be shy about this. I'm going to tell them how disappointed I am. This is not what I call friendship.

When the Going Gets Tough

Dear When the Going Gets Tough

First of all, it's fabulous to hear that Emily is doing better. There's nothing more important than that.

It's funny how people react in a crisis. Some step up to the plate, while others seem to disappear.

Let's face it: it's uncomfortable to talk to someone going through a difficult life event, whether it be a sick family member or a shivah. Like you say, people are afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing, making a stupid remark or being insensitive. It's easier to avoid the situation until things return to "normal."

But I'm with you. We need to educate people and let them know it's not OK to avoid difficult situations, especially when people close to you are suffering.

Here are some ground rules.

You're not bothering when you call. Do you have any idea how boring sitting in a hospital is? A phone call is a break, a time when a parent can vent. It doesn't matter what it's about, whether it's the lousy hospital food or how scared they are. You listen.

Even better, get down there and be with that parent. Bring some homemade food, a good book or a magazine. Call first, and offer to stop by their house to pick up anything they might need.

Being an early riser, when my nephew was in the hospital, I would get in my car at 5 a.m. and visit with my sister-in-law who was by his side. She appreciated the company, and I was there when the doctors made their rounds. I know she also appreciated being able to discuss their findings with a family member who cared.

Don't forget about dad who is home with the other child, holding down the fort, working, making sure his daughter gets to school, gets picked up, has dinner, and has to get down to see his other daughter and relieve his wife, too.

If you think it all sounds like a nightmare, you're right. Besides worrying about a sick child, the logistics of keeping the rest of the family from falling apart are important as well.

Take a casserole over, or a soup, salad or treat. Don't ask. Just do it.

When you're visiting, take your cues from your friend. If she or he needs to talk, you listen. If they want to hear about something else in the "outside world," then you talk, but never overstay your welcome. You need to have your radar on high alert, and sense when they need to rest. You can even offer to let them sleep or shower or go for a walk while you stay and hold down the fort, making sure their child is not alone.

Be a friend in good times and bad. It's part of life.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: ellacjn@gmail.com. Ella is not a professional counsellor. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Pan-Asian fusion

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

Pan-Asian fusion has established itself in Canada and is becoming increasingly trendy. Its popularity here is an indication that cultural boundaries around the world are becoming more flexible, and that Canada's growing population of Asian immigrants have transported their cuisine and cooking traditions with them.

Many Asian Canadians have been assimilating into Canadian culture, and so has traditional Asian food. This transformation, years ago, applied only to the mixing of Asian and Canadian food, but today, Pan-Asian fusion is the result of combining different components and methods from various Asian cultures and cuisines, including Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean and Hawaiian Pacific Rim cuisine, (based on American, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Polynesian and Portuguese origins). They are now being fused together to create fresh, flavourful and exotic ethnic-inspired dishes that we Canadians crave.

Although most of us have never had the opportunity to visit Asia, we can create wonderful Pan-Asian fusion dishes at home. The secret is to research and use authentic Asian ingredients while bridging these new flavours with foods that you already know and enjoy. Open yourself up to the pure pleasure of savouring these dishes with an entirely new fusion flare.

PACIFIC RIM STYLE MEATLOAF

A delicious fusion meatloaf with a tropical twist.

1 1/2 cups panko Japanese bread crumbs
1 14 oz. can crushed pineapple, drained, reserve 2 tbsp. juice
2 eggs, beaten
2 tbsp. fresh chives, finely chopped
1 tbsp. grated fresh ginger
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 tbsp. fresh coriander, chopped or 1 tsp. dried coriander
1 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. Hoisin sauce
2 lb. ground chicken

Topping
4 tbsp. hoisin sauce
2 tsp. rice wine vinegar
2 tbsp. pineapple juice
1 can pineapple rings for garnish

Prepare 2 Pyrex loaf pans by spraying them with canola oil. In a large bowl, combine panko crumbs, crushed pineapple, eggs, chives, ginger, garlic, coriander, salt and hoisin sauce.

Fill loaf pans with an equal amount of the chicken mixture. Combine topping ingredients in a small bowl, divide it in half, and spoon over the top of each loaf. Bake in a 350-degree oven for one hour. Let stand 5 minutes and, using an offset spatula, go around the edges and loosen the meat loaf from the loaf pan. Place a flat plate over the loaf pan and invert, draining off any juices. Place on a serving platter. Slice and garnish with pineapple rings.

SESAME DUMPLINGS

These tangy dumplings are wonderful served hot right from the pot, but are equally delicious the next day warmed up in the microwave or served cold over a bed of fresh Napa cabbage.

Dumplings
1 package wonton wrappers
1/4 lb. ground chicken
1 tsp. soy sauce
1 tsp. cornstarch
1/2 tsp. sesame oil
1 tbsp. finely chopped carrot
1 tsp. fresh ginger, grated
1 tbsp. chopped green onion or chives
Garnish/Salad
1/4 cup Napa cabbage, finely shredded
1/4 cup red pepper, finely chopped
1 1/2 tsp. fresh ginger, grated
2 tbsp. green onion, minced
Sauce
2 tbsp. sesame oil
1/4 cup soy sauce
3 tbsp. rice vinegar

In a small bowl, combine chicken, soy sauce, cornstarch, sesame oil, chopped carrot, ginger and green onion. Line a tray with parchment paper. Place wonton wrappers in a single layer on parchment paper, a few at a time. Spoon 1 tsp. of chicken mixture onto each wrapper. Moisten edges and fold into a half-moon around filling, squeezing to seal. Then gather up the flat side of the fold toward the centre and pinch – dumplings should look like small pouches. Continue until all wrappers are filled.

In large pot, bring water to boil. Gently put in wontons, reduce heat and cook for 5 minutes or until filling is no longer pink. Drain well and put in large bowl. Add Napa cabbage, red pepper ginger and green onion. Mix together the sesame oil, soy sauce and rice vinegar. Toss dumplings with mixture. Serve immediately.

What's for dinner?

Sue Epstein,
Special to The CJN

Laura Frankel, former executive chef of Wolfgang Puck's kosher restaurant and catering service in Chicago and owner-chef of Shallots Bistro in that city, has written a book called *Jewish Slow Cooker Recipes*.

Frankel calls her slow cooker her "Shabbat miracle machine," but has written this book to focus on using the slow cooker to produce satisfying, creative meals every day of the week, not just for Shabbat cholent. The recipes, however, are generally not the "throw stuff in the slow cooker and leave home" type. Many of the recipes have as many as 12 ingredients and seven or eight steps before you're ready to leave home for the day.

Another caveat – although you don't have to be kosher to love this book, it is aimed at a kosher audience. But I know very few, if any, who have meat, dairy and pareve slow cookers, thus limiting your ability to use some of the recipes.

That said, I think you'll love the dishes she presents. Using Frankel's recipes, you can free up oven and/or stovetop space by using your slow cooker. And the recipes are great! I would not have ever thought to use my slow cooker to make dishes like Hot Wings, Moroccan Lamb Tagine or Brown Sugar Glazed Corned Beef. And if you do have a dairy slow cooker, there are some amazing side dishes like Mushroom Stroganoff and desserts such as Black Forest Bread Pudding to be made in it.

Frankel says if you're a slow cooker fan you're sure to find new, exciting recipes in this book. If you're a bit more cautious, then maybe you'll find the inspiration to try slow cooking.

GARLICKY POT ROAST

Marinade:
3 tbsp. chopped garlic (about 4 large cloves)
3/4 cup light brown sugar
3/4 cup olive oil, plus extra for browning the roast
1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp. tomato paste
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 3-5-lb. chuck roast, fat trimmed
olive oil
Sauce:
2 large Spanish onions, chopped
6 garlic cloves, chopped
1 cup dark beer such as Guinness or Aventinus
1 whole head of roasted garlic
2 cups chicken stock
1 cup crumbled gingersnaps (about 15 small cookies; store bought are fine)
1/4 cup tomato paste

Marinate the roast. In a bowl large enough to hold the roast, stir together the chopped garlic, brown sugar, olive oil, vinegar, tomato paste and 1 tablespoon each salt and pepper. Add the roast and turn it to coat on all sides. Cover the bowl and marinate for at least 3 hours, or overnight in the refrigerator.

Place a large sauté pan over medium heat. Lightly coat the bottom of the pan with olive oil. Remove the roast from the marinade and pat dry. Discard the marinade. Lightly season the roast with salt and pepper. Brown the meat on all sides, about 7 minutes per side. Set aside the roast but do not clean the pan.

Preheat a 6-1/2-quart slow cooker to high.

Make the sauce. Add the onions to the sauté pan and cook until brown, 3-5 minutes. Add the chopped garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes more, until the garlic is very fragrant and has softened slightly – do not let the garlic brown. Add the beer. Scrape up the browned bits with a wooden spoon or spatula. Transfer the mixture to the slow cooker insert.

Place the roast and any collected juices in the insert. Squeeze the roasted garlic out of the skin and into the insert. Add the stock, gingersnaps and tomato paste. Stir together. Cover and cook the roast on high for 7 to 8 hours, until it can be pierced easily with a fork.

Remove the roast from the cooker and keep warm. Strain the sauce before serving. Cut the roast into large chunks and serve hot with your choice of accompaniment. Pass the sauce. Makes 8 servings.

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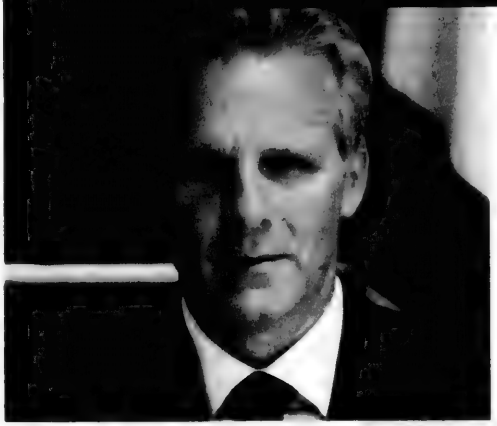

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With Musical Guest **Edon Pinchot**

A 15-year-old singer/songwriter and recording artist, Edon has played piano since he was nine years old and has been singing even longer. After growing a fan base through his YouTube covers of Top 40 songs, Edon recently completed a successful run on the NBC show "America's Got Talent", where he reached the semi-final round out of thousands of auditioning contestants.

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Harper in Israel

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is greeted by children upon his arrival at the Knesset. *[Jason Ransom/ PMO photo]*

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Teen's legacy continues to roar

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Where he went, what he saw, what it all means

Jennifer Tzivia MacLeod
Special to The CJN

JERUSALEM — Through words and actions, Prime Minister Stephen Harper showed on his visit to Israel last week that he "understands Jewish history and Jewish aspirations," says prominent Liberal MP Irwin Cotler.

The former cabinet minister said Harper's trip accomplished three main things. First, he was able "to express Canada's commitment to Israel as a matter of principle," through his Knesset address. Second, the prime minister succeeded in "furthering bilateral relations... not only between governments, but also between peoples." And, third, he succeeded in "warming the hearts of Israelis... that somebody would come here and not engage in the blame game."

The view from Israel

But despite his praise for the trip, Cotler told *The CJN* that it "might have resonated more back home" if Harper had broadened his delegation.

Continued on page 17

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

They didn't all get together, hold hands and sing *Kumbaya*, but they came pretty close.

Participants in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's trip to Israel were positively gushing about the prime minister's performance on the world stage, with several referring to his speech in the Knesset as the highlight.

Rabbis on the trip also mentioned the interaction between colleagues from various denominations of Judaism as a happy unintended consequence of the trip, which saw more than 200 community leaders, rabbis and businesspeople join the Canadian delegation as an "accompanying party."

Referring to Harper's address to the Knesset, Toronto lawyer Berl Nadler, a member of the board of directors of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) called it "a stirring piece of oratorical clarity on the issues."

The view from Canada

Continued on page 17

Rosh Chodesh – Trumah
Candlelighting: 5:10
Havdalah: 6:14
Greater Toronto Area

Inside: PM's historic visit
Eight pages of news, commentary and photos

Scarlett Johansson defends SodaStream — please see page 22

CANADA

Drabinsky Paroled

TORONTO — Former theatre mogul Garth Drabinsky was granted full parole last week. Drabinsky, 64, will now be able to serve out the remainder of his fraud sentence at home in Toronto. The ex-CEO of Livent was convicted in 2009, along with his friend, Myron Gottlieb, for falsifying financial statements, which ultimately led to the bankruptcy of what was North America's largest live-theatre company in 1998. It was Drabinsky's second attempt at gaining full parole. He was released on day parole last February.

WORLD

Madoff Heart Attack

NEW YORK — Ponzi schemer Bernard Madoff suffered a heart attack in jail. Madoff confirmed to *CNBC* that he was hospitalized last month after the attack. The Jan. 22 report said Madoff, 75, also is suffering from stage 4 kidney disease. Madoff is serving 150 years at a federal prison in Butner, N.C., for the largest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history. Many of his victims were Jewish groups.

Dieudonné Arrested

PARIS — French comedian Dieudonné M'bala M'bala was arrested for allegedly assaulting court officers who came to his home with notices for payments due on fines for inciting hatred against Jews. Dieudonné, who owes nearly $100,000 for several hate speech convictions, was arrested Jan. 21, *AFP* reported. He denies firing plastic projectiles at the bailiffs. Earlier this month, officials said they were investigating him on suspicion of funnelling proceeds from his shows to his partner and registering his possessions in her name to avoid having funds and property seized as payment for the overdue fines.

Ex-Meretz Head Dies

JERUSALEM — A former Israeli minister and leader of the left-wing Meretz party, Shulamit Aloni, died Jan. 24 at 86. A veteran of Israel's Independence War and a product of the Shomer Hatzair Zionist youth movement, Aloni entered politics in 1965 as an MK for what would become the Labor party. She broke away from Labor in 1973, leading the Ratz party, with an emphasis on civil rights and feminism. In 1992, Ratz coalesced with the left-wing Mapam movement, becoming the Meretz Party. Under her leadership, Meretz won 12 seats in the Knesset, setting the stage for the left-wing support then-prime minister Yitzhak Rabin needed the following year to sign the Oslo peace accords with the Palestinians.

McGill Biochemist Wins Israel's Wolf Prize

MONTREAL — McGill University biochemistry professor Nahum Sonenberg is the co-winner of Israel's prestigious Wolf Prize in science for his discovery of the key regulators of protein synthesis in the body.

Nahum Sonenberg

Sonenberg, who won for medicine, is one of eight scientists from four countries among the winners announced Jan. 16.

Born in Germany, Sonenberg grew up and was educated in Israel, completing a PhD at the Weizmann Institute of Science. He has been teaching at McGill since 1979. He's currently a James McGill Professor in the department of biochemistry and a senior researcher at McGill's Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Research Centre.

He'll share the $100,000 prize with Victor Ambros of the Harvard Medical School and Gary Ruvkun of the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Established in 1978, the Wolf Prize is awarded in five categories: agriculture, chemistry, mathematics, medicine and the arts. One-third of all recipients have gone on to win a Nobel Prize.

Sonenberg will receive his prize in May at a state ceremony in the Knesset.

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Girls done tfillin at Orthodox N.Y. high schools

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

A decision by two New York Orthodox high schools to allow female students to pray wearing tfillin has grabbed the attention of the Jewish media in the United States and Israel, and now Orthodox leaders in Canada are weighing in on the issue.

Earlier this month, SAR High School, a modern Orthodox school in Riverdale, N.Y., and Ramaz High School, a modern Orthodox school in Manhattan, announced within weeks of each other that girls are permitted to don tfillin during prayer services if they choose.

"Our school sees the role of women in Orthodox practice very positively and I think this is an inevitable outcome of increased Jewish education for girls and changing roles for women in every area of society," Paul Shaviv, head of school at Ramaz and former director of education of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, told *The CJN* last week.

"There are some Orthodox circles that will welcome it and some who will vigorously resist it. We welcome it," he added.

Current TanenbaumCHAT head of school Rabbi Lee Buckman, feels that this is a hot-button issue, not because it's halachically impermissible for women to wear tfillin, but because it's a practice that many Orthodox community members deem unacceptable.

"Acceptable religious practice is not determined exclusively by what halachic sources dictate. Communities also determine what is acceptable," Rabbi Buckman explained.

"For example, standards of conversion and kashrut vary from community to community, even when each asserts that its position is halachically defensible. Similarly, the decision about women wearing tfillin, while halachically defensible, will be unacceptable to some communities."

Paul Shaviv

But Rabbi N. Daniel Korobkin, senior rabbi at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation, said that it's inaccurate to say that women donning tfillin is not a halachic violation.

He referred to a quote by Rabbi Moshe Isserles in Chapter 38, section 3 of the *Shulchan Aruch*, where he states that "when it comes to time-bound commandments, women are exempt, but allowed to participate... But Rabbi Isserles states unequivocally that if a woman wishes to be stringent and to wear the tfillin, we are supposed to protest, and say that is not an appropriate thing to do," Rabbi Korobkin said.

"Not only should it not be encouraged, but it should be actively discouraged."

Continued on page 10

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Harper gets up-close view of Syrian mess on Mideast trip

Reflecting on Prime Minister Stephen Harper's historic Jan. 20 speech to the Knesset, the *Globe and Mail*, in its editorial "Speaking on a matter of principle," noted, among other things, that he "pushed back at those who would single out Israel for criticism… while soft-pedalling the misdeeds of the neighbourhood's many less savoury regimes."

According to Reports
PAUL MICHAELS

On the subject of the less savoury regimes in the region: this column goes to press a day before the prime minister travels to Jordan, where he was scheduled to visit a Syrian refugee camp in which approximately 600,000 Syrian refugees languish. Their plight is shared by millions of other Syrians, many of them refugees in Lebanon and Turkey, or internally displaced within Syria itself. They have all suffered under the brutal repression of one of the least-savoury regimes not only in the region, but in the world – Bashar Assad's Russian- and Iranian-backed Alawite regime.

Early in January, when international attention to the tragedy of Syria was flagging, Robert Fulford reminded us in his *National Post* column, "Syria's sadistic survivor," that "Assad's war against his people is set to begin its fourth year." Sadistic indeed: "Assad has used poison gas against Syrian civilians and raised the estimated death count of the war to about 130,000." Against all earlier predictions, including U.S. President Barack Obama's less than a year ago, Assad will stop at nothing to survive.

"Peace negotiations are scheduled for later this month, and Assad's prime minister has announced in advance that anyone who thinks the regime will hand over power must be delusional," Fulford wrote.

In fact, the opening round of what's known as the "Geneva II" talks began Jan. 22 in what's typically described as the "peaceful" Swiss resort town of Montreux, a setting that couldn't be in greater contrast to the hell that's been unfolding in Syria the past few years. Further talks between Assad's delegation and the Syrian opposition are scheduled to continue two days later in Geneva.

Virtually no one holds out any prospect for progress on the vision set out more than a year ago in the "Geneva I" talks of establishing a transitional government – one that excludes Assad himself.

It was prescient of Fulford to refer to Assad's prime minister's "delusional" comment, since now that the talks are finally underway, the widely shared view is that as long as Russia, Iran and Iran's Lebanon-based proxy Hezbollah continue to support Bashar Assad (and there's no reason to assume they won't), it's nothing short of delusional to assume that he'll give up power – transitionally or otherwise.

Syria's tortuous mess is also immensely complicated by the growth of numerous Sunni jihadi factions, including foremost the Al Qaeda-linked group, the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS), who are as busy fighting among themselves and against elements of the Free Syrian Army as they are fighting Assad's forces. And, like Assad's forces (including thousands of Hezbollah, Shia Iraqi and Iranian fighters), many of the Sunni jihadists also stand accused of atrocities.

Fulford cites Frederic Hof, described as the former American representative to the Syrian opposition, arguing that the jihadists have succeeded in making Assad "appear the less terrible alternative for Syria."

It's certainly fair to say that both of these sides seem to be in grotesque competition for something other than the "less terrible" alternative. It seems to vary by the day.

After all, on the eve of the Geneva II talks, a group of Qatari-commissioned lawyers (Qatar opposes Assad) released 55,000 images showing 11,000 prisoners, most aged 20 to 40, executed or tortured to death by the Assad regime. These gruesome images were verified as authentic by independent international experts.

It's no wonder that Hof, interviewed on *BBC News America* on Jan. 22, said that what's occurring in Syria is "a humanitarian abomination that's engulfing the entire region."

During his visit to Jordan, Harper will have had an opportunity to see evidence of this abomination up close.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

TU B'SHVAT VISIT

Thornhill Conservative MP Peter Kent made a visit to Netivot Ha-Torah Day School's north campus senior kindergarten classes where he planted trees with students in honour of Tu b'Shvat. With him are Sydney Feintuch, left, and Gabi Breitbart.

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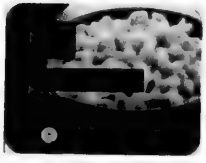

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Treating the foreigner with respect

Rose Fontanes, 47, a Filipina caregiver who lives and works in Tel Aviv, recently shot to fame after her star turn on the inaugural season of *X-Factor Israel*. The unlikely diva is the most recognizable face in Israel these days, but when she first auditioned for the televised singing competition, she tearfully admitted just how detached she felt from Israelis. In a segment that aired during an early episode, Rose told an interviewer: "I feel that everyone is looking at me like I am an alien."

That certainly appeared to be the case the first time Fontanes performed on *X-Factor* – no one quite knew what to make of her. As she made her way to centre stage, the cameras captured the quizzical and bemused looks of her fellow contestants and the panel of judges. Who was this foreign intruder?

Then she begun belting out a pitch-perfect rendition of Lady Gaga's *You and I* and the answer didn't seem to matter much anymore. Almost immediately, Israel fell in love with Rose. Week after week, she sang her heart out on TV – to Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody*, Shirley Bassey's *This Is My Life* and Sinatra's *My Way*, among others – and Israelis responded by voting for Rose online and on their phones until she completed her improbable ascent to reality TV supremacy. It's a heartwarming story, especially for Filipinos, who deserve some good news in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan.

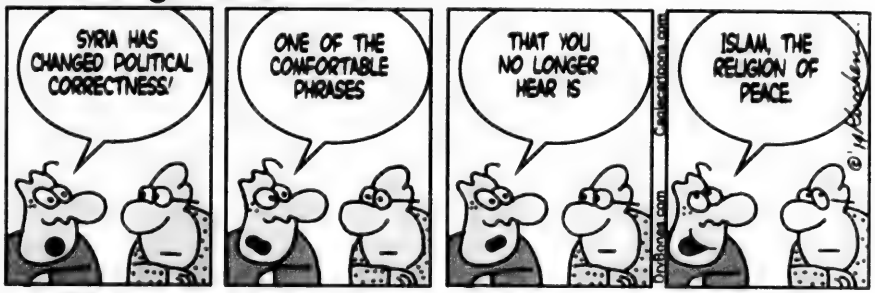
And yet Rose's comment from way back when about feeling like an alien remains, and it seemed especially poignant a few weeks ago when thousands of African migrants protested for days near the Knesset and in Tel Aviv. The migrants, mainly from Eritrea and Sudan, accuse the Israeli government of stalling on their asylum requests, which has forced many into detention and prison, and which the government has not entirely denied.

The migrants present an awkward dilemma for Israel. It is unclear what sort of long-term future they can reasonably expect in the Jewish state, and yet they deserve to have their voices heard and their complaints addressed – that is, after all, why they chose modern, democratic Israel over their backward, war-torn homelands. The mixed reaction to the migrants indicates Israelis are still grappling with how to move forward.

As for Rose, Israel's very own Susan Boyle, her *X-Factor* run proves that a non-Jewish foreigner can make it in Israel, at least as long as she has a wonderful talent to share. Given her unique story – and her penchant for singing the pants off of one classic after another – one senses that Rose has a long career ahead of her.

The Torah commands us to treat the *ger* (foreigner) with utmost respect, since we ourselves were once aliens in the land of Egypt. The rise of Rose Fontanes proves many Israelis – critically, younger ones – have taken that message to heart, and that the Jewish state can be a welcoming home to those who aren't. Israel gave Rose a chance to fulfil, as she put it on *X-Factor*, her "dream to be something else." Fifty-thousand-plus Africans are hoping they'll get the same shot.

Dry Bones



Give Harper a break

I would like to remind Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) ("Harper's Israel trip criticized," *The CJN*, Jan. 23) that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has cut out the waste, but has kept important social programs intact. His wise leadership has kept taxes in check in Canada while others have sunk into recession. Canada has been kept afloat by his steady and smart financial management.

Lashon hara, derogatory speech about another person, is not a good thing without justification. When that person, in this case the prime minister, has done all in his power to speak the truth about Israel and to balance his nuanced foreign policy instead of cowering to Islamists and leftists, as other world leaders are doing, it behooves even a member of an anti-Israel group such as IJV to give him a break.

Gary Gerofsky
Dundas, Ont.

UN must take a stand

Surely this is the last straw ("UNESCO exhibit cancellation slammed," *The CJN* Jan. 23). Can any civilized person not recognize the overt and shameless anti-Semitism displayed by the Arab League and the United Nations? Hitler and Goebbels would be proud of them.

If the leaders of the democracies don't immediately demand an apology from the UN and a restoration of the program, then the clash of civilizations is lost, and the jihadists have won.

The exhibition, *The People, the Book, the Land – 3,500 years of ties between the Jewish People and the Land of Israel*, deserves to be seen on UN property. No group of racists should be allowed to dominate the UN and subvert it from its mission, part of which is "to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours."

Len Bennett
Montreal

Sharon's legacy

The CJN editorial of Jan. 16 ("Sharon's final lesson") suggests that former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's bold move to disengage from Gaza was his best decision.

With the Hamas takeover in Gaza, subsequent attacks on Israel and repression of Palestinian democracy, it has become obvious to Israelis, from left to right, that the disengagement was a gamble for peace that Sharon lost – and is arguably the worst decision of his illustrious career.

Ezra Franken
Montreal

• • •

After the horrific events that occurred in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, the Israeli government launched a full-scale inquiry and properly reprimanded and demoted Ariel Sharon for his failure in permitting a Christian militia to attack and murder innocent Palestinians.

In contrast, when Muslim terrorists and suicide bombers kill innocent Israelis, they are praised as heroes and martyrs, and streets are named in their honour. There is no rebuke by the government that sent them on their murderous campaigns. This celebration of murderous acts continues on a daily basis today in Syria and in Iraq. The countries that fund and support terrorists, such as Iran, are never taken to task, nor are there motions of condemnation at the United Nations or expressions of regret by Muslim religious leaders. At Sabra and Shatila Israel accepted its share of responsibility, but in point of fact, the murders were committed by Christians not Jews.

Bert Raphael
Jewish Civil Rights Foundation of Canada
Toronto

Jewish RCAF veterans sought

I am writing a book about my father, Abe Ferstman, who served in the Royal Canadian Air Force as a bomber navigator during World War II. He died prematurely in 1977. I would like to interview other Jewish RCAF veterans about their experiences as Jews in uniform during the war, for example about Jewish chaplains and religious services, relations with non-Jews, any discrimination encountered, etc.

I would also be pleased to hear from anyone who knew my father at any stage of his life. I can be reached at 416-922-0305 or brian@ferstmanlaw.com.

Brian Ferstman
Toronto

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Is Harper-led Canada Israel's new best friend?

Sean Savage
JNS.org

With the Middle East in turmoil, Europe moving backward, and the United States fatigued from years of war and recession, Canada has emerged as a staunch supporter of Israel. At a time when Israel is routinely singled out for condemnation, Canada has been at the forefront of defending Israel and criticizing its enemies.

This outspokenness comes amid the growing economic and political clout of Canada, a country that is traditionally accustomed to keeping a low profile internationally. When Prime Minister Stephen Harper embarked on his first trip to Israel from Jan. 19 to 22, the Jewish state rolled out the red carpet for him. Has Israel found a new best friend?

"[Harper] really understands the importance and moral justification for a Jewish state. He gets it," Rabbi Philip Scheim of Toronto's Beth David Synagogue, who travelled as part of Harper's delegation to Israel, told *JNS.org*.

Since World War II, Canada's foreign policy has centered on multilateralism and participation in international organizations. But Harper has moved beyond those traditional corridors and has focused on a stronger and more independent Canadian foreign policy.

Part of this new independent foreign policy has been supporting Israel, an often-unpopular position around the world. Immediately upon taking office in 2006, Harper bucked world opinion and supported Israel in its war against the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah. This outward support has continued in every military engagement Israel has been involved in since.

Canada has also supported Israel in the United Nations, joining only a handful of small nations and the United States in voting against upgrading the Palestinians to non-member observer state status in 2012 and repeatedly voting against resolutions condemning Israel.

On Iran, Harper has aligned more closely with Israel's position than with the positions of some its allies in Europe and the United States. In 2012, Harper cut diplomatic ties with Iran and expelled Iranian diplomats from Ottawa. More recently, Foreign Minister John Baird said he was "deeply skeptical" of the interim nuclear deal with Iran and reaffirmed that Canada would maintain its sanctions again Iran.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, hosted Prime Minister Stephen Harper at his Jerusalem office during the Canadian prime minister's visit.
(Haim Zach/GPO photo)

These positions have come with some costs for Canada. In a shocking outcome in 2010, Canada lost a bid for a seat on the UN Security Council. Some speculated that Harper's strong pro-Israel stance might have played a role in straining relations with the UN's large Islamic bloc.

"This is really something we have not seen before, a prime minister of Canada taking a really strong position at a great political cost. He knows that this could really hurt him in some areas, but he doesn't care, because this is what he really believes," Rabbi Scheim told *JNS.org*.

Harper, an evangelical Christian who belongs to the Colorado-based Christian and Missionary Alliance church, has also come under fire from critics who claim that his faith influences his foreign policy.

"My sense is that there may be an element of religious connection [to Israel]. But that is certainly not all of it; I think it also has to do with his sense of the world, his sense of justice and understanding of history, especially Jewish history," Rabbi Scheim said.

But Canada, like its American and European allies, still has a vocal anti-Israel movement within the country, particularly on university campuses and in certain media outlets.

In 2005, Toronto's York University became the first school to host "Israeli Apartheid Week" (IAW), and its student union, the largest in Canada, voted last year to divest from Israel. IAW events have also spread to other Canadian universities.

Harper's recent selection of Toronto lawyer Vivian Bercovici, who is Jewish and has been a vocal supporter of Israel, to be Canada's next ambassador to Israel has also drawn some criticism in the Canadian media. In an interview with Baird, CBC anchor Evan Solomon, who is also Jewish, questioned whether it is appropriate to appoint a pro-Israel Jew to be the ambassador to Israel.

"Vivian Bercovici is Jewish, so there are going to be some questions. Why not appoint someone who doesn't even have the perception of any kind of bias [in favour of Israel]?" Solomon asked.

Yet despite the criticism of Harper's pro-Israel stance, Shimon Fogel, CEO of Canada's Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, credits Harper for making support for Israel a mainstream position in Canada.

"Adopting those positions on Israel is what a mainstream party should look like in the eyes of most of the Canadian electorate today," Fogel said.

This support has shown itself in the positions of the leaders of Canada's two main opposition parties, the centrist Liberal party and the centre-left New Democratic Party (NDP).

"Yes, the Liberal party will have Israel's back – but not because it's in our political interests to do so at home, but because it is the right thing to do on the world stage," Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau recently told a crowd of 500 people at Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto.

Meanwhile, NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair has strong Jewish ties. Mulcair's wife is a French Sephardi Jew whose parents are Holocaust survivors, and his children are being raised Jewish. Mulcair has described himself as an "ardent supporter of Israel in all instances."

Amid the political implications, one aspect of Harper's trip that may be overlooked is the economic component. Like Israel, Canada has successfully weathered the global economic crisis over the past five years and has invested heavily in high-tech areas.

Joining Harper on the trip to Israel were 30 of Canada's top business executives, including David Asper and Albert Reichmann, as well as Air Canada CEO Calin Rovinescu.

At a time when few countries around the world come to Israel's defence, Rabbi Scheim believes the trip is an opportunity for Israel to finally express its appreciation for Harper.

"He is very well-known in Israel. You go to the U.S., nobody knows who the prime minister of Canada is, but in Israel, the whole country knows him and I am very proud to identify with him," Rabbi Scheim said.

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Why are my conversions not valid in Israel?

Rabbi Julie Schonfeld in New York

The good news is in: American modern Orthodox Rabbi Avi Weiss' conversions will be accepted in Israel.

I am glad to see that the religious integrity and leadership of Rabbi Weiss has been acknowledged. Undoubtedly, this course correction on the part of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate is due in part to the hue and cry of influential Jewish leaders, many of whom are not Orthodox, who are to be praised for speaking out.

Of course, my conversions are not recognized in Israel. Nor are those of my 1,700 Conservative colleagues, my 2,000 Reform colleagues and my 300 Reconstructionist colleagues. The fact that Jewish leaders and major organizations are stepping up to address the issue of pluralism is a wonderful step forward and one that we should all applaud and encourage.

But why does this only happen when an Orthodox rabbi's character is at stake? Where is the statement on behalf of the nearly 4,000 rabbis and the 85 per cent of Diaspora Jewry we represent when the derogation of our Judaism is black-letter law in Israel?

Rabbi Weiss himself wrote in October in the *Times of Israel* that "Israel as a state should give equal opportunities to the Conservative and Reform movements. Their rabbis should be able to conduct weddings and conversions."

Leaders of Jewish organizations and public figures have criticized Israel in defence of Weiss, something far too few have been willing to do for the Conservative and Reform movements. This double standard was expressed stunningly by U.S. Rep. Eliot Engel.

"If Rabbi Weiss' credentials are rejected – an Orthodox leader with decades of experience – what does that portend for other strands of American Judaism?" asked the New York lawmaker, who represents Rabbi Weiss' district in the House of Representatives.

What indeed?

To those who issued statements in defense of Rabbi Weiss that were both bold and effective, I thank you. And I call upon you to now issue a statement for Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist rabbis. Notify your board members and donors that the rabbis who married them, bar mitzvahed their children, buried their parents, and converted their sons- and daughters-in-law do not deserve to be called rabbis in the eyes of the Israeli rabbinate. Tell them that none of their life-cycle events count and that the State of Israel does not really think they are Jews for religious purposes.

The American Jewish establishment will not stand for the discrediting of someone known as an Orthodox rabbi. That's better than nothing, I suppose, but far less than the Jewish public deserves. Where is the outrage for us? Has the Chief Rabbinate exported its hatred of the streams? Has the Israeli political leadership exported its willingness to ignore the mistreatment of the vast majority of the world's Jews by an extremist minority?

If we take a long, hard look at ourselves, the best explanation probably comes from a paraphrase of the famous Pogo cartoon, "We have met the enemies and they are (also) us."

Structural intolerance and discrimination do not only harm the abused, but obscure the human dignity of every individual. Such intolerance, allowed to not only survive, but thrive, engenders an atmosphere in which it is impossible to treat even your friends and colleagues as your equals. In the words of Maimonides, "A rabbinic prohibition is always and everywhere superseded for the sake of human dignity."

No one is asking any rabbi or Jew to hold personally by the interpretations of a community or a rabbi with whom they do not agree. But all must be equally respected and acknowledged.

American Jewish leaders derive legitimate authority only on the basis of their integrity and willingness to seek and grasp the convictions of the people they represent. In my experience, the colleagues I serve with are dedicated beyond measure to these ideals. That is what has made this chapter so chilling. We are becoming invisible to ourselves.

As it is written in Ethics of the Fathers, "Other people's dignity should be as precious to you as your own."

Rabbi Julie Schonfeld is executive vice-president of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international association of Conservative and Masorti rabbis.

Israel is coming to Reform Judaism

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Anat Hoffman is arguably Israel's best known and most effective social activist. What for her admirers is her claim to fame is for her detractors proof of her notoriety: her leadership of the Women of the Wall campaign that demands the same rights for women as for men to pray and read Torah there. The movement has galvanized women from across the religious spectrum and compelled the government of Israel to seek ways to accommodate their liturgical demands.

Hoffman is also executive director of the Israel Reform movement's Religious Action Center, a potent advocacy organization on behalf of religious pluralism and equal treatment of all sections of society. It's a staunch champion of the rights of individuals, Arabs no less than Jews, migrants no less than citizens.

Last month, Hoffman was honoured by the Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) at its convention in San Diego, Calif., with the prestigious Jane Evans Award. The WRJ has its roots in the United States and Canada, but of late, it has also created an outpost in Israel.

Reform Judaism has had a continuous and growing institutional presence in Israel since soon after the establishment of the state. Some of its pioneers emigrated there much earlier. But in recent decades, Hoffman and the many Reform rabbis, trained and ordained in Israel have helped bring Israel to Reform Judaism.

In her address at the award ceremony, she offered some practical advice about bringing Israel even closer. Her recommendations are relevant to all Jews in the Diaspora, irrespective of affiliation.

To start with, she urged her audience to be informed about every aspect of life in Israel, not only its security concerns. We should know about the many wonderful things that are happening there – spiritually, culturally and economically – far beyond what the media abroad normally report.

Hoffman's words reminded me that Israelis regard themselves as being among the happiest people in the world.

Her approach was supported by others who attended the convention, held concurrently and partly jointly with the Biennial of the Union for Reform Judaism, the North American umbrella organization. The *Forward* quoted David Siegel, Israel's consul general in Los Angeles, asking rhetorically, "How many people would be excited about Israel if the only conversations were about 'crisis'?"

Akiva Tor, another Israeli official, suggested that "the weighty issues of strategic concern should not be the entrance point, but an outgrowth of a love and understanding of Israel."

Hoffman urged Jews in the Diaspora to support causes in Israel that reflect their values. She obviously had in mind those who vote left-of-centre in their home countries yet ally themselves with right-wing, even reactionary, forces in Israel. She urged us to refuse to choose between our progressive values and our commitment to Israel. As she put it: "Let your frustrations motivate your actions."

A good way of knowing Israel is at least by visiting it as often as possible. She asked the convention delegates to try to see more than the tourist guides are willing to show. "Less Roman ruins and more freedom rides," she said.

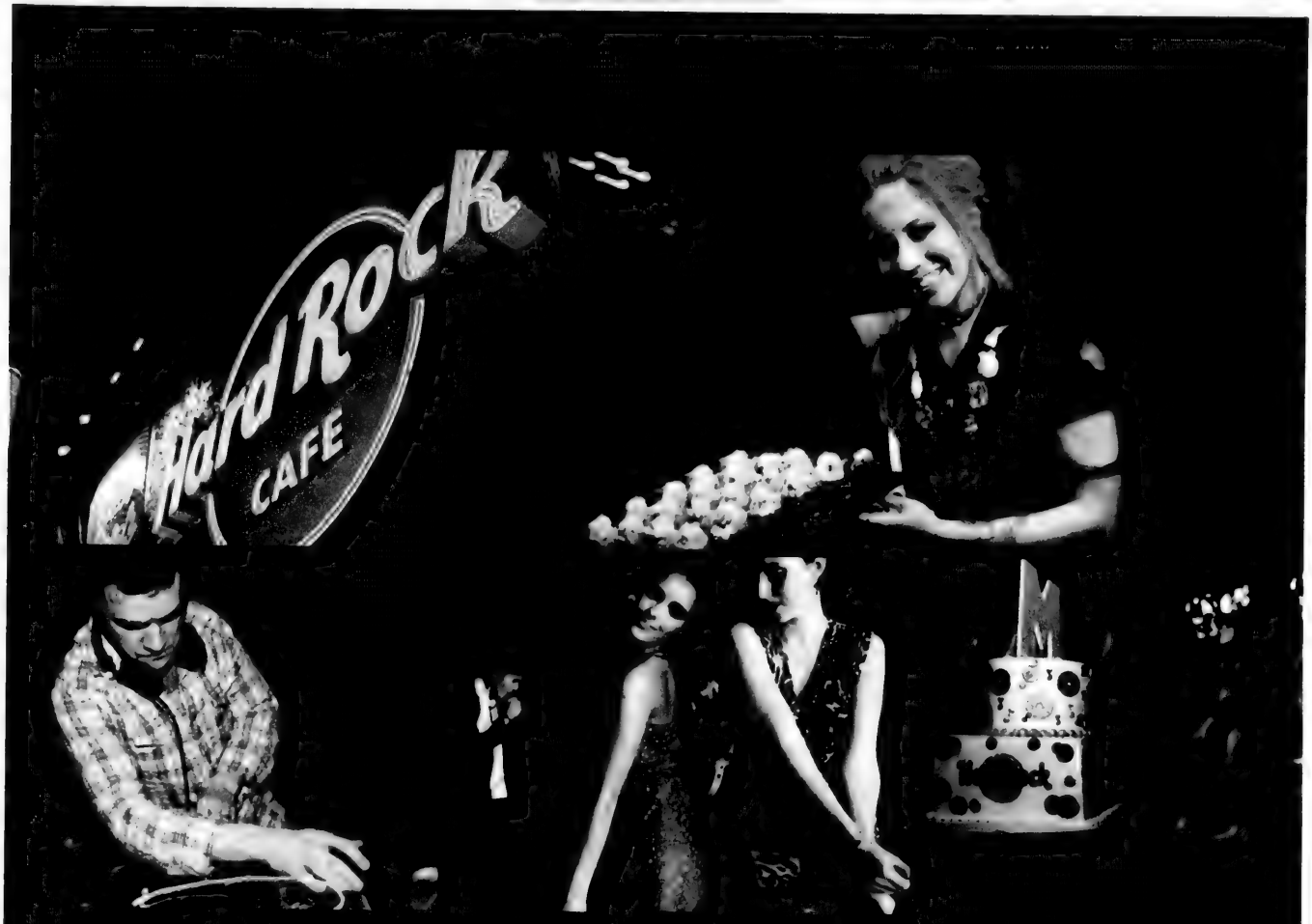
The reported presence of many Israeli Reform leaders at both conventions was further evidence of how Israel has come into the centre of the movement. This was also reflected in the new links forged with the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. Its founder, the late Rabbi David Hartman, had inspired and guided the current president of American Reform Judaism, Rabbi Rick Jacobs.

Like Rabbi Eric Yoffie, his predecessor in office, Rabbi Jacobs is a committed Zionist and determined to steer Reform Judaism in North America toward ever greater involvement with Israel, not only to support progressive forces there, but to be open to all facets of what Israel brings to every Jew in the Diaspora.

Rather than only stressing the inequalities that, alas, still exist also when it comes to religious pluralism, the Reform movement is involved with the wide range of challenges that contemporary Zionism in general and Israel in particular are facing.

Though frustrations understandably continue to evoke critical responses in some quarters, the leaders of Reform Judaism are determined not to allow the many barriers placed along its path to deter it from active and continued involvement with all aspects of Israeli life.

Bringing Israel to Reform Judaism, in addition to bringing Reform Judaism to Israel, has benefited both immeasurably.



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Ex-Montrealer tapped for Bank of Israel post

CJN Staff

MONTREAL — Montreal native Nadine Baudot-Trajtenberg has been recommended by Bank of Israel governor Karnit Flug to serve as her deputy.

Currently deputy dean of economics at the Interdisciplinary Centre Herzliya, Baudot-Trajtenberg is a former adviser to the Canadian government who moved to Israel in 1987 when she began a career with Bank Hapoalim, where she served as a senior analyst and later in several management positions.

A Université de Montréal graduate, she holds a master's degree from Oxford University and a PhD from Harvard University. She is an expert in macroeconomics and capital markets.

Her husband, Manuel Trajtenberg, was the head of the Israeli government committee created in response to the 2011 demonstrations for social justice held in Tel Aviv. He currently chairs the planning and budgeting committee at the Council for Higher Education.

Baudot-Trajtenberg's appointment is subject to cabinet approval. If she's confirmed, it would be the first time two women were at the helm of Israel's central bank.

In the 1980s, she advised the Canadian department of finance on tax reform.

Her nomination for the five-year term was announced Jan. 16. The office of deputy governor is renewable for one additional term.

In the Bank of Israel announcement, Flug stated, "Nadine has vast experience that extends to a variety of topics. There are many challenges facing the Bank of Israel, and I am confident that Nadine's talent and experience will help us deal with them."

Leading Winnipeg federation is a family affair

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — For David Kroft, the new president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, community service runs in the family.

In fact, Kroft is the third member of his family to serve as leader of the community. His father, Manitoba Court of Appeals Justice Guy Kroft, was a president of both the Winnipeg Jewish Community Council (a forerunner of the federation) and the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, and his older brother, Jonathan, served a two-year term as president of the federation in 2008 and 2009.

"I come from a family where we were taught the importance of community," Kroft told *The CJN*. "I hope to be able to bring my own touch, vision and style to my new role as federation president."

A lawyer with the firm Fillmore Riley – he was called to the bar in 1990 – he has served on the federation board for more than 20 years. He was elected to a standard two-year term as president.

The federation's first major order of business under Kroft's leadership will be finding a replacement for Bob Freedman, its retiring executive director who has been in the position for more than 25 years. He has announced his intention to retire by the end of August.

"The search process for a successor is ongoing," Kroft said. "A new executive director after all this time is a significant change. He or she will create a new dynamic."

Kroft spoke about building on what his predecessors have left him.

"We are so lucky that our community is growing and our CJA campaign continues to grow year after year," he said. "Our greatest growth among donors is in the 30-to-45 demographic. That has been a result of our community planning and outreach efforts."

He also spoke of the federation's ongoing effort to reach out to people who may be flying under the radar and find ways to attract them to affiliate with the community. He also spoke of the need to make participation in the Jewish community more affordable.

David Kroft

Kroft noted that over the past few years, the federation has been tackling the issue of a general decrease in synagogue attendance.

"We have to figure out what role we should be playing in trying to increase synagogue attendance," he said. "The health of our synagogues is important to the overall health of our community."

He also spoke of his desire to encourage a sense of teamwork among the federation's beneficiary agencies.

"We are all part of the whole," he said.

In addition to his service to the Winnipeg Jewish community over the years, Kroft has been a longtime board member of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs and its predecessor agency, the Canada-Israel Committee.

He noted that he has been to Israel several times and was scheduled to go last winter for a CIJA board meeting, but he "got stuck in Toronto by a snowstorm."

This year, he was among 10 members of Winnipeg's Jewish community who accompanied Prime Minister Stephen Harper on his trip to Israel.

Kroft and his wife, Ellen, are the parents of three school-age children. Outside of work and volunteer activities, Kroft keeps busy driving his children to various programs. He also tries to run three or four times a week, an activity he describes as a good stress reliever.

Not a new trend, says Shaviv

Continued from page 3

He said if a woman came to him privately and she had displayed a "unique level of spiritual devotion… and she really felt tfillin was going to bring her to the next level, then only on an individual basis would I allow a woman to don the tfillin, but it would be done in absolute secrecy… I might tell her… do it privately, because we don't want to set an example for other people who have not risen to that level."

Goldie Plotkin, wife of Rabbi Avraham Plotkin, spiritual leader of Chabad of Markham, said she believes that women who want to wear tfillin are suffering from an inferiority complex.

"To me, when a woman takes [this] mitzvah, she has some kind of an inferiority complex by saying I need to be a man," Plotkin said.

"That's my personal feeling. I know that when a woman understands… what her essence is, what God needs from her, not what she wants for herself and what she wants to gain from religion… when she does it with all her essence, she won't need that tfillin to reach that level.

"There are so many mitzvahs that we know are ours, that we have to perfect. We're not on the level of grabbing at other mitzvahs that we don't know well… There are so many mitzvahs that we have to perfect before we can start jumping on a bandwagon and saying, 'But I also want to do tfillin.' That's not your mitzvah!"

Rabbi Buckman said that currently no girls put on tfillin at TanenbaumCHAT, but if anyone expressed interest in doing so, they would be allowed to.

"I would support her and applaud her courage. If she requested to learn more deeply about women and halachah or women wearing tfillin, I would connect her with a teacher who would gladly study with her."

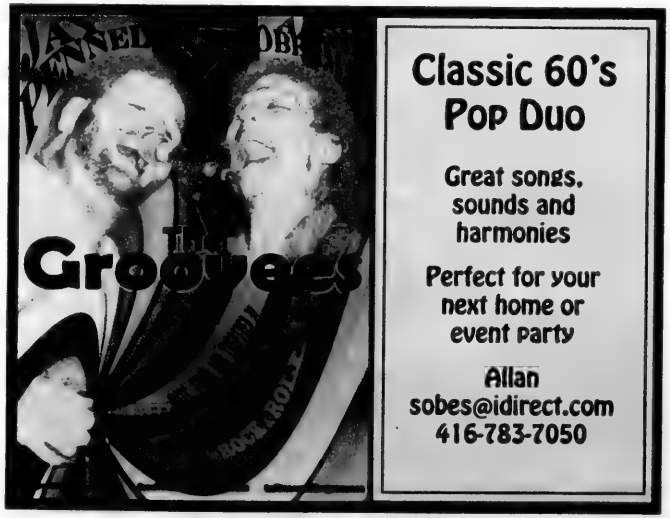
In a statement, SAR High School principal Rabbi Tully Harcsztark wrote that "this is not the common practice in our community… [but] I felt it appropriate to create a space at SAR for tefilah that is meaningful to them."

Shaviv, who feels that too many "newspaper inches are being spent on what is not really a very high-profile issue," said this isn't a new trend.

"Contrary to what was reported in the press, there have been a small number of girls at Ramaz putting on tfillin without anyone making any fuss about it whatsoever. And I think if you look carefully in other Orthodox circles, [you'd see] discreetly, individual women have made that choice," Shaviv said.

"Over the years, we have looked at the wonderfully positive achievements of our female students in the school. We are otherwise a totally egalitarian school – the girls and boys are in co-ed classes in every subject. We have girls who are outstanding Talmud scholars… We encourage our girls to take their Judaism very seriously."

Shaviv believes that the role of women in Jewish ritual and practice will continue to be "one of the dividing lines between… modern Orthodoxy and Haredi Orthodoxy."



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We're 'freiers' and proud of it

Having made aliyah from Canada last August, I'm one of the newest Israelis, but this week, I'm also one of the proudest.

When Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper told the Knesset Jan. 21, that Canadians will support Israel regardless of any economic or political benefit in return, he said, "This is a very Canadian trait… to do something for no reason other than it is right." Everybody in the room burst out laughing, but I wasn't sure why.

Actually, I can understand why the Israelis in the room laughed. Here in Israel, doing something without being assured of a reward is the definition of a *freier* – a sucker (pronounced "fryer" as in deep-fryer). The *freier* is constantly mocked here – the pleasant guy who stands nicely in lineups, who lets someone else take the lone taxi, who tips readily, who doesn't snatch what is rightfully his.

Sounds remarkably Canadian to me.

A series of advertisements for a new Israeli phone company revolves around the line: "Enough of being a *freier*." You've been paying too much, now it's time to look out for yourself.

For those Israeli Knesset members, perhaps it was funny to hear Harper offering Canada as a *korban* (sacrifice, or doormat), helping out Israel and getting nothing in return.

But at that moment, my heart soared. If Canada wants to be the *freier* among the nations, I'm there. However, that wasn't when Harper truly won my heart, as a Canadian who is now Israeli, and vice versa.

That came later, when he said, "Israelis have endured attacks and slanders beyond counting and have never known a day of true peace." I felt a chill: he *had* me.

Harper gets it in a way that Jewish community leaders promised the whole world would get it after 9/11: that the threat of terror anytime, anywhere undermines the quality of life everywhere. There can be no true peace if violence is lurking around the corner. But after 9/11, the world didn't get it. The world packed up its bags and left the tragedy behind.

Some of us – Harper included – didn't forget. Not only because we're haunted by the images of tragedy, but because our dedication is infused with the glow of ancient spiritual meaning: the religious imperative to support Israel.

It's no coincidence that Harper is an evangelical Christian whose spiritual convictions are perhaps the primary source of his steadfast support of Israel. For me, this parallels my commitment to make aliyah, to live here, to walk those holy four *amot* (cubits) in the Land of Israel – a mitzvah that's said to be equal to all the mitzvot of the Torah – every day of my life.

As Rev. David Wells, general superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, told me before Harper's Knesset speech, the steadfast Christian commitment to Israel flows naturally from their belief in God's everlasting covenant with the Jewish People.

Back in Canada, Harper stands to gain little for his staunch support of Israel, and despite renewed alliances with the Palestinian Authority, he may even lose some allies back at home. But I still believe his support is consistent with Canadians' image on the global stage – the perennial nice guy. And sure, if you want to put it that way, the *freier*.

Yet in another way, I've noticed since we moved here in August that there is nothing more Israeli than being a *freier*. I believe that deep down inside (though Israelis may be afraid to face this truth), all Israelis are *freiers*. Israeli society revolves around a remarkably caring ethic that goes all the way back to the Torah and Tanach. They just sometimes hide it very well: that's the prickly-pear "sabra" for you.

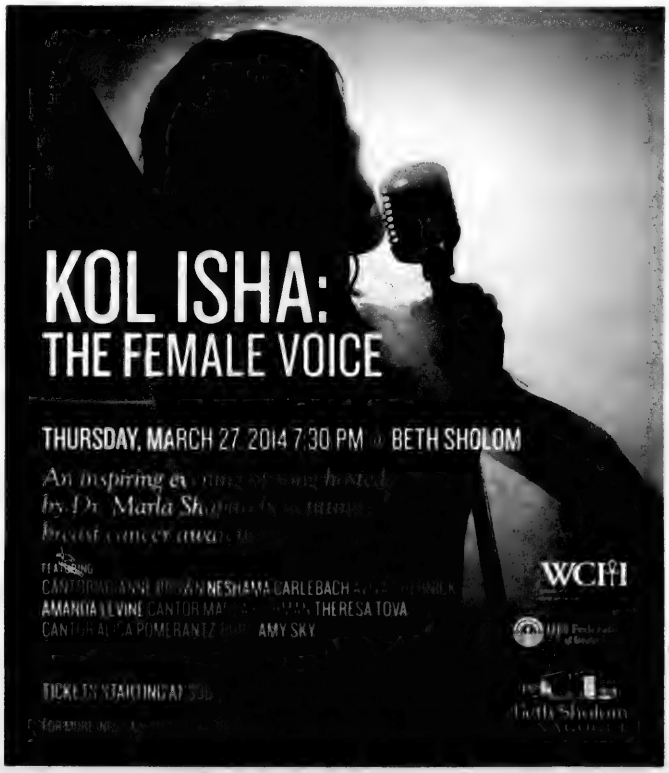
Israel itself, whenever it's able, has always been the first to rush out into the world and help others – for example, in Japan after the tsunami or in the Philippines after the recent typhoon – regardless of any economic or political benefit in return (although building international goodwill can't hurt).

Canadian Jews and Israelis may shake their heads when they hear that Harper has pledged an additional $66 million in Canadian aid to the Palestinian Authority. Enough of being a *freier*, they might say. Doesn't he understand that these are not our eager partners in peace? Yet it was clear from Harper's speech that his moral expectations cut across the board: he's calling on Israel's neighbours to take greater responsibility for the peace process.

Growing up as a Canadian Jew, at all Hebrew school assemblies, as well as synagogue and community events, there were two flags at the front of the room – Canadian and Israeli. Two flags, two national anthems, two loyalties – but never divided loyalties. Israeli values, we were told, were Canadian values.

Arriving in Israel last August, I actually cried, thinking I might never see those flags together again. As much as I love "*kachol-lavan*" (blue and white), I missed its red-and-white counterpart.

Witnessing blue and red waving together over the Knesset Jan. 21, against a golden Jerusalem sunset, felt like a homecoming, reinforcing the rightness of our decision to live here, but also confirming that – just as I always thought – there's no conflict. I can remain happily Israeli, happily Canadian – *freier* to the world, and fiercely, fiercely proud of it.



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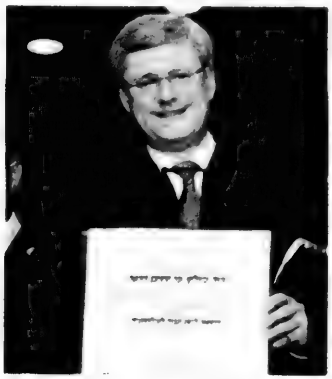
Aislin rejects accusations over Harper cartoon

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The editorial cartoonist who goes by the pen name Aislin came under fire last week for a drawing of Prime Minister Stephen Harper with a blue-and-white Israeli flag over his face that critics said is "incendiary" and comes close to employing age-old stereotypes of Jews who have the power to silence critics.



Prime Minister Stephen Harper received an honorary doctorate from Tel Aviv University. *[Israel Sun photo]*

But Terry Mosher says these interpretations are far from what he intended, which was no more than a legitimate critique of Harper's policies, ones he says diverge from Canada's traditionally more "balanced" approach to the Middle East.

"The s--t hit the fan, just like in the old days," Mosher told *The CJN*.

The Jan. 21 cartoon prompted outrage from community organizations as well as angry calls and letters to the Montreal *Gazette*, where it was published.

In the drawing, only Harper's eyes and nostrils are exposed, leading the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) to comment, "We object to his incendiary visual suggesting that Israel is somehow muzzling Canada's foreign policy… It is ludicrous for Aislin to suggest that Canada's support would lead Prime Minister Harper to be mute on any divergence of opinion."

B'nai Brith Canada went further, terming the cartoon "vile, grotesque and simply offensive," and calling for an apology.

"It is all too similar to perverted images vilifying Harper which we have seen during his trip to the Middle East. It treads close to borrowing the age-old canard that Jews wield undue influence to silence critics of Israel," said Frank Dimant, CEO of B'nai Brith.

But Mosher said the cartoon wasn't meant to suggest Harper was being muzzled. It was drawn to compare the prime minister to a sports fan, the kind who draw a blue maple leaf on their faces to show their support for the local hockey team.

"I painted the flag to indicate he's a fan of Israel," Mosher said.

"I was watching TV with him and [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu. It was just a simple thought that given Canada's more balanced policy in the past, he's gone overboard."

"There's nothing ominous" in the drawing, just a suggestion that Canada's policy should be more balanced, he added.

Mosher said the drawing was vetted by seasoned staff at the *Gazette*, who saw it as a legitimate political cartoon.

"There's not bad intent aimed at the Jewish People or Israel," he said. "It's simply a comment of me being worried about Canadian policy with regard to the Middle East."

It's not the first time one of his cartoons on the Middle East has landed him in hot water. In 1997 – "the old days" he referred to – he was harshly criticized by Muslim groups for a cartoon that commented on the murder of foreign tourists in Luxor, Egypt.

In it, he depicted a dog labelled "Islamic extremism" with the caption, "With apologies to dogs everywhere." Mosher refused to apologize at the time. He said there would be no apology for the Harper drawing either.

Such illustrations are part of a robust culture of critiquing politicians, something Israelis are particularly good at, Mosher said.

He has met Israeli editorial cartoonists, including one of the country's most famous, Nissim "Nusko" Hezkiyahu, who is director of the Animix Cartoon Festival. Mosher said he hopes that one day he'll be invited to Israel to present his work, which examines Canada through the eyes of a cartoonist.

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Dalhousie, BGU to create ocean studies centre

Joel Jacobson
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — Halifax's Dalhousie University and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) in Israel have signed a memorandum of understanding to create a world-class ocean studies centre in Eilat.

Dalhousie president Richard Florizone and BGU president Rivka Carmi signed the agreement Jan. 21 in Israel with the goal of combining the two schools' oceans scholarship and expertise. Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attended the signing during Harper's visit to the Middle East.

The agreement allows for several different facets of inter-university collaboration, including pure and applied joint research projects, co-supervision of doctoral students, industry research internships in both countries, joint field courses (in the winter in Eilat, where BGU has a campus, and in the summer in Halifax), co-taught courses and major scientific conferences and workshops.

The end objective is to create an ocean studies centre in Eilat that encompasses scientific and academic programs from both countries.

Florizone, just starting his term as Dalhousie president after replacing Tom Traves who retired last October, remarked. "The excellent science done by Marlon Lewis and other Dal ocean researchers, together with [businessman and philanthropist] Seymour Schulich's strong support and [Dalhousie vice-president of research] Martha Crago's facilitation, has given great momentum and credibility to our partnerships with leading Israeli universities and research institutions."

From left, Ben-Gurion University rector Zvi HaCohen, BGU president Rivka Carmi, Dalhousie University president Richard Florizone and Dalhousie vice-president of research Martha Crago at the signing.

Carmi was excited about the agreement. "The sea covers 70 per cent of the earth's surface and is essential for our survival. And yet, at the same time, most of it remains unexplored – filled with mystery and unfulfilled potential. We believe this partnership will strengthen the cutting edge science at both universities and place this unique initiative at the forefront of global research."

Carmi was one of the eight university leaders in attendance during Florizone's installation ceremonies in October. She received an honorary degree from Dalhousie and took part in an international panel discussion.

However, the start of Dalhousie's relationship with the university and oceans research in Eilat dates back to a 2011 Nova Scotia trade mission in which Crago took park.

"My visit that year gave me the awareness and commitment to build ties with the excellent scientific work in the unique setting of Eilat," said Crago. "It's a place that's important not only for marine science, but also for developing improved cultural and socio-political understanding.

"Dalhousie, with its striking multidisciplinary strengths in ocean science partnered with the oceanographic, marine biology and aquaculture possibilities of the scientists in Eilat, will advance our understanding of the resources and risks that the global ocean offers to us."

Helping make the agreement possible is Canadian philanthropist and Dalhousie School of Law namesake Schulich, who is playing a leading role in the new centre.

"I believe we have a duty to give back, and I cannot think of a better way to give back than to invest in education," said Schulich. "This partnership with Dalhousie University and Ben-Gurion University focused on ocean studies is important to our two countries and to our world. I am very proud to be a part of it."

In addition, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto has been a valuable ally in support of the initiative, having partnered with the Eilat region for more than 30 years, and sees the expansion of BGU's Eilat campus a key part of its strategy.

Nestled on the coast of the Red Sea, Eilat is a logical location for such an oceans centre. The city is home to the Interuniversity Institute in Marine Science, which involves Bar-Ilan University, Hebrew University, Haifa University, Israel Institute of Technology (Technion), Tel-Aviv University and the Weizmann Institute of Science. Eilat also hosts the National Center for Mariculture, as well as a campus of BGU.

Dalhousie is a compelling partner for Eilat, with its long track record as one of the world's leading research universities through its work with initiatives ranging from the Ocean Tracking Network to the Halifax Marine Research Institute to the new, cutting-edge Ocean Sciences Building.

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DINNER TIME: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, left, hosted Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his wife, Laureen, at Netanyahu's residence Jan. 19. *[Kobi Gideon/GPO photo]*

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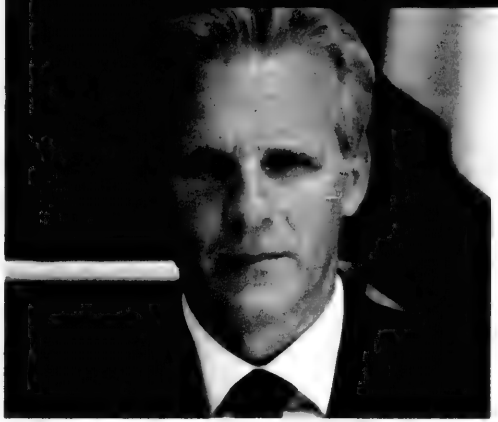

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Kenney counts costs of supporting Israel

David Horovitz
The Times of Israel

Employment and Social Development Minister Jason Kenney, was one of the senior members of the large delegation accompanying Prime Minister Stephen Harper on his visit to Israel, the West Bank and Jordan last week.

Kenney sat down on Jan. 21 with *The Times of Israel* and discussed the striking contrast between Canada's stirringly pro-Israel public position, as underlined by Harper's "Through fire and water, Canada will stand with you" speech in the Knesset Jan. 20, and what might be summed up as the "Through fire and water, we'll condemn you" stance of so much of the rest of the international community. Excerpts:

TOI: In light of Harper's very supportive speech, many Israelis think he was spot on, and that the rest of the world doesn't get it. Why is there a gulf between Canada and very few other countries on the one side, and the rest of the world on the other, where Israel is concerned?

Kenney: Partly because as our prime minister said, "it's always easier to go along to get along" – that is to say, [to follow] the path of least resistance.

It's no secret that the foreign ministries of most western countries have an institutional bias against Israel that is probably informed by the fact that there is one Jewish state and dozens of other Islamic and Arabic states. That frankly informs the professional public service in most western foreign ministries.

You mean there are 20 times as many diplomats who have served in Arab countries?

And 40 times more in Muslim countries. That's right. The prime minister more or less intimated that in his speech. That means you've got dozens more diplomats and foreign policy wonks who absorb a particular perspective which is frankly and obviously hostile to Israel.

So that becomes the default position. It takes a profound act, it takes great intentionality on the part of political actors, to overcome that kind of institutional bias to begin with.

Secondly, the political incentives are not in favour of this. In the United States, of course, with a large constituency of Christian Zionists, and the not insignificant influence of the Jewish community, there's always been a strong political constituency generally to support Israel, but that doesn't exist in Western Europe, and it doesn't exist in Canada.

The Jewish community constitutes one per cent of our population at most, and there's no Christian Zionist constituency to speak of. For most people, if they're not familiar with the complicated politics and history of the region, they don't understand why a government would want to take clear positions on this.

So you've got an institutional bias built into most western foreign ministries, you've got a lack of political incentives to take these positions. I think that helps to explain it.

Jason Kenney, left, and John Baird, right, join Prime Minister Stephen Harper in a group photo of the members of the Israeli and the Canadian governments. ***[Flash90 photo]***

Those are the only two factors, or would you bring other factors into the mix? Is anti-Semitism in there somewhere, if not the dominant feature? Demographics – the fact that, for instance, there are 10 times as many Muslims as Jews in France? That hardly encourages a French MP, say, to take a fair-minded position on Israel and the region.

The positions that we have taken have been demonstrably *against* our electoral advantage. Some of the superannuated foreign policy establishment in Canada have grasped for an explanation as to why our government has taken these arguably contentious positions. And the simplest explanation they can come up with, which is really the dumbest, is that the Conservative party has taken this position to advance our electoral interests. Nothing could be further from the truth. The truth is this: with the Jewish community representing less than one per cent of our population, it tends to be concentrated in urban core electoral districts which have typically been inaccessible to the Conservative party.

On anti-Semitism, one thing that's not recognized here perhaps is that in addition to the positions we've taken on Israel and the politics of the Middle East, we've also become a global leader in combating anti-Semitism and promoting Holocaust commemoration, education and research. This year, Canada's chairing the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. We hosted the last meeting of the inter-parliamentary coalition for combating anti-Semitism. That led to the Ottawa protocol, that essentially said that not all criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic, but those who tend to single out Israel for opprobrium or condemnation or question the legitimacy of the Jewish state are arguably giving expression to hateful views.

Are you impacting other nations' attitudes to Israel?

Yes, very much so. For example, in February-March 2007, I announced in my capacity as minister for multiculturalism that Canada would not participate in the Durban II [UN anti-racism] conference. We were by far the first country in the world to make that announcement, well before Israel. We did that because of our assessment that Durban II would be a rerun of Durban I. Iran was the vice-chair of the organizing committee. They were organizing preparatory meetings on Jewish High Holidays, presumably to minimize the participation of Jewish NGOs. All of the hallmarks were there. This was going to be a reiteration of Durban I.

So we announced our withdrawal, and suddenly put other western governments a bit on the defensive. The easier thing for them would have been to participate in the preparatory work and make a decision closer to the date. But because we made that decision very early in the process, over a year before Durban II, and again on Durban III, we set a benchmark.

So it's really that opportunity to change the frame of reference a little. We've done that on a number of issues. We were the first country in the world to stop funding the Palestinian Authority following the election of Hamas in March 2006. When Canada does something like that first, suddenly it at least changes the frame of reference. And I think there's a number of issues where that's happened.

Is the $66 million in funding for the PA announced by Harper earmarked specifically? How do you ensure it doesn't go to the wrong purposes?

Through close oversight. We have a robust office in Ramallah that administers these contribution agreements with the Palestinian Authority. Institution building is the primary focus. But also economic development, some humanitarian relief, including food aid. We have had a particular impact on police training there, which by all accounts has been quite successful. The Israeli government concedes that there's been tremendous co-operation on the security front with the authorities in the PA and a reduction in the levels of violence.

We're not naive. We understand that we'll always have to be mindful that the dollars are properly spent. But we want to play a constructive role here. And that's evidence that our position is not unbalanced. We strongly support a Palestinian leadership that's interested in pursuing peace. And we want to do so practically.

We also play an important role in the Palestinian refugee issue. Should there be traction in the peace process, we would be taking the lead on the resolution of the refugee issues. We stand ready, always, to provide our expertise on these issues.

There's a concern in Israel that the UN definition of Palestinian refugees, uniquely, includes third- and fourth-generation descendants, which elevates the numbers to the millions, and makes the problem that much harder to solve. If the same criteria were used as elsewhere, it might be easier to resolve.

I think that objectively speaking that observation is fair. I note with particular interest that if the same definition were applied de facto to the Jewish refugees of the Middle East then most of the Sephardim in Israel would be considered refugees.

Does Canada have a take on the Iran interim deal? Netanyahu thinks it's a mistake and it's not going to stop them. Your prime minister did not rule out that the diplomacy might go somewhere.

We certainly hope it does. And we support the efforts to achieve that objective. But we're not naive. We're openly skeptical of this Iranian regime.

Our skepticism isn't informed only by their nuclear ambitions, but also by their atrocious human rights record. Canada has led in each of the last seven years the UN General Assembly [UNGA] resolution condemning Iran's human rights practices, which has never been a slam dunk, by the way. A lot of the nonaligned countries line up with Iran in opposing that. We want to see progress from this new leadership not just on the nuclear program but more broadly on political reform and respect for rights. We're watching with a very skeptical eye. Should they prove their good faith through verifiable action, we'll relax our sanctions regime.

And yet at the General Assembly on Palestinian statehood, none of those Western European countries (except the Czech Republic) lined up with Canada and Israel and the United States. That doesn't suggest that people with the mindset the Canadian government is following are holding any kind of sway here.

We don't win them all, but we win some of them.

That 2006 trip to the G8 in St. Petersburg during the Lebanon conflict, there was an initial resolution drafted...that used the typical language of condemnation of Israel and Prime Minister Harper simply refused [to accept it]. He ended up largely drafting a revised G8 statement which was ultimately published, placing all of the responsibility for the Lebanon conflict on Hezbollah as the aggressor. That doesn't change the world. But it at least lights a candle in the darkness.

TimesofIsrael.com

Yad Vashem memorial was also on agenda

View from Israel
Continued from page 1

"It's no problem bringing half a dozen ministers, 15 MPs," but Harper should have considered "bringing, say, two MPs from the other parties," said Cotler, who was in Israel during Harper's visit but not part of the prime minister's entourage.

Cotler stressed that Harper's understanding of Israel and the Jewish People hasn't come at Palestinian expense.

"He has spoken of the Palestinians' right to an independent state," Cotler said, noting that the prime minister gave an additional $66 million in aid to the Palestinian Authority when he met with PA President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah.

While Canadian reporters may have waited in vain for Harper to criticize Israel publicly about settlements in the West Bank, Cotler believes it was sufficient to mention privately "what was necessary for each of the parties to hear."

Throughout the trip, the Canadian media hounded Harper over everything from the conservative makeup of the delegation and its large size to his "name-calling" in the Knesset when he invoked the term "anti-Semitism."

They also highlighted the embarrassing actions of York Centre MP Mark Adler, who was recorded shouting a request to a Harper aide for a picture with the prime minister in front of the Kotel, calling it "the million-dollar shot" that was key to his 2015 re-election prospects.

International media were also predictably critical of Harper's visit. *Al Jazeera* called his Knesset speech "baffling," while *The Economist's* blog seriously questioned "the rationale for the trip."

Not all Israeli reaction was positive, either. A cartoon in the English edition of *Ha'aretz* showed Harper and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dancing together while a dejected Abbas looks on.

Most notably, two Arab Knesset members repeatedly shouted out catcalls before storming out of Harper's Knesset speech.

However, their main complaint – that MK Taleb Abu-Arar's village had no water and electricity – was revealed to be a lie when an Israeli watchdog group shared images of his house flanked by an air conditioner, satellite TV dish, electricity lines and an electric meter.

But most Israelis now agree with Netanyahu's characterization of Harper as a "rock star," a reputation he secured by singing and playing piano at a state dinner hosted in his honour by Netanyahu.

As for Harper himself, his main impression of Israel has been the "real shortness of the distances" in the Jewish state compared to the "elaborate transportation" needed to get from one part of Canada to another.

It's driven home Israel's perilous position and "how truly existential any security threat of any kind really is."

This "speaks to the extreme desirability of finding a peaceful resolution to some of the ongoing, unresolved issues," Harper said. "I remain convinced there is such a solution."

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, told *The CJN* that Harper's visit will increase Canada's standing not just in the eyes of Israelis, but also among Palestinians and Jordanians, as "a serious and committed player" in the Middle East.

Israeli President Shimon Peres, left, meets with Harper at Peres' office in Jerusalem. *[Israel Sun photo]*

On Jan. 22, Harper flew by helicopter to the Hula Valley in the Upper Galilee, to inaugurate the Hula Valley Stephen J. Harper Bird Sanctuary and Education Centre, a Jewish National Fund (JNF) project announced at the Negev Dinner in Toronto last month, where Harper was the evening's honoree and where he announced his Israel visit.

Harper and his wife, Laureen, examined a model of the soon-to-be-built 4,000-square-metre, high-tech visitor centre.

Harper eagerly agreed to lend his name to the project, saying, "I value it obviously as a personal recognition. I also think it is a fantastic environmental project."

In the 1950s, the Hula Valley was devastated ecologically when malaria-breeding swamps were cleared to create farmlands and several indigenous species were lost in the process. The agricultural land was always prone to flooding, however, and as ecological awareness grew in the 1990s, JNF led the way in restoring the native wetlands.

Each spring and fall, the area is temporarily home to close to 500 million birds migrating between Europe and Africa.

Ending his at-times controversial Israel trip with a project centred around ecology and the environment may have been a bid by Harper to broaden support for his activities here, or at least turn down the volume on the home-front criticism.

Following a ceremony in which he received an honorary doctorate from Tel Aviv University, Harper flew from Ben-Gurion Airport to Jordan, where he met with King Abdullah II and Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour. A spokesperson from the Prime Minister's office told *The CJN* that "obviously, it's been a very successful trip," noting that Harper was the first Canadian prime minister in history to address the Knesset, and adding that the prime minister's itinerary included both official duties and sites of personal significance, many of which are also important to Canada's Jewish community.

Knesset speech greeted with standing ovation

View from Canada
Continued from page 1

"I think he was intellectually honest on the origins of anti-Zionism in a way even Jewish community leaders are not," he said.

"There are very few world leaders who have as well thought-out a position," he said. And considering the criticism he faced for drawing too close to Israel, Nadler said, "I think it's a pretty gutsy thing to do. The prime minister has the courage of his convictions. They're well thought-out political positions, based on facts, and well articulated."

Nadler said the prime minister's forceful address seemed to catch even members of the Knesset off guard, with his address being greeted by standing ovations.

Later, Harper visited the Western Wall. "You should have seen the cheering at the Kotel. It was heartwarming. It was like he was being welcomed as a genuine political and moral hero, a person prepared to take positions that are unpopular," Nadler said.

Rabbi Philip Scheim, spiritual leader of Toronto's Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation, said, "For all of us, the highlight was the appearance at the Knesset. The sense of pride we had of the prime minister standing up in the Knesset, giving as pro-Israel a speech as can be, from the heart…

"He knew he would get flack" from some opponents, he said, referring to critics who say Canada is best served with a more even-handed approach to the Middle East.

Rabbi Jarrod Grover of Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto, called the trip a "wonderful moment after wonderful moment – with a lot of waiting in between."

Harper's Knesset speech, his welcome by Israeli parliamentarians were "very powerful moments," Rabbi Grover said.

He rejected suggestions that political leaders should be more even-handed. "Why be temporizing every comment of support for Israel with 'buts,' 'howevers'? That's singling out Israel unfairly for everything wrong in the country instead of celebrating the many things they got right in a region that is collapsing. That even-handed position did us no good. We should be proud the prime minister sees that."

For Vancouver lawyer Bernard Pinsky, Harper's visit marked "the conjunction of two things I love – my country Canada and the country of Israel.

"I don't see any conflict between loving and supporting them both. You can do both unconditionally. I want to be involved in making both places successful."

Pinsky, past chair of the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver and past member of CIJA's board, among other community leadership roles, said there were several memorable events during the trip. Standing at the Kotel as the prime minister approached, he was surprised to see "a group of Chassidim… shouting and excited and frenzied with joy" to see Harper.

Rabbi Grover spoke of the benefit of spending time with his Jewish colleagues, as well as a few Christian ministers. "We spoke on the religious direction of the country and the challenges we face," he said.

"This was really not just about Harper and the trip to Israel. It was a bonding experience for people who accompanied him. The Jewish community should feel good that we have so many friends in the government and across the country," he added.

The one regret Rabbi Grover expressed was that "the visits were exclusive and secluded." Even the highway was cleared to ensure Harper's safety, he said.

"The prime minister saw the major sites, but he didn't really get to see Israel." Even taking him out for a coffee on Ben Yehuda, a pedestrian street in Jerusalem, would have exposed him "to the people, the culture, the real vibrancy of the country," he said.

• • •

Though some 200 individuals were part of the "accompanying party" that joined the official delegation, questions have been raised as to who made the list and who didn't.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl of Beth Tzedec Congregation, one of Toronto's largest synagogues, was not among those invited on the trip.

He's not sure why. There has been some discussion in the community about the list. "Jews talk about all kinds of things. People talk, who is on, who was not on."

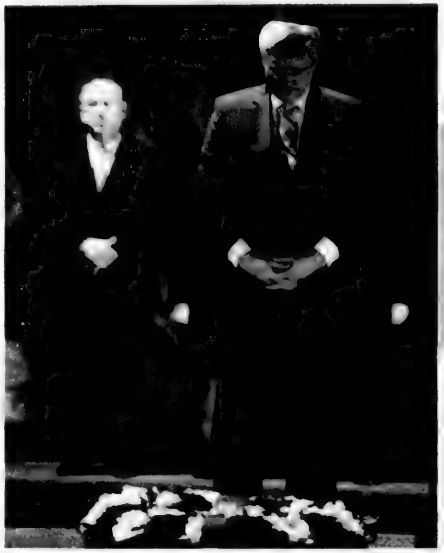
According to Rabbi Frydman-Kohl, Pinsky and Nadler, the Prime Minister's Office made the final list after soliciting suggestions from major Jewish organizations. MPs submitted their own lists.

Rabbi Grover said that's how he was included, noting he has developed a personal relationship with his shul's local MP, Chungsen Leung.

How the list was chosen is less significant than the trip itself, Rabbi Frydman-Kohl stated.

"What's really important is what the prime minister did there and what it represents, both to him personally and as head of government, and to us, as a statement on Canadian policy in the Middle East. So we have to keep our eyes on the big picture.

"I'm thrilled. I think this has been a home run for the prime minister and, more importantly, a home run for Canada," he added.



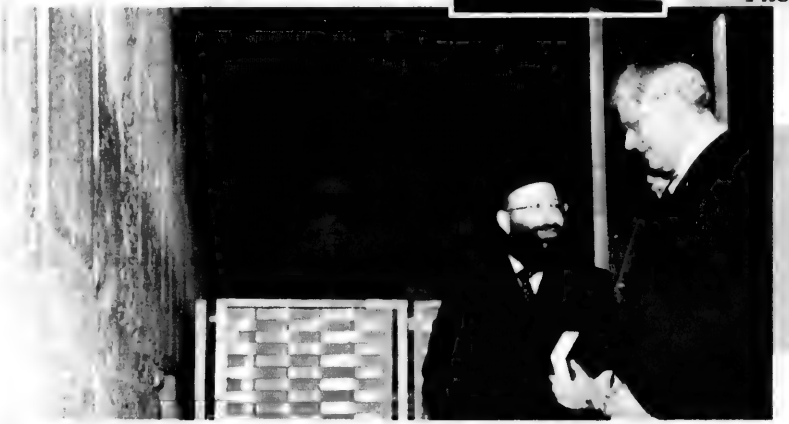
Prime Minister Stephen Harper lays a wreath at Yad Vashem.

At the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) reception, from left, Joseph Gitler, York Centre MP Mark Adler, Julia Koschitzky

Harper speaks to the Knesset.

At CIJA reception from left, Franck Azoulay, director of missions for CIJA, John Baird, minister of foreign affairs, Jonathan Schneiderman, senior government advisor and director of development for CIJA.

Photos by Israel Sun, JiniPix , GPO and Flash90



Harper visits the Kotel, where he met with Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, rabbi of the Western Wall and holy sites in Israel.

Harper receives an honorary degree from Tel Aviv University.

Harper and his wife Laureen watch cranes during a tour of the Hula Lake Ornithology and Nature Park in northern Israel. Harper attended a dedication ceremony for a visitor's center at the nature park, which is also named after him, and was funded by donations raised in Toronto.

Harper gives a surprise performance of *Hey Jude* for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other dignitaries at a state dinner in Jerusalem.

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Israel competing on skates, skis

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

When you picture Israelis facing off against elite international competitors, you might think of sports such as judo or windsurfing or... chess. But how about figure skating or downhill skiing? That's what they'll be doing when the world's finest meet at the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi next month.

Israel first sent a winter delegation (of one) to the 1994 Lillehammer Games in Norway, where skater Michael Shmerkin finished a respectable 16th. At Nagano, Japan in 1998, Shmerkin was joined by ice dancers Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovski. The pair would return to compete twice more, finishing as high as sixth in Salt Lake City in 2002. **[bit.ly/isrolym41]**

The Israeli contingent grew to five that year when Israel first competed in short track speedskating. In Turin, Italy, in 2006, Israel was first represented off the ice rink by alpine skier, Ukrainian oleh Mikail Renzhyn. **[bit.ly/isrolym03]** But once again, no medals.

The team was scaled back to three for Vancouver in 2010. Although figure skater Tamar Katz qualified according to Olympic standards, Israel's Olympic Committee wanted to put its weight behind athletes it thought had a greater chance of reaching the podium. So Katz was iced.

Boris Chait of Israel's Ice Skating Federation was not pleased. "We've been to countries where people come up and say: 'We didn't know you Israelis knew how to skate. We thought you only knew how to shoot.' ... Israel is not like Germany or the United States, where they can be choosy. They have hundreds of athletes, all capable of winning medals." **[bit.ly/isrolym04]** Despite the strategy, Israel was shut out again.

This year, Israel's contingent is back to five, all Olympic newcomers: alpine skier Virgile Vandeput, men's figure skater Alexei Bychenko, pairs Andrea Davidovich and Evgeni Krasnoposki, and short track speed skater, Vladislav Bykanov. **[bit.ly/isrolym20]**

Most of Israel's top winter athletes train in the United States. That can be controversial, but the competitors say they need to be there for the facilities and the coaching. "We may train in the U.S. most of the time, but we grew up in Metulla and we are proud to be Israeli," Roman Zaretsky told the *Jerusalem Post* in 2010. "We chose to skate with the music of *Hava Nagila* and *Schindler's List* for a reason. We want to make Israel proud and show the world that we are here." **[bit.ly/isrolym15]**

Although Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is joining other world leaders in giving these games a wide berth, Sochi is rolling out the welcome mat for Jewish visitors – well, at least Ari and Chani Edelkopf are. Rabbi Edelkopf is director of Sochi's Jewish community of 3,000. They run the local Chabad, which has been gearing up for the influx of Jewish tourists by renovating its shul and acquiring a new Torah scroll. **[bit.ly/isrolym18]**

Realistically, none of the Israeli athletes heading to Sochi is expected to come home with gold (or silver or bronze.) After all, it took 40 years of competition until Israel won silver and bronze at the 1992 summer games. And it wasn't until 2004 in Athens that *Hatikwah* was played as Gal Fridman was awarded gold for his incredible achievement in windsurfing. **[bit.ly/isrolym19]**

Hopefully, it won't take Israel's winter elite quite as long.

highway@rogers.com

We must return to the middle path

Sephardi Window
Rabbi Ilan Acoca

In recent years, numerous articles and lectures have been given regarding the future of Sephardi Judaism.

As a Sephardi Rabbi, I was delighted. However, to my dismay, I found that most of the lectures were to the extreme right or the extreme left.

In my opinion, Sephardi Judaism has to come back to its origin, which was always the middle path.

Our great sage Maimonides, teaches us in his book *Mishneh Torah*: "Each and every man possesses many character traits. Each trait is very different and distant from the others.

"One type of man is wrathful; he is constantly angry. [In contrast,] there is the calm individual who is never moved to anger, or, if at all, he will be slightly angry, [perhaps once] during a period of several years.

"There is the prideful man and the one who is exceptionally humble. There is the man ruled by his appetites – he will never be satisfied from pursuing his desires; and [conversely], the very pure of heart, who does not desire even the little that the body needs.

"There is the greedy man, who cannot be satisfied with all the money in the world, as [Ecclesiastes 5:9] states: 'A lover of money never has his fill of money.' [In contrast,] there is the man who puts a check on himself; he is satisfied with even a little, which is not enough for his needs, and he does not bother to pursue and attain what he lacks.

"There is [the miser], who torments himself with hunger, gathering [his possessions] close to himself. Whenever he spends a penny of his own, he does so with great pain. [Conversely,] there is [the spendthrift,] who consciously wastes his entire fortune.

"All other traits follow the same pattern [of contrast]. For example: the overly elated and the depressed; the stingy and the freehanded; the cruel and the softhearted; the coward and the rash, and the like.

"The two extremes of each quality are not the proper and worthy path for one to follow or train himself in. And if a person finds his nature inclining towards one of them or if he has already accustomed himself in one of them, he must bring himself back to the good and upright path.

"The upright path is the middle path of all the qualities known to man. This is the path which is equally distant from the two extremes, not being too close to either side. Therefore the Sages instructed that a person measure (lit., estimate) his character traits, directing them in the middle path so he will be whole."

How I wish that the great minds of Sephardi Jewry would sit united and craft the future of Sephardi Jewry through Maimonides' model. This idea is appealing to me and it would be a dream come true.

I wish that this would happen soon, but for now, let us all implement the lesson of Maimonides and implement the middle path in all our endeavours.

A new look at day school funding

Class Act
Daniel Held

Last March, I described two parallel challenges facing Jewish day schools: financial sustainability and affordability. I wrote the article at the beginning of a research project studying the landscape of interventions designed to address the financial challenges facing Jewish day schools, day school parents and day school funders.

Nearly a year later, the project has resulted in a report published by the Jewish Funders Network, designed to share knowledge, spark conversation and ignite innovation in the work to make Jewish day schools both financially sustainable and affordable.

As I wrote then, day schools face two interrelated challenges. Sustainability is the long-term financial viability of the school – balancing its budget year after year and being able to withstand short- and long-term financial challenges including the steady demand for increased financial assistance and the need to invest in a quality educational program. Affordability is parents' perception of cost and value. It's a factor in both the perceived value and the cost of tuition in relation to a realistic assessment of household disposable income.

While the sticker shock of tuition can be startling, of greater long-term concern, is that average day school tuition across North America has risen at a steady rate of three per cent a year since 2009, a rate significantly higher than increases in household income and inflation.

Faced with the reality of these challenges, schools and communities across the United States and Canada have taken bold steps to reframe the revenue and expense sides of day school budgets. Roughly, these initiatives can be placed into five categories: controlling costs, determining and reaching capacity, communal collaboration, middle income initiatives and endowment building.

The creativity is impressive. School leaders are examining every aspect of their operations from admissions to fundraising, tuition to staffing. Among other initiatives, they are using technology to drive new models of teaching, setting tuition at a percentage of household income, sharing back offices and capitalizing on economies of scale, and building communal funds to offset the burden on parents.

Studying these initiatives, their benefits to day schools and the challenges in their implementation reveals that while many are worthwhile and have a marked impact on school budgets, none is a silver bullet. Significantly moving the needle in the costs and funding of day schools will require substantive changes both in the ways we deliver education and in the ways we fund the costs of this education.

Where does this leave us? While this prognosis could be seen as bleak, it's not. New, bold ideas are needed, but these innovations can only grow out of the substantive and creative work undertaken thus far. I am excited that the tenor of the conversation has moved from one lamenting the costs of day schools, to one proactively dreaming of and experimenting with innovative solutions. These collaborative and creative movements are a key first step toward moving the needle.

The intense, immersive nature of day schools make them the gold standard in Jewish education, increasing graduates' knowledge, shaping their identity and informing their future as communal leaders. But it is also this intensity that makes day school education expensive. We must continue to learn from the experience of the field and think collaborative and creatively.

Receiving in order to give

From the Bimah
Rabbi Yael Splansky

Kabbalah is the art and discipline of "receiving." The modern kabbalist Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag taught that there are four ways of giving and receiving.

The first way is "to receive in order to receive." This is what a baby does. This is what an egotist of any age does. Like baby birds with desperately open mouths larger than their bodies, there are times when we're so needy, nothing and no one else matters. The immediate and end goals are one and the same: to get.

The second way is "to give in order to receive." This is conventional morality. Most interactions between ordinary good people fall into this category. For example, I give my neighbour a Christmas present each year. The gesture of my gift is more and less than an expression of fondness. He's a very good neighbour, and I'd like to keep it that way. If I'm honest, I can see that the gift is a ritual for maintaining the relationship. Now when I go on vacation, he'll keep an eye on my house. Now when I let my weeds grow too tall in the spring, he'll resist complaint. "Giving in order to receive" makes the world livable.

The third way is "to give in order to give." This altruistic giving may be held up in other religious systems as the highest form of morality, but Rabbi Ashlag says it's actually not enough. "To give in order to give" is a kind of adolescent idealism that we ought to eventually pass through. In Judaism, the need to receive should not be denied or pretended away. It's essential if we are to live. Without receiving breath, food or a salary, we would not survive.

So what is the Jewish ideal? The highest, holiest way to interact with others is "to receive in order to give." I often hear mourners say how exhausting a shivah is. It's true, because "receiving in order to give" can be hard work. The task of the mourner during the seven long days of shivah is to wholeheartedly accept the care of others, to receive condolences and comfort, in order to grow strong enough to give again.

Once I travelled to Belarus with a group of doctors from my congregation to bring medical care and Judaica to the remnant Jewish communities there. We thought we would "give in order to give." We thought, at most, we'd receive the satisfaction that usually comes with generosity. But that wasn't all. We received an invitation of home hospitality.

The middle-aged couple who extended the invitation didn't have much. It didn't seem right for them to host all nine of us, but we knew we had no choice but to accept. We instinctively knew that it was the right thing to do. The dark street, the dark apartment building, the dark hallway eventually opened up to their warm and simple room. The feast they spread across every inch of their little table had been prepared with such graciousness. Our guilt for consuming more than a week of their salary faded when we saw the dignity and pride on their faces. In moments like this, it's hard to know who is the receiver and who is the giver. Both are grateful for the exchange. Both are uplifted by the compassionate negotiation.

We first learned this lesson at Sinai. We received God's Torah, so that we could devote our days and our generations giving, by way of mitzvot. When we place ourselves at the foot of God's mountain, we are likely to find our way back to the dignity and the power of receiving in order to give.

For more on Rabbi Ashlag and his disciple, Manitou, see "Jewish Rhetoric" by Bar-Ilan University professor Susan Handelman in *The Journal of the National Council of Teachers of English* (2011.).

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Actress defends SodaStream from criticism

Scarlett Johansson has signed on to become SodaStream's first global brand ambassador.
[johanssonweb.org photo]

JTA

Scarlett Johansson addressed criticism from the Oxfam aid organization over her role as spokesperson for SodaStream, which operates a factory in the West Bank.

"I remain a supporter of economic cooperation and social interaction between a democratic Israel and Palestine," Johansson, a Jewish-American actress who serves Oxfam as a global ambassador, said in a statement released Jan. 25.

"SodaStream is a company that is not only committed to the environment but to building a bridge to peace between Israel and Palestine, supporting neighbours working alongside each other, receiving equal pay, equal benefits and equal rights.

"As part of my efforts as an ambassador for Oxfam, I have witnessed first-hand that progress is made when communities join together and work alongside one another," she said.

SodaStream, an Israeli firm that manufactures home soda makers, signed Johansson to be its first global brand ambassador. She is set to appear in a television ad for the company during the Super Bowl on Feb. 2.

The company employs Israeli and Palestinian workers at its factory in the Maale Adumim settlement.

Oxfam addressed Johansson's association with SodaStream in a statement on its website, saying "Oxfam is now considering the implications of her new statement and what it means for Ms. Johansson's role as an Oxfam global ambassador."

On Jan. 23, in a statement posted on its website, Oxfam wrote that it "believes that businesses that operate in settlements further the ongoing poverty and denial of rights of the Palestinian communities that we work to support."

Johansson has travelled to India, Sri Lanka and Kenya on behalf of Oxfam.

Her statement concludes, "Even though it is a side effect of representing SodaStream, I am happy that light is being shed on this issue in hopes that a greater number of voices will contribute to the conversation of a peaceful two-state solution in the near future."

Meanwhile, the Fox network, which is airing the Super Bowl, rejected SodaStream's commercial for the big game because it objected to a sultry Johansson saying at the end, "Sorry, Coke and Pepsi," *USA Today* reported.

Daniel Birnbaum, CEO of SodaStream, told *USA Today* that it had no choice but to drop the line, but complained to the newspaper that Fox rejected the Super Bowl commercial "because they're afraid of Coke and Pepsi."

CBS, which aired the Super Bowl last year, took a similar action against SodaStream's spot for that game.

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Netanyahu slammed over settler comment

JTA

Benjamin Netanyahu
[Moti Kimchi/Israel Sun photo]

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu must refute his proposal that Jewish settlers should be allowed to remain in their homes in a Palestinian state, a member of the government coalition said.

Jewish Home leader Naftali Bennett, who serves as economy minister in Netanyahu's government, on Sunday called the idea "very dangerous" and said it "reflects an irrationality of values."

The Prime Minister's Office on Sunday told foreign news agencies and the *Times of Israel* that Netanyahu will not force settlers to leave a Palestinian state, even under a permanent peace deal.

The statement, clarifying remarks that Netanyahu made two days earlier in Davos, Switzerland, said Netanyahu believes there can be a Jewish minority in the Palestinian state, just as there is an Arab minority in the Jewish state.

Bennett in a statement also published on his Facebook page said, "We did not return to the Land of Israel after 2,000 years of longing to live under the government of [Palestinian Authority President] Mahmoud Abbas. Whoever advocates for the idea of Jewish life in Israel under Palestinian rule is undermining our ability to sit in Tel Aviv."

In Davos, following a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on the sidelines of the Economic Forum, Netanyahu said, "I do not intend to evacuate any settlements or uproot a single Israeli."

Netanyahu and Kerry reportedly met three times in Davos. In his address to the forum, Kerry said he will soon present a framework agreement for the negotiations "that will define the end game and all the core issues, and provide guidelines for the negotiators in their efforts to achieve a final-status peace agreement."

France to return looted paintings

JTA

French government-owned museums will return three paintings that they came to possess after the Nazis stole them from Jews during the Holocaust, France's minister for culture said.

Aurelie Filippetti identified the three paintings as *Paysage Montagneux* by the Dutch 17th century painter Joos de Momper; a painting of the Madonna and Child, and another unidentified oil portrait of a women. Two of the paintings were in possession of the Louvre Museum, and a third was found at the Museum of Dijon, according to the BFM TV television channel.

"I will return them very shortly to the legal beneficiaries of their owners at the time of their dispossession," Filippetti reportedly said on Jan. 21. She did not reveal the identity of the beneficiaries, but the *Le Figaro* daily reported they were Jewish.

The paintings are part of a list of 2,000 objects of art flagged as stolen by the Nazis that are in the possession of French cultural institutions, according to a report on the France3 television network. In 2013, French authorities returned seven artworks to descendants of Jews who had lost the objects during the Holocaust.

Fatah calls for 'co-ordinated' armed resistance

Elhanan Miller
The Times of Israel

Negotiations with Israel will lead to "zero results" if not fortified by armed resistance, a senior Fatah official said, adding that the first signs of a new Palestinian uprising have already begun to appear on the ground.

An American framework agreement expected to be presented in the coming weeks to the negotiating teams will never receive Palestinian endorsement if based on parameters currently being voiced by the Americans, said Tawfiq Tirawi, a member of Fatah's Central Committee and head of the official Palestinian investigation committee into the death of former PA president Yasser Arafat, speaking to Lebanese news channel *Al-Mayadeen* Jan. 23.

"We [in Fatah] know what the Israelis and Americans are suggesting [in the negotiating room]. So far, the negotiations are taking place only with the Americans, not the Israelis, and the Americans are liars. There is no framework agreement. It's a lie. Even if Kerry [presents] an agreement, Palestinians will reject it. There will be a vote, either inside Fatah or among the Palestinian leadership, and the American proposals will be rejected," Tirawi said.

A number of senior Palestinian officials have voiced public skepticism regarding the possibility of negotiations with Israel leading to a deal, as the nine-month time frame for talks approaches its end in April. Last month, PLO official Yasser Abed Rabbo blasted U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry for "breaking a promise" to end negotiations on all core issues during the original framework.

But Tirawi voiced skepticism that negotiations alone could ever produce a Palestinian state.

"There is no possibility of a Palestinian state being established on the West Bank and Gaza in the coming 20 years. None at all. Anyone who believes otherwise is wrong. Negotiations will bring us nothing... we, all Palestinian factions, must return to the cycle of action. When we will do this, many things will change."

Asked what he meant by the cycle of action, Tirawi clarified he was speaking of "resistance in all of its forms."

"Steadfastness is also resistance, negotiations are also a form of resistance, but there must be something on the ground as well... weapons, popular resistance, there are 100 methods to resist."

Palestinians were pushed into negotiations with Israel by a consensus of Western and Arab states which insisted on diplomacy, leaving the Palestinian leadership no option but to agree, Tirawi said.

"It's true that most PLO factions were against [entering negotiations], but there's something called Palestinian national interests. Did we compromise on any of our principles? No. That's what is important."

Tirawi's words were tacitly directed at PA President Mahmoud Abbas, who consistently speaks out against armed violence toward Israel, preferring to focus efforts on "popular resistance," namely boycotts, demonstrations, and limited violence such as stone throwing.

The resumption of armed resistance, Tirawi argued, must be done in an organized and co-ordinated manner, not sporadically.

TimesofIsrael.com

'Second-timers' now eligible for Birthright

JTA

JERUSALEM — Jewish young adults who have previously visited Israel on a high school program will still be eligible for Birthright.

The Taglit-Birthright Israel steering committee approved the expansion of the free 10-day trip to Israel at a meeting earlier this month, the Diaspora Affairs Ministry announced. The expansion is to go into effect with this summer's trips for 18- to 26-year-olds.

The committee also voted to increase funding to attract more French young adults, who face escalating anti-Semitism at home, to the program. French aliyah has nearly doubled in recent years.

The decision to offer a Birthright trip for second-timers comes after operators of high school programs in Israel complained that the heavily subsidized Birthright trips have hurt enrolment in their programs, according to reports. The trips of the second-timers will be funded solely by donors, as opposed to first-time visitors to Israel, whose trip is one-third funded by the Israeli government.

"Taglit has proven itself as a leader in strengthening Jewish identity among young people in the Diaspora and building ties with the State of Israel," the Diaspora Affairs Ministry said in a statement. "Expanding the participation criteria will add to Taglit's positive influence in the Jewish world."

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Ex-envoy to speak at UJA event

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Michael Oren, the former Israeli ambassador to the United States, will be in Toronto Feb. 4 as part of the closing celebration of UJA's 2014 annual campaign. His address that night: "Jewish peoplehood and the meaning of it today."

"A lot will be based on my personal experience, how my personal story is inextricably tied up with the story of the Jewish People and how I was inspired by that story," he said in a telephone interview from Israel.

"All of us are inextricably linked to that story."

Oren's personal narrative is quite a story. He was born to a Conservative Jewish family in upstate New York. The son of a U.S. World War II veteran who fought in Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge, he would go on to become one the staunchest defenders of the state of Israel. Oren moved to the Jewish state in 1979, served in the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and authored several well-received books on Israeli history.

In 2009, he gave up his American citizenship to become Israel's ambassador to the United States. He relinquished that post in September 2013 and recently signed on with *CNN* as a contributor. He splits his time between Israel, where he lectures at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya and the United States, where he is a fellow at the Atlantic Council, a think-tank.

In a wide-ranging interview, Oren lauded Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who recently concluded a visit to Israel.

"I think it strengthens Canada's position internationally," he said of the trip and of the government's steadfast support for Israel. "The fact it is standing up for what it believes in – for fair treatment of the Jewish state – I think it reflects well on the international stage.

"I think Canada has tremendous prestige in the world, and when Canada takes a principled position, countries listen."

Michael Oren

Of course more than one party backs Israel. "It is important that the support for Israel is bipartisan, even tripartisan," he said, adding he's had "an outstanding experience working with Canadian leaders on all sides of the aisle."

As for the United States, "the Obama administration is trying to make the best of a complex and volatile region… I think there have been some successes. We're living through a period of profound turbulence in the Middle East."

So is this the best time for the United States to push for talks between Israel and the Palestinians?

"There is a school of thought that says because the situation in the Middle East is so fluid and flammable, it's no time to give up assets. Another school says there's so much chaos, let's try to endow one of our borders with stability where we can make an impact," he said.

Oren comes down on the side of those who see it as a propitious time to pursue the stability of one of Israel's borders. But, he cautioned, "we have to be cognizant of the… turmoil in the Middle East."

"I hope the Palestinians are ready for peace and that means accepting Israel as the nation state of the Jewish People," something their leadership has not yet done, he said.

Any peace deal will have to take account of Israel's security needs, which would include a "prolonged IDF presence along the future eastern border."

Iran continues to present Israel with a profound strategic threat, he continued. It's the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism and is fully involved in the bloody Syrian civil war. Its pursuit of nuclear weapons threatens Israel and will likely spur a regional arms race.

"Other countries will get those capabilities," Oren suggested, and there's no guarantee Iran wouldn't use nuclear weapons or pass them on to terrorist groups.

Iran's recent interim agreement with the P5 + 1 interlocutors does not compel it to dismantle its nuclear facilities or centrifuges. In fact, it leaves them intact and allows Iran to maintain its stockpile of refined uranium that could be quickly improved to weapons grade.

"I think Iran has reason to be satisfied with the deal." Israel believed sanctions should have been maintained, along with a credible military threat, Oren said.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Cash, Sydney	Jan. 10/14	255 Bamburgh Circle
Kerbel, Anne	Jan. 10/14	Private
Rosen, Sheila	Jan. 12/14	Private
Miller, Estelle R	Jan. 13/14	1 Clark Ave W
Steinberg, Morton	Jan. 7/14	
Leizerovich, Haya	Jan. 13/14	5430 Yonge St
Karpati, Leslie	Jan. 14/14	5 Kenneth Ave
Awenus, Rose	Jan. 14/14	110 Promenade Circle
Davidzon, Genia	Jan. 14/14	Private
Weiss, Louis	Jan. 14/14	1500 Steeles Ave. W
Gotlieb, Israel (Sam)	Jan. 16/14	130 Neptune Dr
Gatt, Dveyra	Jan. 16/14	205 Cummer Ave
Pelman, Benjamin T.	Jan. 17/14	2075 Bayview Ave
Weinberger, Regina	Jan. 18/14	3560 Bathurst St
Salem, Harvey	Jan. 18/14	2045 Lakeshore Blvd
Azouri, Ezra	Jan. 18/14	
Pritsker, Raza	Jan. 18/14	6250 Bathurst St
Silver, William	Jan. 19/14	
Hurovitz, Mary	Dec. 23/13	Private
Arje, Eva	Jan. 15/14	22 Shalimar Blvd

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Meri Saguy	Jan 7/14	241 Walmer Road
Marcu Faur	Jan 10/14	25 Brunswick Avenue
Sydney Lewis Robins	Jan 10/14	33 Jackes Avenue
Mildred Dinaberg Blueste	Jan 11/14	85 Skymark Drive
Bertha Dawang	Jan 12/14	
Walter (Woulfie) Miller	Jan 12/14	546 Steeles Avenue West
Esther Goldstein	Jan 12/14	55 Ameer Avenue
Claire Taub	Jan 10/14	18-A Hazelton Avenue
Zelda Rebick	Jan 12/14	351 Christie Street
Avra Grossman	Jan 13/14	49 Maple Valley Road
Erving Ross	Jan 13/14	2075 Bayview Avenue
Philip Vlessing	Jan 14/14	7 Townsgate Drive
Bella Stier	Jan 15/14	20 Coreydale Court
Eleanor May	Jan 15/14	28 Lower Village Gate
Zissu (Lica) Landesberg	Jan 15/14	10 Torresdale Avenue
Ruth Kerbel	Jan 16/14	33 Jackes Avenue
Renia Wolnerman	Jan 16/14	546 Steeles Avenue West
Allan Griesdorf	Jan 15/14	300 Brighton Avenue
Marvin Grill	Jan 16/14	81 Point O'Woods Drive
Israil Kodner	Jan 16/14	841 Finch Avenue West

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Signature pieces worn by winner of The Voice

Jewelry designer has a passion to create

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Artistic, detail-oriented, with great fashion sense, finger dexterity and visualization skills – these are some of the qualities that describe Natalie Waldman, founder and creative director of Natalie B Designs.

"I started my business 15 years ago. At that time, it was more of a hobby. I didn't set out with a business plan in place. I am an artist with a huge passion to create. That passion was showing up in my jewelry designs," Waldman said.

Waldman is a powerhouse who designs and operates the business's social media content while running the jewelry design business from her Toronto studio. Her exquisite pieces are showcased in several fashion magazines as well as in Toronto's most exclusive stores, and her market has expanded to include women worldwide.

"Back in the '90s, I saw a brooch on somebody and I really wanted to emulate it. I didn't know where to get the materials, so I began sourcing. When you really want to find something, you make it happen," Waldman said.

Beginning with a line of one-of-a-kind brooches, she eventually expanded Natalie B Designs to include a full line of one-of-a-kind fashion jewelry inputting her own distinct personality on each signature piece.

Waldman's jewelry includes necklaces, bracelets, earrings, belt buckles and brooches. Her creations are made from the finest materials – 22-kt. gold, sterling silver, Swarovski crystals, semi-precious stones and other fine materials.

Travelling the globe, Waldman attends gem and bead shows to buy the components that go into her unique pieces.

"I have a clientele in Florida and do shows once a year that last over a three-day period. I will make over 200 pieces by hand, display and sell them, all while building up my clientele," said Waldman.

With two distinct lines showcasing her creations, a customer can choose either a one-of-a-kind design or a piece that has been duplicated.

"In my one-of-a-kind line that's beaded, I will make that in my studio by hand with pendants. The duplicated pieces are designed by me and will be sent out to be soldered and plated, and then returned back to my studio where I put in the stones. That piece can be made in any quantity that I choose.

"Some customers request custom-made pieces to co-ordinate with a particular outfit or for a special occasion. I will often take someone's old necklace that she may not know what to do with anymore and I will recycle that necklace and turn it into something she can wear again," Waldman said.

Taking inspiration from vintage designer Larry Verba, Waldman found that she has filled a niche with her brooches. "My brooches look great on sweaters and wraps, are made in 3D and are conversation pieces."

Natalie B Designs advertises mainly through social media and by word of mouth, selling Waldman's pieces all over the world through her website. They're promoted as "passionately handmade in Canada." The website showcases Natalie B Designs' full line of jewelry with creations such as her Juno Ring, Nova Spike Bracelet and Cecilia 22-kt. gold earrings with Swarovski crystals and glass cabochon.

Tessanne Chin, winner of NBC TV's *The Voice*, wore Natalie B Designs' Sophia Cuff, Grace Earrings and Amour Gold Cuff.

"*The Voice* contacted me through my website requesting select pieces of jewelry for Tessanne Chin, to be worn while [she was] performing on the show," Waldman told *The CJN* with pride.

The passion to create and the jewelry's unique detailing separates Natalie B Designs from its competitors. The jewelry line has a price-point ranging from $45 to $600 and is described by Waldman as "quality, rich and luxe pieces that are unique."

"I will continue to grow and build my brand," she said. "I have a responsibility to give back to the community, and one of the ways I can do that is through my jewelry."

Waldman has donated several of her pieces over the years to initiatives such as the Baycrest golf tournaments and other charitable causes.

She designed hand-blown heart key chains and donated them to State of Israel Bonds, which handed them out as gifts at events. "If people are receiving my pieces and it goes to a great cause, everyone is happy," she said.

Natalie Waldman

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Presenting the British Philip Roth

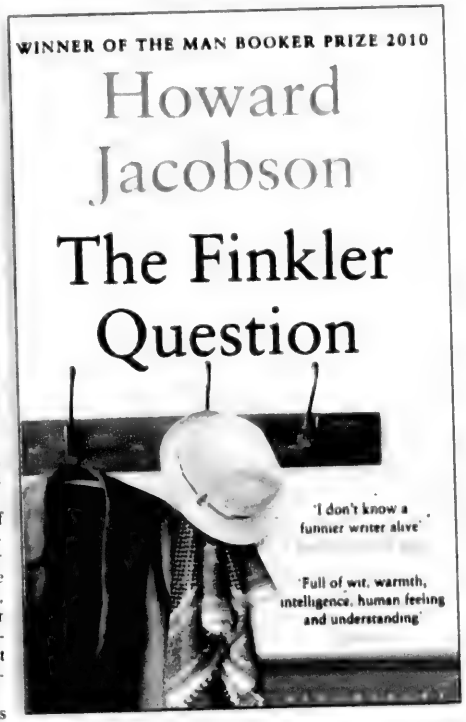
Views & Reviews
Martin Lockshin

The Finkler Question
Howard Jacobson
Bloomsbury Publishing

While I generally review books of Jewish scholarship, this month let me introduce you to a work of fiction, *The Finkler Question*, by Howard Jacobson. Jacobson has sometimes been called the British Philip Roth, although he claims that he would prefer to be thought of as the Jewish Jane Austen.

The Finkler Question won the prestigious Man Booker Prize in 2010, awarded to a work of contemporary fiction by a writer from the British Commonwealth and Ireland. The book is an entertaining read, an unusual combination of humour and serious writing, and it has something to say about a burning issue in the Jewish community.

The plot centres around three characters: two Jewish widowers and one non-Jewish middle-aged bachelor friend of theirs who is a Jewish wannabe. As is often the case with modern-day fiction, none of these men is particularly attractive. (The major women characters in the book are more pleasant, but they play smaller roles.) And yet Jacobson makes us care about them despite their weaknesses.


WINNER OF THE MAN BOOKER PRIZE 2010
Howard Jacobson
The Finkler Question
'I don't know a funnier writer alive'
'Full of wit, warmth, intelligence, human feeling and understanding'

The main character is the gentile, Julian Treslove. He is fascinated and bedazzled by his old classmate, Sam Finkler, the least savoury but most successful and famous of the trio. For Treslove, "Finkler" becomes a synonym for "Jewish," and he dedicates much time and energy to figuring out what makes "Finklers" as successful and witty as they are.

Much of the book centres on sexual infidelity and insecurities about a partner's sexual fidelity. I found that aspect of the book tedious, and not particularly insightful.

But what really interests me is what Jacobson has to say about a different set of topics: Judaism, Zionism and anti-Zionism.

Sam Finkler, a philosopher who writes books for the general public, is a leader of "ASHamed Jews," a group of Jews who trumpet their embarrassment at the alleged crimes of the State of Israel. (The significance of the upper case ASH in the name "ASHamed Jews" is never clearly explained in the book.) Finkler is the most famous and respected of the ASHamed Jews and their most eloquent spokesman. He seizes any opportunity, even when he is asked to appear on a television program about music, to castigate the State of Israel.

Finkler gradually becomes disillusioned with the ASHamed Jews, especially when the group starts to advocate boycotting Israeli products and Israeli academics. A series of anti-Semitic incidents that take place in England have some influence on Finkler, too. (The events are fictional, of course, in this work of fiction, but are fairly similar to real live ones.) His thought processes and slow maturation are described in an understated but convincing manner. For example, when Finkler first hears about the boycott, he declares (as many people of conscience have): "I am in principle against anything which denies dialogue or trade, but to bar communication between intellectuals, who are always our best hope of peace, is self-defeating and inane."

Finkler also advances a few arguments that I have not heard. As he looks around at his group of fellow ASHamed Jews, he realizes that they have banded together because they see each other as family. Who, he wonders, boycotts his or her own family? As time goes on he also realizes that the group is fated to fail. Most of the members, he recognizes, including him, are actually very assimilated, not involved with any other Jewish causes and do not even like the idea of Jews seeing themselves as a separate social entity. He muses: "If I don't particularly want to be with Jews, what's the sense in being with *these* Jews, solely because they don't particularly want to be with Jews either?"

Toward the end of the book, Finkler has a further insight into the ironies of the radical Jewish left's criticism of Israel. He realizes that one of the Jewish values that's most strongly rejected by leftist Jewish critics of Israel is the idea that Jews are in any sense the chosen people. But then these same critics single out the State of Israel, criticizing it while ignoring egregious human rights violations of dozens of countries. In other words, these critics, who have turned the Jewish state into something special and demanded of it a higher standard of behaviour, are essentially treating the Jews as the chosen people.

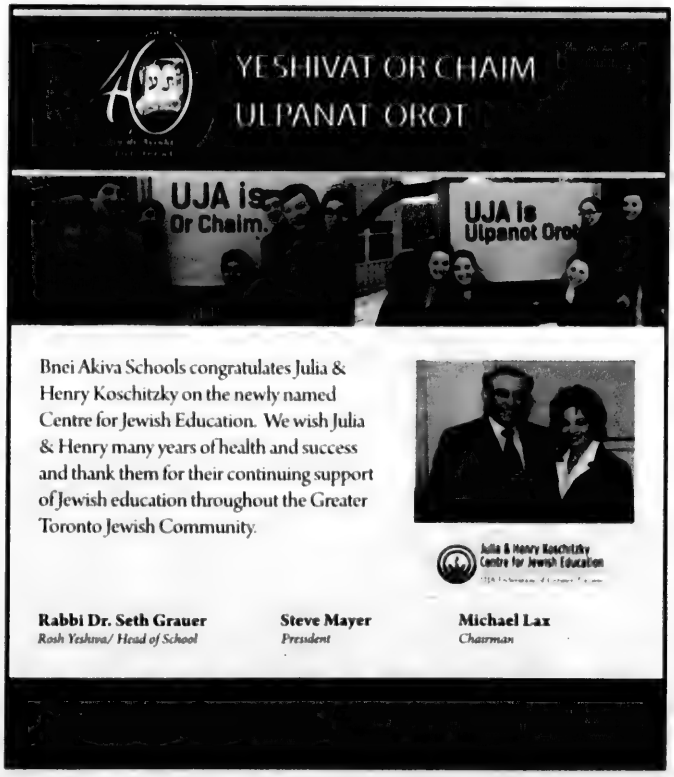
In a recent interview in *Ha'aretz*, Jacobson says he believes that while anti-Semitism seems to be in remission, it has actually been transformed into anti-Zionism, which he sees as "retrospective guilt being deployed."

He adds: "While not every anti-Zionist is necessarily an anti-Semite, it would be surprising if every anti-Zionist wasn't an anti-Semite. After all, anti-Semitism today is such an unacceptable thing, there has to be a refuge for them... Anti-Zionism covers a multitude of sins. It deploys the same cruelty, heartlessness and favouring the letter of the law over sympathy and compassion."

At one point in the book, Finkler pessimistically notes, just after delivering an eloquent public speech defending Zionism, that few people actually listen to reason. "Humanity was trapped in conviction, like rats in rat traps. Those who saw as he saw, saw what he saw. Those who didn't didn't."

But Finkler himself grows in this book, breaks ranks with the anti-Zionist Jews, and, at the end of the book, even finds meaning in a traditional Jewish ritual.

With recent troubling anti-Israel motions at fringe academic organizations like the Association for American Studies, let us hope that more Finklers will see the light.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Bnei Akiva Schools congratulates Julia & Henry Koschitzky on the newly named Centre for Jewish Education. We wish Julia & Henry many years of health and success and thank them for their continuing support of Jewish education throughout the Greater Toronto Jewish Community.
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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

SPOTLIGHT ON ISRAELI CULTURE RUNS THRU FEBRUARY AND MARCH

Ten leading Toronto cultural organizations are joining forces for Spotlight on Israeli Culture, a first-time two-month showcase of Israeli contemporary music, drama, dance, art, film, video and photography, with many events both free and ticketed during February and March.

Organized with the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation, Spotlight on Israeli Culture presents various breakthrough Israeli talents in venues across the GTA. Participating organizations are Dancemakers, Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company, Julie M. Gallery, Koffler Centre of the Arts, Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Toronto Downtown Jazz, Toronto Jewish Film Festival, Toronto Jewish Film Society, Union Events and Volcano Theatre.

Theatrical events include the Hani Theatre's production of *An Israeli Love Story* presented by the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company, and a reading of Israeli playwright **Motti Lerner's** play *Benedictus*, by Toronto's Volcano Theatre.

Cinematically speaking, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival is screening **Evegeny Ruman's** *Igor and The Cranes' Journey*.

Musically, an Israeli Jazz Showcase features the **Gilad Hekselman Trio**, the **Shai Maestro Trio** and the Toronto-based **David Buchbinder Ensemble**. As well, singer-songwriter-musician **Asaf Avidan** performs a solo acoustic performance.

Israeli choreographers **Niv Sheinfeld** and **Oren Laor** will also participate in a conversation on Israeli contemporary dance. And three visual-art exhibitions focus on video, photography and painting, respectively. For further details, please visit www.SpotlightOnIsraeliCulture.com

• • •

New Teatron Production: Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre Company presents *Handle With Care*, a romantic comedy by **Jason Odell Williams** and directed by Teatron artistic director **Ari Weisberg**. "Delivers a bundle of laughs… excellent," said the *Syracuse New Times*. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Feb. 20 to March 2. $19 to $48. www.teatrontheatre.com

• • •

Names in the News: Gallery owner **Edward Epstein**, a native of New York City, has been living in Toronto since marrying a Canadian in 1987. A music programmer, he established Gallery 345 in the city's west end in 2005. A large, L-shaped space with 12-foot wood ceilings and plaster and brick walls, Gallery 345 is on the first floor of a century-old warehouse at 345 Sorauren Ave., a block from Roncesvalles Village.

With its concert grand piano, the space has been the venue for a continuing series on "The Art of the Piano," as well as many other concerts, art and photo exhibitions and other cultural events. Some 20 musical events are scheduled between now and March 1. www.gallery345.com

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Names in the News II: The 12th annual Winterfolk Blues & Roots Festival unfolds on five stages in various venues around the Broadview-Danforth intersection of Toronto. More than 150 artists are slated to perform at the fest, which features 98 free and four paid events. A highlight is the tribute concert for musician **Tony Quarrington** featuring, among others, **Soozi Schlanger**, **Noah Zacharin**, the **Yiddish Swingtet**, **Brian Gladstone** and **Howard Gladstone**. Brian Gladstone is the festival director, and both Brian and Howard Gladstone are brothers to this columnist. Feb. 14 to 16. www.winterfolk.com

The Toronto Jewish Film Festival is screening Evegeny Ruman's *Igor and The Cranes' Journey*, part of the Spotlight on Israeli Culture.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** continues his series on director **Steven Spielberg** with "Erratic Years: *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *The Color Purple*, *Empire of the Sun* and *Always*." $11.25 drop-in; students $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Feb. 3, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• The Adult 55+ group presents *The Magic of Rodgers and Hammerstein*, with pianist **Jordan Klapman**. Sing along and learn about *Oklahoma!*, *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, *The Sound of Music* and other musicals. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2 p.m. (Doors open 1:30 p.m.) Drop-in $4. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

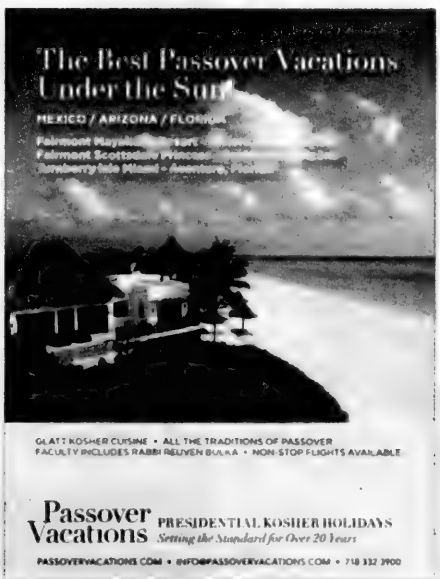
• Toronto Jewish Film Festival's Chai Tea & A Movie presents *Igor and the Cranes' Journey*, an Israeli film by **Evgeny Ruman**. $15. City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Vaughan. Sunday, Feb. 9, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. www.tjff.com

• • •

At the Galleries

• In *Harissa, Honey & Hyssop*, photographer Nelli Sheffer journeys to find the origins of North African foods that tantalize the Israeli palate. Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until Feb. 24.

• The Royal Ontario Museum's 20th annual Silver Lecture is "Tales from the Vault: A Peek Inside the World's Greatest Jewelry Boxes from Queen Mary to Gina Lollobrigida." ROM, Tuesday, Feb. 11, registration from 4:45 p.m. on. Viewing of the Gem and Gold Gallery, 4:30 to 5:20 p.m., lecture 5:45 to 7 p.m. Light refreshments. $40, $45. Pre-registration required. www.rom.on.ca/whatson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Canadian writer captures Israeli slice of life

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

Israeli-born Canadian writer Ayelet Tsabari, whose first book of short stories *The Best Place on Earth* was recently published by HarperCollins of Toronto, writes with amazing intensity, not only about modern Israelis, but also about the small Mizrachi ("Eastern") Jewish minority in Israel: her grandparents came from Yemen.

She's been lauded for crafting stories that pulse with vitality and are situated "on the intersections of love, hope and war." The CBC recently put her on its list of 10 up-and-coming "writers to watch."

Tsabari arrived in Canada at age 25. She lived in Vancouver 11 years and moved to Toronto four years ago. Married with a young daughter, she travels frequently to Israel where I contacted her by telephone, on the eve of a literary tour of Toronto (Feb. 2), Montreal (Feb. 5) and Ottawa (Feb. 6).

What are you trying to do when you write a short story?

I guess I just try to capture a slice of life. I try to inhabit the characters and let them lead me through the story. I try to not control it too much. It starts generally for me with some sort of scenario, a moment that often generates the voice. I don't exactly know what will happen, but I have snippets – I have a starting scenario, maybe a voice, maybe a couple of ideas, and then it sort of just comes together.

What was in your mind when you started to write* Tikkun, *the wonderful first story in the collection?

I knew that it happened during the intifadah. I knew that it was a love story, and I knew I would be telling it from the guy's point of view – he was the one who came to me first. But I didn't necessarily know it would end the way that it ended.

It was an amazing revelation to me to see that you'd actually written the story in a man's voice. You did it so well.

I love writing in alternate voices, it's one of my favourite things about fiction. I can't say that I choose in advance to write from a man's point of view or from a 68-year-old Yemeni grandmother's point of view. The creative process is not that calculated, at least not for me.

Your native tongue is Hebrew, but you now write beautifully in English. Was that a difficult transition for you?

Sure, at first. When I came to Canada, I was already a writer, and suddenly I was stripped of my tools. I couldn't write in English, not at that point; my grammar and my vocabulary needed improvement. It took a few years before I could even comprehend that it was possible to try.

Your literary tour is being hosted by the New Israel Fund, which is often strongly critical of Israel. What do you share in common with them?

What I appreciate about NIF Canada is its support for Mizrachi culture. Growing up in Israel, I was an avid reader, but I never found myself in literature. I never read books with Yemeni characters and I never read any Yemeni authors, and very few Mizrachi authors.

That made me feel as though my dream of becoming a writer was not very realistic because I had nobody to look up to. Secondly, I felt a little bit invisible because I didn't see myself in the literature. So one of the things I appreciate about NIF is their commitment to Mizrachi issues and Mizrachi communities in Israel.

A couple of your stories are set in Canada and another is set in the United States. Is there a common thread in your stories?

Mostly the stories – even the ones in Canada and the U.S. – involve Israeli characters. Also, I'm interested in people that are somewhat displaced. Thematically, that's probably one of the links in the stories, regardless of where they take place.

Ayelet Tsabari

What are you working on now?

I'm working on a novel, also centred around the Yemeni community. It seems I find endless inspiration in the Yemeni community, and I can't walk away from it.

This interview has been abbreviated and edited for clarity. Tsabari appears at the Gladstone Hotel, Sunday, Feb. 2, 7:30 p.m. To reserve a spot or for details about her other appearances, please visit www.ayelettsabari.com

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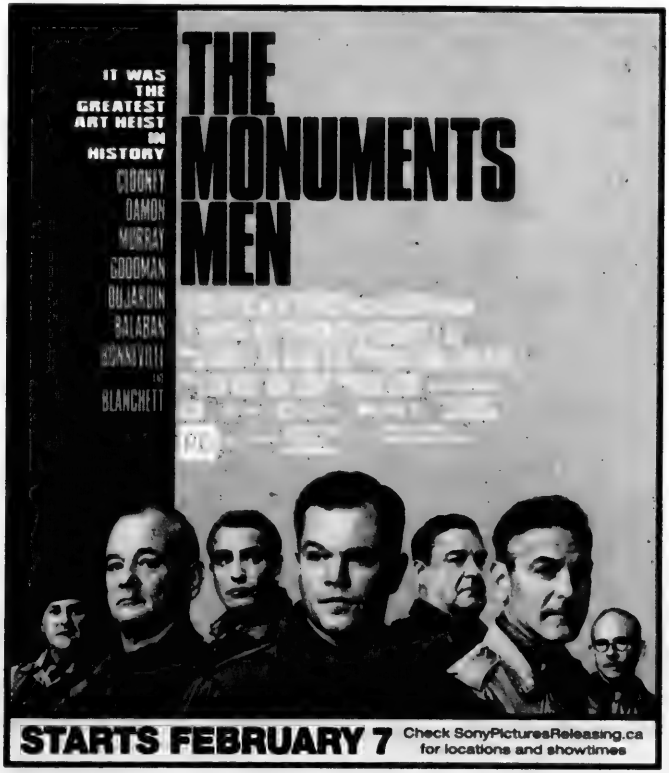


Producer was 'hooked' on TV from childhood

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Since she was a little girl, Phyllis Newman has believed she would one day be a television producer.

Newman, a creative media professional with more than 25 years experience in every area of media production last year became vice-president of production at Toronto-based Eggplant TV, which is responsible for the company's development and production for both film and TV for several Toronto specialty channels.

She has produced and developed many successful and highly rated Canadian and international television and digital media shows.

"Phyllis has been a great resource for us as the company grows and expands its mandate," Terry Tompkins, Eggplant's executive producer, said. "Her knowledge of producing great television has fast-tracked us through a number of challenges.

"Her experience in the business makes us all better. She is really quite invaluable to Eggplant TV."

Newman's interest in production developed many years ago. "I was always creating and performing in plays and concerts with my friends," she said in an interview. "Our basement was like my own little theatre, complete with closets filled with clothes from different eras that I would use to transform into various characters.

"But TV was the ultimate aphrodisiac. I was hooked. I knew early on that I had to be part of this magical and creative world."

Her first taste of media came at CHRY Radio York, where she interviewed several directors including Canadian filmmaker David Cronenberg, and well-known musicians such as Long John Baldry.

"At York University, I learned everything from producing and directing to editing, and I found that this is my passion," she said, adding that she worked with film majors although she graduated with a BA in sociology.

"But I wanted more creative control and I was determined to be a producer. This, I soon realized, was going to take a lot of hard work, focus and tenacity to survive."

Phyllis Newman
(Marko Shark photo)

Her first job was with casting director Anne Tait, casting films and TV productions and working with directors including Richard Safarian (*Twilight Zone*) and Paul Maslansky (*Police Academy*).

Climbing the production ladder, Newman worked on documentaries that dealt with historical and political issues and supervised video shorts at the Canadian Film Centre, a school for advanced training and production in film, television and new media, founded by Norman Jewison.

When cable TV exploded and numerous specialty channels were created, Newman worked on a variety of youth, pop, cultural, talk, comedy and hidden cameral shows. "I've done it all," she said.

She has interviewed and worked with Donny Osmond, Deepak Chopra, Erica Ehm and fashion, financial, food and other experts.

As she looked back on her career, she noted that she has produced and cast every type of host and expert, "including an elephant for a Bollywood-themed episode of *Party Mamas* and to make love connections on *Love Trap*."

Songwriter finally meets singer Rod Stewart

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Rod Stewart's hit song *Rhythm of My Heart* was written by Canadian songwriter Marc Jordan.

The song, from Stewart's album *Vagabond Heart*, was recorded in 1991, but the two singers didn't meet face-to-face for 22 years. On Dec.15, they finally met at Toronto's Air Canada Centre, where Stewart was performing.

"Rod Stewart changed my life. Meeting Rod was a wonderful closing of a circle for me," Jordan said.

Jordan has penned songs for some of music's biggest stars, including, besides Stewart, Diana Ross, Cher, Joe Cocker, Chicago, Bonnie Raitt, Bette Midler, Olivia Newton-John, Natalie Cole, The Manhattan Transfer and several more.

But it was the success of *Rhythm of my Heart* that really set the stage for Jordan to be able to continue with his love of songwriting. "Everybody has to have the big hit to stay in the game. He gave me that big hit, so I could be who I wanted to be," Jordan said.

"I got a call from [the president of [Stewart's label], and he told me in his British accent, 'Rod loves your tune,' and that Rod had said, 'I'll sing the song – I will do a great job. I love the song!'"

Jordan spoke on the phone with Stewart over the years but never actually met him in person.

"He was lovely, warm and inclusive. He had his whole band with him backstage and he introduced me. He was very funny – just lovely. When musicians get together we have our own language. We joked around – all sorts of inside stuff," Jordan said.

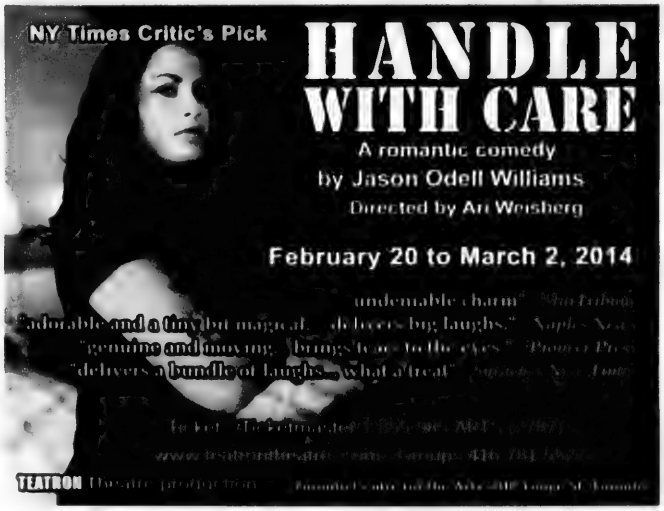
They also wanted to talk about *Rhythm of my Heart*. "I wanted to say thank you to Rod, and... he wanted to know what my inspiration was behind the song... and I told him.

"I wrote the song as a sort of folk song. It was an anti-war song about a soldier who goes to war and wonders. He is wondering whether all humanity is gone from the world. He wonders back home if people still fall in love and if love is alive somewhere back where he no longer is. He longs to be home to find some love again because, while he remembers love, where he is there is just carnage."

Jordan's songs have appeared on some 35 million records. His songs include *Marina del Rey*, *Survival* and *Waiting for a Miracle*. He has recorded 14 cds of his own songs and has won ASCAP, Juno, SOCAN and jazz and pop awards. He spends his time touring solo and as a member of Lunch At Allen's (with band members Murray McLauchlan, Ian Thomas and Cindy Church), and is working on a musical with his wife, singer-songwriter Amy Sky.

Earlier this fall, Jordan released his newest album, *On a Perfect Day*, co-written with producer Chris Bilton and recorded in both Nashville and Toronto.

The album's cover art is an original painting by Jordan, another of his many passions.



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HEEBONICS

HUSTLING and HELPING AND POP

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

When Robert Ostfield took over music and pop culture portal *andPOP.com*, it was a tiny operation run by a couple of ambitious university students. In fact, Ostfield himself had just graduated from Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management when he became CEO of the company.

Today, *andPOP* is one of Canada's leading entertainment portals for teens and young adults. The site books exclusive interviews with some of the hottest names in the music industry – we're talking Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber, Selena Gomez, Jason Derulo and Ellie Goulding, among many others. What's even more impressive: the brand's videos have scored more than 21 million views on YouTube alone.

Ostfield, who now oversees multiple websites as managing director for Channel Zero Digital, whose parent company has owned *andPOP* since 2012, says his success couldn't have happened without two key ingredients: hustle and help.

"I think I've always been a little bit of a hustler and just a natural sales guy," he told *The CJN*. "And I've always admired sales people. You read profiles of successful entrepreneurs and get inspired, and of course you want to imitate that kind of success."

During his university years, Ostfield was a member of Jewish fraternity AEPi. That's how he met *andPOP* founder Michael Levine, who introduced him to the website and co-founder Adam Gonshor. Ostfield quickly became involved with the business side of the site, eventually taking it over once he graduated. The young entrepreneur made one very important change by adding more video content.

"I saw how I was consuming media and how at the time, going back 10 years ago, the world wasn't set up to address that need," he said. "So I just genuinely saw an opportunity and thought I could develop the expertise and the know-how in order to exploit that opportunity."

At that point, he was already getting access to celebrities. He thought: why not create video content instead of just written profiles? "There's value in the access, but if you can really produce everything into compelling video content, there's double the value or triple the value," he said.

The emphasis on videos made *andPOP* stand out at the time. "That's how we became an official YouTube partner very early on. It's that we had high-quality video content with celebrities."

The editorial approach also made the brand stick out from some of its larger competitors.

"Because we were online and because we were a small operation, we could do whatever we wanted," Ostfield said. "So we could ask a boy band about picking up girls and doing drugs and getting drunk. The MuchMusics, the Kiss 92.5s won't and can't talk about that. But we're online. We can do whatever we want."

The site continued to build its credibility by sealing partnerships that made the brand more valuable. Over the years, some of those partners have included AOL Canada, XM Radio, Yahoo Canada and even Esso.

"Really that made the record industry look at us as a major, legitimate player," Ostfield said. "So when they're creating their press schedule for Lady Gaga they say, 'Yeah we gotta do MuchMusic, we gotta do Kiss 92.5, but *andPOP* really gives us a wide distribution – we gotta be on there, too.'"

He said *andPOP's* easy-to-work-with team has made the site popular with publicists and music execs. He also attributes a good part of *andPOP's* success to the great mentors he's counted on, including Jordan Banks, managing director of Facebook Canada.

"The best thing he taught me was, 'Be nice to people on your way up because you'll meet them on your way down.'"

Banks, who's also Facebook's global head of vertical strategy, joined *andPOP* as an investor and board member in 2010. Later, Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame member Gary Slaight also invested in the company. Ostfield singles out two other individuals as close advisers and friends: Google's Neil Shankman and entrepreneur Jamie Grossman. "If I've had success, a lot of that has to do with the fact that I've had a lot of help," he said.

The site expanded in 2011 by raising some money and acquiring *ChartAttack.com*. "The old *Chart Attack* would talk about Billy Talent and Nickelback," Ostfield said. "Our *Chart Attack* talks about Arcade Fire and Broken Social Scene – it's kind of that Queen Street West indie alternative crowd."

Just like with *andPOP*, Ostfield started putting an emphasis on video content with *Chart Attack*, and the site's popularity has since grown significantly. He also makes sure his staff, interns and contributors are all in the same age group as his audience (i.e., teens and 20-somethings).

"We think it's a mutually beneficial opportunity, because for one, they allow us to really be authentic and talk about the right things that our audience cares about," he said. "And at the same time, they're getting amazing opportunities running this brand... So we think it's a win-win."

In 2012, Channel Zero – the largest independent broadcaster in Canada – acquired a controlling interest in andPOP Inc. "Both parties recognized that there was an interesting marriage that could happen here and Channel Zero Digital was formed," Ostfield explained.

In his new role as managing director, Ostfield oversees all of Channel Zero's main digital properties, including CHCH.com. He continues to manage *andPOP* and *Chart Attack*, and he also represents Sony's Crackle.com brand in Canada.

Needless to say Ostfield's a busy guy, but he always makes time to help others.

"You get what you give and I'd like to try to help the next generation of entrepreneurs by giving them the same kind of support that I have received," he said.

After more than 10 years in the business, the entrepreneur is still living by his motto: hustle and help.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

What's New

By LILA SARICK

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of Feb. 13 is Feb. 3. The deadline for the issue of Feb. 20 is Feb. 10. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Jan. 30

NIA CLASS

Women and men are invited to enjoy a Nia class, Temple Har Zion, 8 p.m. $5.

Friday, Jan. 31

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

Jonathan Spyer, Middle East analyst and author, is the scholar in residence at Beth Emeth Synagogue this weekend. Call 416-633-3838 for details.

CHALLAH BAKING

Shaar Shalom Synagogue holds a free challah baking workshop, 10 a.m.-noon.

Saturday, Feb. 1

CAFE TIKVAH

Jordan Klapman sings Jewish Broadway hits, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 7:30 p.m. $10/$15. For tickets, call 416-221-3433.

Sunday, Feb. 2

THE JEWS OF YEMEN

Isaac Hollander discusses the Jews of Yemen, part of a series on Jews of Arab lands, Darchei Noam Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

SHORESH FOOD CONFERENCE

The Shoresh Food Conference will be held 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Miles Nadal JCC. Join rabbis, farmers, foodies and activists to explore the intersection of Jewish tradition and contemporary food ethics. www.shoresh.ca.

Monday, Feb. 3

JOB SEARCHES

Joanna Samuels of JVS, provides tips on the job search process, 7 p.m., Temple Sinai. To reserve, call 416-487-3281.

VISION IMPAIRED CLUB

The Jewish Club for the Vision Impaired meets 7:30 p.m. at the Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. New members welcome. Call **Bess** 905-508-2892.

JEWISH LAW AND DIVORCE

Yael Machtinger discusses divorce law in Judaism and Islam, 1 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Tuesday, Feb. 4

VIOLINS IN WARTIME

The movie *Violins in Wartime*, about an Israeli violin maker, will be shown at 2 p.m. at Beth Tikvah. $5.

OPEN HOUSE

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School holds an open house, 10 a.m. RSVP to **Sheri Rapp**, 416-928-3537 or sheri@djds.ca.

Wednesday, Feb. 5

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Deconstructing Missionary Proof Texts," fourth in a six-part counter-missionary series, 8 p.m., Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. Free. To register, call 416-789-0020, or email toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Feb. 6

ANCIENT ISRAELITE WORSHIP

Rabbi Eva Goldfinger, of Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, discusses "Evolving Polytheistic Worship Among Ancient Israelites," 7 p.m. $20. Address when you RSVP. Call **Roby,** 416-385-3910.

Upcoming Events

MAZON SKATING PARTY

Mazon Canada holds a skating party, **Feb. 17,** 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Upper Canada College.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Act to End Violence Against Women (formerly Jewish Women International of Canada) is seeking to expand its board of directors. The group, which works mainly in the Jewish community, is looking for women with knowledge of the issue of violence against women who have fundraising, legal and financial experience. Email resumes to penny@acttoendvaw.org, or call **Penny Krowitz** 905-695-5372.

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Women Fully Clothed, four female comedians, will perform at Hadassah's Tamid Chapter's Girls Night Out, 7 p.m., **Feb. 27,** St. Michael's College School, 1515 Bathurst St. $40. For tickets, call 416-630-8373, or email info@toronto.chw.ca.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Russian, Hebrew, and English-speaking volunteers are needed to support clients or family members with life-threatening conditions. Next training session in February-March.

Continued on page 33

Potential French immigrants spooked by charter: brief

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Quebec's proposed values charter would have a "devastating" impact on the Jewish community, and is already dissuading Jewish immigrants, notably from France, from coming here, Federation CJA and its advocacy arm, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), say in a joint brief to the National Assembly committee conducting hearings on Bill 60.

"Since the beginning of this debate, a noxious social climate has developed and had a negative impact on the continuity of the Jewish community," the strongly worded brief states.

"Numerous French Jewish families tell us that they are now considering immigrating to other regions of North America instead of Quebec."

The charter jeopardizes the community's efforts for years to attract Jewish immigrants, notably from France, to offset the decline in its numbers since the 1970s, they say, as well as to find ways to keep its youth in the province.

"Now, the debate on the 'charter of Quebec values' has destabilized our young people, of whom greater and greater numbers ask themselves whether there is a place for them in Quebec," the 40-page brief states.

The organizations want the bill withdrawn, calling it "a bad solution to a problem that does not exist," one that violates the federal and Quebec human rights charters, as well as the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The organization warns against Quebec modelling its brand of secularism on France's rigid separation of church and state, which has contributed to social tensions in that country.

"By importing to Quebec a model of secularism foreign to Quebec history, we risk importing with it social conflicts that until now have been absent from Quebec," the organizations state.

Since the Quiet Revolution a half-century ago, the province has developed a balance between the rights of the majority and minorities that works quite well, they say.

"[T]his bill threatens to betray the Quebec tradition of pluralism, to exclude the people of minority communities from full participation in public life, and to compromise the acquired rights and the future of the Jewish community in Quebec."

Rather than entrenching state religious neutrality, the charter represents "the antithesis of secularism," the organizations argue, by giving preference to the dominant Catholicism.

"It would confer an exceptional legal status, said to be a national heritage, for the traditional faith of the majority, and thus totally marginalize the public expression of minority faiths."

Susan Laxer

The organizations say they are in favour of "a pluralism that gives minorities the necessary space to express their distinctive characters while respecting French Canadian history and tradition," along the lines of the policy adopted by René Lévesque's Parti Québécois government in 1981.

Quebec vice-president Luciano Del Negro said CIJA hopes to receive a date to appear at the public hearings, which are scheduled to continue until April.

The federation and CIJA will hold a "town hall" meeting on the charter Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m.

"We understand the frustration that has been felt throughout our community over the proposed charter," federation president Susan Laxer wrote in an e-mailed community message.

"[This] will be an important opportunity to hear a spectrum of insight as well as make your own voice heard."

B'nai Brith Canada has chosen not to make the text of its brief public, said Quebec region director Harvey Levine.

He said B'nai Brith does not want "to spill all the beans" in advance of its hoped-for appearance before the parliamentary committee.

The organization submitted its brief on Dec. 19, the day before the deadline, he said, and is in about 106th or 107th place to receive a date to be heard, which would likely mean the end of February or early March.

Basically, B'nai Brith believes the bill is unnecessary and should be rejected, calling its unconstitutional, Levine said.

"It's turning upside down the whole definition of a secular society," he said. "It's divisive and playing into the hands of xenophobia."

Meanwhile, the Quebec Liberal party issued its official position on Bill 60 on Jan. 21. It would place no restrictions on the wearing of overt religious symbols by public employees, except for police officers and prison guards who have uniforms.

Leader Philippe Couillard said the latter would have to make an accommodation request to a "competent authority" to wear such symbols, and that any religious gear must not impede security, communication or identification. "Real steps towards integration" would also have to be demonstrated by the applicant.

The sole Jewish Liberal MNA, Lawrence Bergman, defended the position as representing greater flexibility than exists at present for police and correctional officials who wishing to display religious symbols. He added that kippot would "certainly" not be prohibited, because they don't present safety or other issues.

Continued from page 32

Volunteers are also needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

LOOKING FOR HOOPSTERS

Looking for three guys over 35 to play basketball in UJA's charity basketball tournament. **Feb. 23.** Call **Michael**, 416-300-9239.

HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS

Beth Avraham Yosef of Toronto Congregation is going to see the Harlem Globetrotters at Copps Coliseum, **Feb. 9.** For tickets, call **Rich Winkler** at 905-886-3810, ext. 135, or email rich@bayt.ca.

OPEN DOORS, OPEN MINDS

Dr. Bahram Jam, a member of the Zoroastrian religious community, speaks at Temple Kol Ami's Shabbat services, **Feb. 7**, 7:30 p.m.

POKER TOURNAMENT

Temple Kol Ami holds a charity poker tournament, **Feb. 9**, 2 p.m. Tickets $40. Call 905-709-2620.

ORGAN DONATION

An evening on organ donation from a Jewish viewpoint, will be held **Feb. 10,** 7:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. **Rabbi Reuven Bulka,** organ donors, recipients and doctors will speak.

FAMILY & IMMIGRATION LAW

Lawyer **Adela Crossley** will discuss immigration and family law, **Feb. 19.** Free. For location, call Act to End Violence Against Women, 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

YOUNG JUDAEA

Young Judaea holds its leadership convention Feb. 28-March 2. See www.youngjudaea.ca for details.

COMEDY NIGHT

Beth Avraham Yosef of Toronto Congregation holds a comedy night with comedian **Marc Weiner** and jazz guitarist **Stan Samole, Feb. 8**, 8 p.m. Tickets $18/$20. Call 905-886-3810.

FAMILY CAREGIVERS

A support group for people caring for parents with cognitive or physical impairments will meet Thursdays, 7 p.m. starting **Feb. 20** at Day Centre for Seniors, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

MORASHA CLASSES

Shayna Kravetz teaches "Ten Tough Torah Questions – Part II," **Feb. 12-March 12**, 9:45 a.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum teaches "When the Bible is Confusing: A Dynamic Solution," **Feb. 12-March 12,** 11:15 a.m. To register, call **Loretta,** 416-789-7400.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Have you been through the mental health system? Would you like to be a peer support to others going through the system and soon to be discharged from the hospital? Baycrest is starting a new support program. For more information, call **Janis Sternhill** at 416-785-2500, ext. 2575, or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Parenting the Child/Teen with ADHD: A 4-week group for parents who want to learn strategies to assist and discipline their children effectively. Starts Feb. 4, 7 p.m. Call for pre-group assessment, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215.

Living with Teens: A 6-session group for parents of teens. Topics include: setting limits, letting go, drugs, alcohol and sexuality. Starts Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn how to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly divorced or separated individuals. Starts Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at the Lebovic Community Centre, 9600 Bathurst St.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women under 50 who have lost their spouse in the last few years, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Am Shalom, 767 Huronia Rd. Barrie, is hosting a SMART workshop, low-impact exercises designed to decrease the risk of falls, build muscle strength, flexibility and endurance. Classes run Thursdays at 1:30 p.m. Free to men and women over 55. Call 705-737-5044, ext. 221 to register.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Adult 55+Culture, Education, Community, Miles Nadal JCC Sing with **Jordan Klapman** when he presents "The Magic of Rodgers and Hammerstein," Feb. 6., 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.). $4. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. Feb. 4, **Amanda Shubert** discusses "Technology and Imagination in Film,"10 a.m.; Feb. 6, **Afi Peykani** discusses, "Power of Attorney, Wills and Trusts," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine March 26. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the 2014/2015 school year for the daycare and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4351.

A Jewish Literary Festival for Children will be held Feb. 17, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Featuring authors' readings, book sales, and a make-your-own-book station.

The book club discusses *The Invisible Bridge* by **Julie Orringer** Feb. 24, 1 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Jewish teen ice-skating party, Feb. 1, 6:30 p.m., Dufferin Grove Park. RSVP **Yael Polunsky** 416-633-2511 or email shaliach.gesher@gmail.com.

Harissa, Honey and Hyssop, photos by **Nelli Sheffer,** is on display in the gallery until Feb. 24.

Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses the work of **Steven Spielberg**, Mondays 7-9 p.m., until March 17. Feb. 3: *Erratic Years*.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Health and fitness: MELT Method for hands and feet, helps alleviate arthritis, bunions, carpal tunnel and more. Mondays to March 17, 2:30 p.m.; MELT Method-full body. Meets Tuesdays 7 p.m. to March 18 or Wednesdays to March 26, 11 a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org or 416-898-1818, ext. 574

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

Emergency First Aid and CPR 'C' taught Feb. 2, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

The similarities between financial and physical health, will be discussed Feb. 3, 7 p.m.

A healthy skin workshop will be offered Feb. 6, 11 a.m.

A workshop on dating in midlife, for men and women over 40, will be held Feb. 18 at 7 p.m.

An osteoarthritis workshop will be held Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

The movie *The Frisco Kid* will be shown Feb. 24, 1 p.m.,

Israeli cuisine with a twist of Iraqi and French cuisine will be discussed Feb. 26 at 7 p.m.

Book club with reviewer **Bruria Cooperman** meets Feb. 28, 10:30 a.m. To register for programs, call **Andrea,** ext. 3006 or email adaiam@srcentre.ca.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

Teen's legacy will roar on

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

The family of Olivia Sophie Wise is learning to move forward in life without their beloved daughter and sister.

At age 16, Olivia captured worldwide attention by recording her version of Katy Perry's *Roar*. The video became an overnight online sensation and drew the attention of Perry, who posted a response to Olivia saying she was "very moved" by the video and "Wise sounded great."

Olivia lost her battle with brain cancer in November 2013. Her courage and inspiration triggered an outpouring of compassion.

Following her death, Perry tweeted, "Your spirit and strength has inspired me and so many others... May you rest in peace."

Grief experts say losing a child is the worst kind of loss anyone could possibly go through, a searing and unspeakable pain, but her three siblings have also been experiencing the pain of her loss.

"I'm glad she's not suffering anymore. It's hard but it makes it easier knowing that I feel her with me all the time. I am focusing on all the fun and happy memories I have, and Olivia was, and will always be, my best friend," said Olivia's younger sister, Sabrina.

Her brother expressed it this way: "Sometimes I have trouble sleeping. I miss my sister so much," Jason said.

Older sister Kaily is also living with past memories. "I'm not doing so great," she said. "Just trying to get through each day and remembering all the positive memories we had together. I will never be able to fully accept that she's gone – it still feels like a dream but I know that every step I take in life, she will always be my side."

Michael Wise, Olivia's father, expressed his sorrow, but he, too, is clinging to the memories. "I have deep sadness in the pit of my stomach. Life does not feel the same. I hear her tell me in her own voice, 'I love you Daddy,' with the way she used to pucker and blow kisses to me," he reflected.

In the midst of their grief, Kari Winemaker, Olivia's mother reflected on the apparent injustice of the loss and the need to move on for her family.

"The loss of Olivia is so unfair to my whole family, and especially to Olivia, who had so much to offer. I am thanking God for my other three amazing children, who pick me up each day. I know they deserve to be able to carry on, so I feel I have to show them how. I am forcing myself to be the mother I was and the one I want to be. I am doing my best to get us all back to our schedules and to living life to the best of our abilities."

But it's not easy, she added. "Not a second goes by each day that I don't think of Olivia, her beauty, her zest for life, her wonderful spirit, and I use this to propel me forward. She is a huge part of me. I have learned so much from her. I feel her presence every day. I speak to her at times, to tell her how much I love her and to ask what she would do about certain things. I am trying to find purpose for this awful tragedy."

Olivia's dream was to help children, her mother said. "We started the Liv Wise Fund. My kids were selling Liv Wise bracelets at school raising money from early on. We have changed the name to the Liv Wise Foundation, raising money for brain cancer research and children living with brain cancer. We have raised over $200,000 and the numbers are continuing to rise."

Winemaker praised the Jewish community, which she said has been supportive from the time they heard of Olivia's illness. "We have received support from community members such as dropping off a challah, offering kind words, helping with car pool and if we need something, people are there, and we are thankful."

It's important to keep loved ones alive in our heart and in the hearts of other people as well, she said. "We talk about Liv, we go to places she enjoyed. We still buy the food she liked. We see something that reminds us of her. Every Sunday, we have family and friends for dinner, and we reminisce.

"Olivia loved her circle of friends, singing and performing in theatre productions. She made an impression anywhere she went – people fell in love with her everywhere," reflected Winemaker.

A fundraiser is being planned at the Toronto Zoo this spring, Winemaker said. "A run – Liv will roar again."

Olivia's versions of *Roar* and *Simple Girl*, an a cappella version of a song Olivia wrote when she was 11, are available on iTunes with the proceeds going to the LivWiseFoundation.

Visit www.livwisefoundation.com for more information.

The Wise family – from left, Jason, Kaily, Michael, Kari, Sabrina and Olivia.
[Shaindel Friedman Photography]

Halachic challenges of the ice storm

Kosher Living
Richard Rabkin

Who's ready for summer? This winter, the weather has been particularly harsh, and it's not even half over yet! I think Someone Above is trying to give us a hint – why don't we all just make aliyah already?

In all seriousness, while bad weather can be uncomfortable, and at times dangerous, it can pose halachic challenges as well. This was evidenced during the recent ice storm in Toronto.

An important kashrut principle that is not widely known is called *bishul yisrael*. Briefly, for food to be considered kosher, even if the ingredients are 100 per cent kosher, a person of Jewish faith must be symbolically involved in the act of cooking (as long as the food would be "fit for a king's table" and could not be eaten raw). Today, most COR caterers, restaurants, bakeries, supermarkets and so on have non-Jewish chefs and kitchen staff, so the COR mashgiach is required to light the initial flame that's used to prepare the food. This doesn't necessarily mean that the mashgiach needs to light every stovetop every morning. Rather, he or she lights the oven's pilot light, which is then used to ignite all of the other various flames on a day-to-day basis.

Most of the time, this system works well. But, if you can see where I'm going here, if there is a prolonged power outage, it can pose a significant problem. And if you certify approximately 170 retail establishments across the Greater Toronto Area as the Kashruth Council of Canada does, then you've got 170 times the problems. That's just what happened during the 2013 ice storm.

On Friday night, Dec. 20, freezing rain began to fall. By Saturday night, many homes, business and COR facilities began losing power. Starting Monday, and throughout the week, different sectors began regaining their power, so COR mashgichim had to be at the ready so that they could visit their establishments and relight pilot lights and assist in any other way possible.

City officials were recommending that non-essential personnel stay off the roads due to the dangerous conditions, but for kosher consumers, COR mashgichim are essential personnel! While some mashgichim couldn't even get their cars out of their driveways due to the ice, the COR team banded together and covered for one another, visiting the city's establishments one by one so Toronto could have kosher food.

Let's hear it for our boys (and girls)!

Some COR-certified facilities, such as retirement homes and hospitals have their own generators to restore power in cases of emergency. At one such seniors residence, the generator was able to keep the kitchen running, but the power didn't extend to the rest of the residence. The health and safety of the elderly residents is obviously critical, so they were evacuated to a hotel downtown. But many of the residents keep kosher. What were they going to eat?

The senior's residence staff decided to cook as much food as they could in their COR-certified facility, with their mashgiach assisting. Then, they double-wrapped all of the meals, sealed them with COR kosher stickers and loaded them into vans, which transported the meals to the hotel where the residents were staying. In spite of the treacherous road conditions, our COR mashgiach accompanied the van to the hotel and helped set up the satellite kitchen so that all of the residents' dietary needs were taken care of.

While power was restored to most of the city within a few days, the ice storm of 2013 seems to have left an indelible mark on our communal consciousness. For instance, trees that were downed in my neighbourhood have yet to be cleared. But as time moves on, hopefully we won't forget the heroic actions of a few COR mashgichim who kept the city of Toronto kosher in December 2013.

Fish – fast and fabulous

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

We all know that we should be eating more fish. It's a lean protein, full of heart- and brain-healthy omega 3s and easy to digest. Also on the upside, fish is one of the easiest things to cook, if you follow a few guidelines.

All fish is naturally tender, so regardless of the type, it will cook in about 10 to 15 minutes, making it a fantastic weeknight option. There's no need to marinate it to make it tastier or to engage in a long slow cook to tenderize it. Basically, all fish cooks in the same amount of time, regardless of the cooking method. A good rule of thumb is to start testing it for doneness after 8 to 10 minutes per inch, always measured at the thickest width, not length. This applies whether you're poaching it, baking it or grilling it. That said, it's important to not overdo fish or it will dry out.

The other wonderful thing about fish is that it's so versatile. There are so many types to choose from that you'd be hard pressed to find yourself getting bored with fish. Even if you consume fish only once or twice a week, and regardless of what the recipe calls for, try to buy the freshest fish you can. If only frozen filets are available, thaw them in your fridge overnight and never at room temperature. The choices I have suggested in the recipes below are just that, recommendations only. Feel free to substitute your favourite variety.

GRILLED HALIBUT WITH SUGAR SNAP PEA AND LEMON MEDLEY

This fish is an all-season treat. Fresh herbs are available everywhere now and liven up this colourful topping. Halibut is a meaty fish and a bit on the expensive side, so this is a treat to be enjoyed once in a while. Having said that, it's super easy to put together and as delicious as they come.

2 cups sugar snap peas, trimmed (about 8 oz.)
3 green onions, thinly sliced
2/3 cup finely shaved or sliced fresh fennel
1/2 cup julienned sun-dried tomatoes, packed in oil
1 tsp. freshly grated lemon zest
5 tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice
5 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp. each chopped fresh parsley and chives
1 tbsp. chopped fresh tarragon
2 tsp. honey
1/2 tsp. each salt and pepper
halibut filets

Preheat the oven to 400. In a pot of lightly salted boiling water, blanch snow peas for 1 to 2 minutes or until bright green. Drain. Immediately rinse under cold running water until cool. Drain again. Cut in half on the diagonal and transfer to serving bowl. Stir in green onions, fennel, sun dried tomatoes and lemon zest.

Place fish filets on aluminum foil-lined baking sheet.

In a bowl, whisk together lemon juice, olive oil, parsley, chives, tarragon, honey and salt and pepper. Brush each filet with 1 tbsp. of the mixture. Roast in the centre of the preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish, or until the fish flakes easily.

Meanwhile, toss together the remaining lemon/oil mixture with the sugar snap pea mixture. Transfer filets to plates and top with snow pea medley. Makes 4 servings.

THAI FISH CURRY

If you want to serve this as individual servings, then buy four filets. However, it's just as easy to make it a curry "stew" by using a meaty fish such as snapper and cutting the fish into large chunks before you poach it. This is excellent over Basmati or Thai Jasmine rice to help soak up the delicious sauce.

2 tbsp. canola oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp. finely minced fresh ginger
1/2 tsp. each hot chili flakes, ground coriander and ground cumin (or 2 tsp. Thai hot chili paste)
1/2 cup each diced sweet red pepper and carrots
3 cups sliced mushrooms
1 tbsp. each finely grated lemon and lime zest
1 cup light or regular coconut milk
2 tbsp. tomato paste
1/2 tsp. each salt and pepper
4 fish filets (such as cod, salmon or red snapper)
3 green onions, chopped
1/4 cup chopped fresh coriander

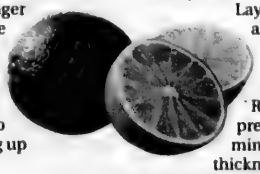
In a large shallow saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add garlic, ginger, chili flakes, coriander and cumin; cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add red pepper and carrots and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes. Add mushrooms. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes or until all excess liquid has evaporated. Stir in lemon and lime zest, coconut milk, tomato paste and salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, stirring to break up the tomato paste.

Nestle fish in liquid. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, for 8 to 11 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish, until the fish flakes easily. Remove fish to a serving platter and keep warm.

Boil remaining liquid for 3 to 5 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat; stir in green onions and coriander. Pour over fish and serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

OVEN-ROASTED FISH WITH WASABI, LIME AND GINGER SAUCE

This Asian-inspired recipe takes only minutes to prepare. The lime juice blends splendidly with the soy, ginger and coriander, while the wasabi powder adds a little kick. If you're not a fan of heat, feel free to leave it out. The addition of mayonnaise allows the sauce to nap the fish without ending up all over your plate.



4 tbsp. freshly squeezed lime juice
1 tbsp. soy sauce
2 tbsp. chopped fresh coriander
1 tbsp. finely minced fresh ginger
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1/4 tsp. wasabi powder
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
4 sole filets (sea bass or snapper can be used)
2 tbsp. mayonnaise

Preheat the oven to 400. In a small bowl, whisk together the lime juice, soy sauce, fresh coriander, ginger, garlic, wasabi powder and pepper.

Lay the four fish filets on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet. Brush 3 tbsp. of the lime juice mixture over the filets. Roast in the centre of the preheated oven for about 7 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish, or until the fish flakes easily.

Meanwhile, whisk the mayonnaise into the remaining lime juice mixture.

Transfer fish to serving plates and drizzle with lime juice/mayonnaise mixture. Makes 4 servings.

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Going for gold in Sochi

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Dylan Moscovitch knew he wanted to compete in the Olympics from the time he was a little kid.

"My mom said when I was five, someone asked me if I wanted to go to the Olympics, and I said, 'No, I want to win the Olympics.' It's been at the forefront of my mind my entire life," Moscovitch said.

Now, the Waterloo-based Toronto native is fulfilling that dream, having arrived in Russia to compete in the Sochi Olympic Winter Games with figure skating pairs partner Kirsten Moore-Towers.

He said he's going to use his past competition experiences as strength and fuel to bring himself to a whole new level. As the only Jewish figure skater on the Olympic team, and perhaps the only Jew competing for Canada, he'll be doing his best to win the competition that he called the "pinnacle goal" of figure skating.

"I'm definitely proud to be representing my country, Canada, and also to be representing Jewish Canadians," he said. "It's an honour to be representing the community, and I hope to make everyone proud."

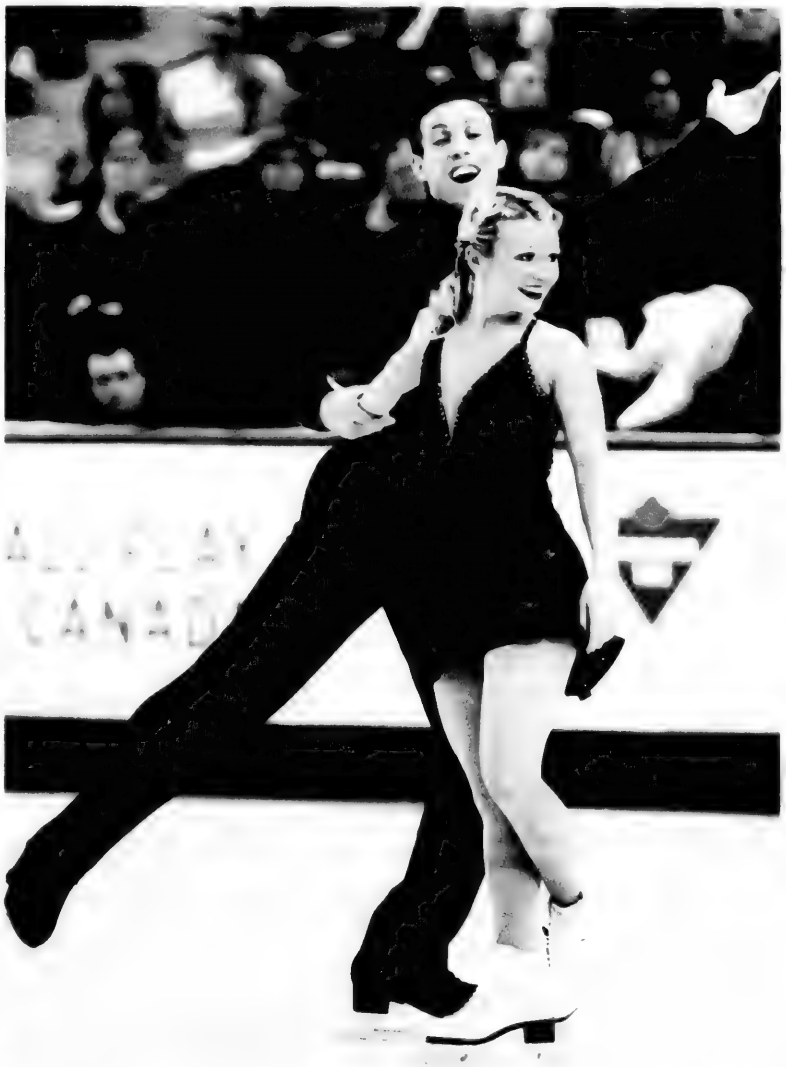
Moscovitch, who began skating as a toddler, said he's been experiencing a big wave of emotions ever since he heard the news that he'd be competing.

"[It's] very exciting and surreal, a little overwhelming," he said. "It's been my dream. It's been what I've been working for my entire life, so to know all those hours and sacrifices and finances and time... it all came to fruition."

The team was fairly confident they would be chosen even before it was made official. They placed second in January at the national championships in Ottawa, and came in fourth overall at the 2013 world championships, which Moscovitch said is the highest level apart from the Olympics.

With the goal of getting to Sochi, the team has been on a rigorous training schedule, with skating practice six days a week and daily training both on and off the ice ranging from 3-1/2 to six hours a day.

Continued on page 25



Dylan Moscovitch and Kirsten Moore-Towers skate at the national championships. *[Danielle Earl photo]*

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Greater Toronto Area

Settlement issue spurs coalition tensions
Please see page 29

Chassidic councillor seeks to heal divisions in Montreal — see page 19

CANADA

Lev Tahor Raided

CHATHAM, Ont. — Quebec police searched two homes belonging to the fringe haredi sect Lev Tahor on Jan. 29. Last week's raids took place in Chatham, Ont., where some 40 sect families reside after leaving Montreal in November. The raid came days before an Ontario judge was set to decide whether 14 children ages several months to 16 years old, can remain with their parents in Chatham, or be placed in foster care in Quebec, where there is an outstanding order by child welfare services. The ruling was expected Feb. 3. Also last week, a mother from the group who had two of her children, both under five, removed for five days and returned, sent an open letter to media outlets decrying harassment by authorities. The children were removed when a mark identified by child welfare authorities as a bruise was noticed on one child's face. The mother of three, who can't be identified, says the mark was made by permanent marker. That case was adjourned until April.

Frank Exhibit Opens

VANCOUVER — A travelling exhibit about Anne Frank opened last week at the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. The exhibit, from the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, is aimed at schoolchildren. A companion exhibit includes artifacts donated by local Shoah survivors. Both are running until May 30.

WORLD

YU Lawsuit Tossed

NEW YORK — A U.S. federal judge tossed out a $680-million sexual abuse lawsuit filed by 34 ex-students of Yeshiva University. The judge said the victims, ranging in age from late-30s to early-60s, waited too long to speak up in accusing YU of turning a blind eye to molestation they say they suffered there. Their lawyer called the ruling an "abomination and a disgrace" and plans to appeal. The suit, filed in July, alleges YU wilfully turned a blind eye while two of its rabbis sexually assaulted teens at YU's prestigious high school for boys in Manhattan from 1969 to 1989.

Anti-Hollande March Turns Ugly

PARIS — A march through Paris against French President Francois Hollande ended with anti-Semitic chants and support for an anti-Semitic comedian.

Protesters give Nazi salutes. *[YouTube screenshot]*

Some 150 protesters were arrested in the "Day of Anger" demonstrations Jan. 27. Nineteen police officers were injured in clashes with protesters, one seriously, *AFP* reported. Police estimated that 17,000 participated in the march.

Protesters performed Nazi salutes and the quenelle, a gesture invented by the anti-Semitic French comedian Dieudonné M'bala M'bala, that's reminiscent of a Nazi salute. They also urged freedom of speech for him.

Anti-Semitic chants included "Jews go home" and "Jews, France is not your country."

The Union of French Jewish Students, or UEJF, condemned "anti-Semitic slogans and Nazi salutes" by some protesters. The group's president, Sacha Reingewirtz, told *AFP*, "This Day of Anger has turned into a day of hate."

Reform Shul Defaced

JERUSALEM — A Reform synagogue in the central Israel city of Ra'anana was vandalized with graffiti. The graffiti, found Jan. 30 on the outside of the Kehilat Ra'anan synagogue building, included quotes from Maimonides on non-believers. The shul has previously been vandalized, most recently in April 2011.

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Ottawa Facebook dispute echoes U.S. 'Open Hillel' debate

Where's the line in campus debates about Israel?

A student passes by Hillel of Greater Toronto's office. *[Cara Stern photo]*

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

When Hillel Ottawa's Israel Awareness Committee (IAC) updated its Facebook page last month to include a social media code of conduct, Tyler Levitan noticed a clause that he says violates the committee's stated goal of "engaging in debate, discussion and dialogue on Israeli society, culture and politics."

Based on Hillel International's general operational guidelines for all its chapters, the code says the IAC will remove posts that endorse boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigns against Israel, which it views as "hateful rhetoric."

But Levitan, national campaigns co-ordinator for Independent Jewish Voices, said the IAC policy stifles discussion by silencing people who disagree with Hillel's position on Israel.

His challenge echoes a debate going on south of the border, where a backlash against Hillel's chapter guidelines has spawned a growing "Open Hillel" movement.

Among other things, the guidelines contain a clause that says Hillel is open to partnering with organizations that have diverse perspectives in support of Israel, but won't partner with groups or host speakers that support BDS campaigns.

This past fall, Levitan started an organization called Young Jews for Social Justice, which, according to its Facebook page, is "made up of Jewish youth in Canada whose critical views of Israel's policies are marginalized and ignored by the mainstream Jewish community."

When Levitan tried to advertise the group's first event through Hillel in order to reach Jewish students, he found he wasn't welcome to do so.

"Hillel creates this atmosphere of not wanting critical discussion of Israel," said the Ottawa-based Levitan, who graduated from Carleton two years ago with a master's degree in political economy.

"It's a very simplistic, very dishonest way of categorizing the Palestinian solidarity movement. On Hillel's part, it's very irresponsible to their mandate of providing a space for diversity of Jewish opinions."

Continued on page 10

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Raid bolsters Israeli claims about Turkish flotilla

An intriguing story from Turkey last month, although covered by two of the world's largest news agencies, *AP* and *Reuters*, received, with the exception of *CTV*, very little media attention in Canada.

On Jan. 14, Turkish anti-terrorist police raided the offices of the government-supported Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) in the southern Turkish city of Kilis, which borders Syria. This is the same IHH that headed the Mavi Mamara flotilla's attempt in May 2010 to break Israel's naval blockade of Gaza, leading Israeli commandos to storm the ship. Nine Turks were killed in the ensuing clashes which, Israel claimed, were caused by IHH militants – not, as Turkey maintained, innocent humanitarians.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The Turkish police action last month was prompted by evidence that IHH, which claims to have been delivering "humanitarian" aid to rebel groups in Syria, was actually supplying arms to groups linked to Al Qaeda.

Reuters reported from Istanbul that "the rise of Al Qaeda-linked groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in parts of northern Syria near the border has left Ankara open to accusations it is lending support to radical Islamists. Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly denied Turkey is providing shelter or backing to Al Qaeda-linked groups in Syria."

According to *Reuters*, the operation against IHH was part of a series of raids carried out in six cities, including Istanbul, in which five people were arrested overall including two IHH employees. However, on the same day (Jan. 14), *Hurriyet*, a major Turkish newspaper, reported that the anti-Al Qaeda operation had netted 28 suspects.

An *AP* story from Ankara, carried on ctv.ca, examined some of the political intrigue behind the IHH story that's playing out as part of allegations of corruption against Erdogan and members of his party, the AKP: "The government says the corruption probe was instigated by followers of a moderate Islamic movement led by U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen. The government insists that Gulen's supporters have infiltrated Turkey's police and judiciary and are out to discredit the government ahead of local elections in March. Gulen denies being behind the vast police corruption probe that has targeted people close to Erdogan."

IHH denies any links to Al Qaeda and terrorism and, in turn, charges that it's being targeted as a way to prevent Turkey's largest humanitarian organization from sending aid to Syria.

AP reported that IHH Secretary General Yasar Kutluay insisted that both Israel and Gulen's supporters were behind the police raid, a charge Gulen's movement immediately rejected as slanderous.

Mustafa Akyol, columnist with *Hurryiet* and *Al-Monitor*, wrote in *Al-Monitor*, Jan. 3: "The fact that the Gulen movement has carefully avoided joining the anti-Israeli sentiment within Turkey's Islamic circles (including Gulen's much-discussed opposition to the Gaza flotilla of 2010) is taken as evidence for the Israeli conspiracy. Pro-AKP media are full of articles these days that depict the Gulen movement as the fifth column or the Trojan horse of 'Zionism.'"

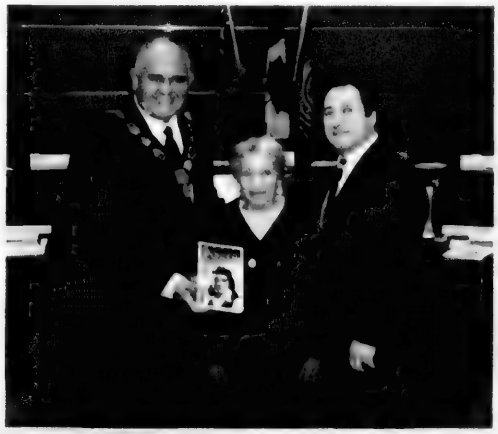
Erdogan has been striking out against numerous authorities involved in the corruption investigation, just part of his increasingly anti-democratic, authoritarian behaviour. As *AP* noted, "The government removed hundreds of police officers from key posts as it fights to contain the corruption scandal and has also introduced a highly contentious draft bill that would tighten its grip over a council that appoints judges and prosecutors and strengthen control over the judiciary."

Writing for *Tablet* magazine (Jan. 14) about the raid on the IHH, Yair Rosenberg observed that the "news from Turkey would appear to bolster Israel's contention that at least some members of the flotilla were not the humanitarians they claimed – if only three years too late to save Israel from international opprobrium."

Not to be forgotten either is the apology that, at the urging of U.S. President Barack Obama, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu extended to Erdogan last March for the Mavi Mamara fatalities. That effort to break the impasse in relations between Turkey and Israel has proved largely futile, and, thanks to Erdogan, it's an impasse that remains mostly unchanged today.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN



SHOAH RECALLED

Markham city council recognized International Holocaust Remembrance Day at a council meeting Jan. 28 by showing a short film based on the memoir of Holocaust survivor Elsa Thon, who presented a copy of her book to Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti, left. With them is Ward 2 Coun. Howard Shore. This was one of nine events organized for the day by the Azrieli Foundation, which publishes survivor memoirs and partners with groups across Canada.

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The Jewish education conundrum

Last week, *JTA* published an essay by Sam Ser entitled "Jewish day school? Not for this observant Jewish family."

In his piece, Ser, a Michigan native who works for his local Jewish high school, summarized the grave challenge facing the Jewish education system: Here is a man who wants to send his kids to Jewish day school, and yet he can't afford to (and won't accept a subsidy). Instead, Ser and his wife (who also works in Jewish education) have decided to enrol their kids in public school and do Jewish education on their own.

As I read the article, I found myself nodding along, and I know I wasn't the only one. Ser's model of cheap, customized Jewish education is a compelling alternative for the growing number of young families crippled by the cost of Jewish schools – a do-it-yourself approach to Jewish education. Why spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on day school when you can offer your kids their very own, made-to-measure Jewish education at a fraction of the price?

I confess to be considering just the kind of thing Ser outlines. At the current rate, I won't be able to afford Jewish education for my daughter without accepting dramatic lifestyle changes (for myself, but also for her), and I don't think I could stomach someone else paying instead of me. So she might go to public school and get her Jewish education at home.

I could very well end up being my daughter's primary Jewish educator, unless day school gets a lot more affordable very soon – and I think I'm fine with that. In fact, I'm fairly confident I can, with a little help from family and friends, bring up a good Jewish daughter without day school.

That's exactly why it's important to be reminded every once in a while why many Jews continue to assert that day school is so essential, and why they are willing to bear the financial burden associated with it.

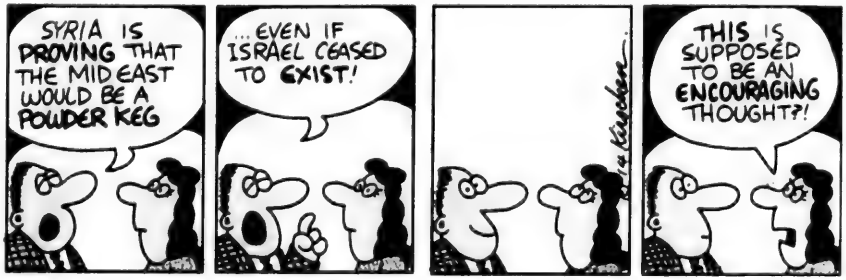
An appropriate example made headlines recently when two Orthodox high schools in New York decided to allow female students to wrap tfillin during prayers. (As *The CJN*'s Sheri Shefa reported, Rabbi Lee Buckman, head of school at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, supports female students at his school who might want to follow the lead of their American cousins.)

Whether you're of the opinion that women being permitted to wear tfillin is a bold step forward for Orthodox Judaism or you believe there's no basis for such an interpretation of Jewish law, this episode proves young people are invested in shaping the future of Judaism, and that the day school system is an incubator for their exploration.

If my daughter doesn't attend Jewish day school, will she miss out on being part of the evolution of Judaism? For everything I can teach her about our religion, I fear she'll be less likely to participate in the development of Judaism if she's not enrolled in day school – where, as the tfillin story proves, that process is very much underway. And that makes me wonder whether I can afford to deprive her of such a unique opportunity, whatever the cost.

yoni

Dry Bones


SYRIA IS PROVING THAT THE MID EAST WOULD BE A POWDER KEG
...EVEN IF ISRAEL CEASED TO EXIST!
THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE AN ENCOURAGING THOUGHT?!

CIJA responds to francophones

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is pleased that Jack Jedwab, a former director of the Canadian Jewish Congress-Quebec region, lauds our work to oppose the so-called charter of Quebec values as both "forceful and articulate" ("Values charter could 'devastate' community," *Cjnews.com*).

However, we would like to reassure readers of *The CJN* that the inclusion of Israel in our name in no way impedes CIJA from making our community's voice heard in the francophone media. We are, in fact, regularly asked to comment on a wide range of Jewish-related issues with no connection to Israel.

Indeed, on the issue of the charter itself, CIJA has been quoted, interviewed and mentioned on some 60 separate instances in the francophone print and electronic media, more so than any other community-based advocacy organization. CIJA is always available to provide information and commentary on its work on behalf of our community.

David Ouellette
Associate Director, Public Affairs (Québec)
The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs

Harper's trip to Israel

Sheryl Nestel of Independent Jewish Voices Canada ("Harper's Israel trip criticized," *The CJN*, Jan. 23) got one thing correct when she wrote that the government of Canada's stance "does not reflect the opinions of all of Canada's Jews."

The government of Canada's stance does not reflect the opinions of those Jews who support a Palestinian right of return and would thus have Israel, as a Jewish state, commit national suicide; nor the opinions of those Jews who support the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel; nor the opinions of those Jews who oppose Israel's naval blockade of Gaza, which prevents weapons falling into the hands of terrorists; nor the opinions of those Jews who oppose the separation fence, which prevents the murder of Israeli men, women and children.

The government of Canada's stance, thankfully, does not reflect the opinions of Independent Jewish Voices Canada, which advocates for each and every one of these positions.

Joe Spier
Calgary

We live in an era where there are national campaigns in the United States, Britain and other countries by anti-Israel groups, including associations of university professors, calling for academic boycotts of Israel.

This is why it is heartening to hear of the partnership between Dalhousie University and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev to create an ocean studies centre in Eilat ("Dalhousie, BGU to create ocean studies centre," *The CJN*, Jan. 30).

This is a good example of Canadian academia opting out of, as Prime Minister Stephen Harper so aptly put it in his recent address to the Knesset, "going along to get along."

Susan Schacter
Toronto

Aislin's controversial cartooning

I'd be inclined to cut Aislin some slack ("Aislin rejects accusations over Harper cartoon," *The CJN*, Jan. 30).

But I wonder if he has the guts to paint a similar political cartoon showing someone's face covered by a Muslim flag. If not, and he and his editors felt that this would be too controversial, then all his rationalizations are just a bunch of bull.

Larry Shapiro
Rancho Mirage, Calif.

Show some love

Rabbi Philip Scheim expresses his hope that there be more of a connection between rabbis of different affiliations in our community ("What happened to the love?" *The CJN*, Jan. 9). I would like to piggyback on that wish by suggesting that each of us form a connection with a fellow Jew, no matter his or her status or affiliation.

I suggest as a first step something simple. How about greeting a fellow Jew with a "Good Shabbos"? Those two warm, friendly words can bring us closer together.

Debbie Bauer
Toronto

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Canada and U.S. diverge on Israel, Mideast

Be thankful we have Harper, not Obama

Michael Taube

It's no big secret that Prime Minister Stephen Harper and U.S. President Barack Obama are on opposite ends of the political spectrum. They have different political ideologies, economic viewpoints and international perspectives.

And when you compare Harper and Obama's overall political records, the prime minister has a huge advantage.

Harper has won three straight federal elections, modernized the Conservative Party, taken principled policy positions and effectively managed the economy from a centre-right perspective.

Obama, who is in his second term in the White House, has crushed the U.S. economy, overseen soaring unemployment levels, and has supported half-baked policy programs like Obamacare.

Harper's and Obama's divergent positions on Israel and the Middle East are also worth noting. The former has become Israel's greatest friend and ally, whereas the latter is now viewed with concern and, on occasion, suspicion when it comes to Israel's safety and security.

Yet in spite of all this, Obama maintains a solid edge in popularity among Canadians. Two polling firms, Harris/Decima and Angus Reid, found that 68 per cent and 72 per cent of Canadians, respectively, would have voted for Obama in the 2012 presidential election. (Contrast this number with the 51.1 per cent he ultimately received from U.S. voters.)

Jewish voting patterns for Harper and Obama are also puzzling.

According to an Ipsos-Reid exit poll, 52 per cent of Canadian Jews supported Harper's Conservatives in the 2011 federal election. While that's the highest tally ever recorded for a right-leaning Canadian political party, it's a low number considering Harper's long standing philo-Semitic positions and pro-Israel leanings.

In contrast, Obama received 71 per cent of the Jewish vote in the 2012 presidential election. To Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's credit, his 29 per cent tally was the highest earned by an American conservative in nearly 25 years. Regardless, he lost to a liberal Democrat who pays more lip service to Israel, and gets less results, than any U.S. president in recent history.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, left, and U.S. President Barack Obama chat at the White House in September 2009.

[Jason Ransom photo]

To be fair, the winds of political change are still blowing in different directions. Canadian Jews are just starting to abandon the left-wing political malaise that has haunted them for generations. In time, their American counterparts will hopefully become more balanced when it comes to voting for the GOP.

In the meantime, here's another reason Canadian Jews should be grateful that Obama doesn't hold one of our passports: his preposterous position on Muslim anti-Semitism.

In an interview with *The New Yorker's* David Remnick, Obama said that "the interests of Israel in stability and security are actually very closely aligned with the interests of the Sunni states." You're not alone in scratching your head over this puzzling analysis of Israel-Sunni Muslim relations.

Obama went on to make this eye-popping statement: "What's preventing them from entering into even an informal alliance with at least normalized diplomatic relations is not that their interests are profoundly in conflict, but the Palestinian issue, as well as a long history of anti-Semitism that's developed over the course of decades there, and anti-Arab sentiment that's increased inside of Israel based on seeing buses being blown up. If you can start unwinding some of that, that creates a new equilibrium."

That's right. The U.S. president believes the scourge of Muslim anti-Semitism is only a few decades old. Clearly, the centuries of anti-Semitic hatred initiated by Fatimid caliph Al-Hakim and later Al-Malik, which affected Jews living in northern Syria and Morocco, must have escaped his vast knowledge of the region.

Let's contrast this with Harper's rational position on anti-Semitism.

In his speech to the Israeli Knesset on Jan. 20, the prime minister said, "we have witnessed, in recent years, the mutation of the old disease of anti-Semitism and the emergence of a new strain. We all know about the old anti-Semitism. It was crude and ignorant, and it led to the horrors of the death camps." Harper also noted "in many dark corners, it is still with us... in much of the western world, the old hatred has been translated into more sophisticated language for use in polite society."

This led to one of Harper's most impressive statements. "Think about the twisted logic and outright malice behind that: a state, based on freedom, democracy and the rule of law, that was founded so Jews can flourish, as Jews, and seek shelter from the shadow of the worst racist experiment in history, that is condemned, and that condemnation is masked in the language of anti-racism. It is nothing short of sickening. But this is the face of the new anti-Semitism. It targets the Jewish people by targeting Israel and attempts to make the old bigotry acceptable for a new generation."

For the record: I'm a small "c" conservative. I've known Harper since 1996. I worked as one of his speechwriters. As well, I've occasionally been critical of the Tories for not being fiscally conservative enough.

Take me out of the equation, however. Wouldn't you want a Canadian leader with a solid economic record, one with a strategic and tactical political mind, and who takes strong principled positions rather than politically correct ones? And wouldn't you want someone in charge who supports Israel's right to defend itself – and abhors the history of anti-Semitism?

Canadian Jews – and all Canadians – should, therefore, be pleased to have Stephen Harper, and not Barack Obama, as their political leader.

Michael Taube is a former speechwriter for Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

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Another take on controversial cartoon

Gil Troy in Montreal

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's recent trip to Israel was triumphal. At a time when Israelis frequently feel criticized, boycotted, abandoned, delegitimized, he represented the silent majority of citizens in the world's major democracies who not only accept Israel's right to exist, but cherish Israel's contribution to the world.

And in an era when Canada's importance in the world is often underappreciated, Israel's warm welcome and the resonance of Harper's words proved that Canada counts. Unfortunately, in Montreal, the happy story of Harper's pilgrimage was sullied somewhat by Aislin's controversial cartoon blasting the trip. Many deemed the cartoon anti-Semitic – I do not – and I think the disagreement is instructive.

The cartoon pictured Harper's face wrapped in the Israeli flag, with the Jewish Star prominently smothering his mouth. The implication was that Harper's true thoughts were being silenced. Those who thought it was anti-Semitic felt Aislin was claiming that "The Jews" were muffling Harper and that Aislin's Jewish imagery triggered anti-Semitic accusations of Jewish power and money manipulating politicians.

I know the despicable past and odious present of those accusations. I do not dismiss them or take them lightly. I believe Israel's critics should have a moral responsibility not to stir the anti-Semitic beasts that are so easily roused in the world today, even in the enlightened West. But allow me to offer two, more benign, readings of the cartoon.

As a Zionist, I understand that Judaism is both a nation and a religion, meaning that the Jewish Star is both a national and religious symbol. Aislin did not use the Jewish Star, he used the Jewish Star on the Israeli flag, which is the flag of a sovereign country. The Zionist revolution entailed bringing the Jews back to history, maturing enough to take responsibility and take criticism. If Aislin wants to criticize Israel, isn't it reasonable to use the Israeli flag with its Jewish Star as a cartoonist's shorthand, as the most recognizable symbol of Israel?

I regret that we live in a world where anti-Semitism continues, where the delegitimization of Israel has anti-Semitic foundations, where anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism overlap and where, therefore, it is hard sometimes to criticize Israel without appearing anti-Semitic.

As an historian, I recall that in the 1980s, the Canadian prime minister, Brian Mulroney, and the American president, Ronald Reagan, hit it off. Both were conservatives trying to reform liberal policies. Both were Irish raconteurs. And they had great chemistry together. Many Canadian progressive elites – who claim they are beyond patriotic yet harbour an anti-Americanism that in itself expresses their patriotism – feared this friendship. They worried that Mulroney was being too chummy and that Canadian needs were being subordinated to American whims. Had Aislin – who probably believed that – drawn a cartoon with Mulroney's face smothered by an American flag, would anyone perceive that as bigoted or simply caustic?

Israel must be mature enough as a country to accept harsh criticism, even as critics should be wise enough not to inflame historic sensitivities built up unhappily over millennia of suffering. But I would rather live in a world wherein we give each other the benefit of the doubt and are slow to take offence, than live in a hair-trigger, hyper-sensitive world wherein caricatures of Mohammed lead to death threats and riots.

Within that spectrum, of course, note that the Jewish community's anguish was sincere, but the protests were peaceful. The most dramatic move contemplated was cancelling *Montreal Gazette* subscriptions – which is a legitimate move, even if the objection was only about Aislin's politics not his imagery. That's part of the democratic give and take. Cartoonists (and columnists) provoke, and sometimes their publishers pay the price (or reap the benefit).

There is also a tactical issue here. Unless a cartoonist really crosses the line, fighting satire with outrage is usually a losing proposition. You look unnecessarily thin-skinned – and give the offending cartoon far more publicity than you intended – which is what happened with the Aislin counter-attack.

Ultimately, Stephen Harper proved Aislin wrong. Harper is just not that good an actor. His four-day trip to Israel was not bought or dictated. It was a sincere expression of genuine friendship by a statesman who understands that for all its challenges and shortcomings, Israel is a plucky democracy doing great things and sharing core Canadian and democratic values. Maybe that's what upset Aislin and the other blame-Israel-first types most!

An expiry date for 'never again'?

Urban Writer Avrum Rosensweig

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's recent trip to the Land of Israel, our *Eretz Yisrael*, appeared to be a mission, a Haj of sorts, a trip he saved as the dessert during his days as prime minister of the country.

It was unusual to watch because, along with the traditional pomp of such trips, there was excess baggage that no doubt worried the grounds crew, the question of whether Harper's newly painted, blue Polaris CC-150 military aircraft could take off. But it did so, pageantry and all.

So many of us appreciated the fervour of Harper's visit (referred to by Jonathan Kay as "manic" in the *National Post*, Jan. 21) and his words of support for our homeland, Israel, and her values. We're tired of the malodorous and foul smelling anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment permeating the United Nations and the majority of the world's nation-states, and our prime minister successfully swung that pendulum back, at least a few positions, to allow supporters of Israel to experience great pride.

But while large segments of the Canadian Jewish community embrace Harper as the world's most vocal head of state in support of Israel, isn't it healthy and wise for them to be similarly multi-dimensional in their outlook on the man, his party and its national policies? Shouldn't we strengthen our political selves by grappling with his entire ideology and body of work?

As constituents, isn't that the judicious thing for us to do – for Harper, for our country and for our people?

For if we don't, if we simply see our prime minister as a one-issue leader whose very vocal support of Israel eclipses the ramifications of his very damaging national policies, are we not, indeed, undermining who we are as Canadians and as lovers of Israel? By telling our current government all is well as long as you care about Israel in the way you do, aren't we negating our influence and commitment to other important values such as pikuach nefesh – the preservation of human life – within our boundaries, and assistance to the poor?

Once again, I thank the government of Canada for investing so heavily in its recent trip to Israel. I call upon our community to remember the prime minister's fervent speech to the Knesset, but at the same time, to re-embrace our commitment to "never again," particularly having to do with today's refugee claimants to Canada who are regularly turned away from our hospitals, and more seriously, our shores.

I ask that you look closely at the situation of the Roma right now, those who walked beside us to the ovens of Auschwitz but today are without a homeland. Ponder very seriously how it is our government minimizes the persecution levied at the Roma people in Hungary and the European Union, and how we are okay with its cold and dispassionate refugee policies. Where is our sympathy and compassion for the refugee, as embodied in our love for Israel and the millions of refugees who came to her shores?

When we watched Harper at Yad Vashem, why did we not challenge ourselves on our promise to help those who came after us to this nation, Canada? Once we were finished celebrating our prime minister's trip to Israel, why were we not inclined to call our members of Parliament demanding an explanation for the preservation of shanty towns we call native reserves and the below average medical care extended to our Aboriginal Peoples? Is this fair to our government, to our community, to our native brothers and sisters?

Does "never again" have an expiry date?

Support for a leader requires balance and thoughtfulness. While Canada's backing of Israel will not ensure Israel's overall security and global acceptance or our place in the world, it is sensible to be supportive of "Harper to Israel." But to be a constituent, an attentive Jew, a well-balanced national and global citizen, we must also challenge the hell out of him on other aspects of his leadership, including laws and policies affecting the "stranger" – the men, women and children, like our ancestors, who are the most marginalized and alone within our borders today. That, too, is a Jewish value.

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Open Hillel seeks to make Hillel more inclusive of all viewpoints

Continued from page 3

Zane Colt, a fourth-year public administration student at Carleton University and city-wide president of Ottawa's IAC, said the social media code of conduct isn't new, but the IAC only recently posted it on its Facebook page in response to pro-BDS comments there.

Colt said the IAC is open to diverse opinions, as long as they promote positive dialogue, which BDS does not.

"[BDS] shuts down the debate," he said. "If [the BDS campaign] were ever successful, it would result in the destruction of Israel. As the world's only Jewish state, we don't want to give a platform to support BDS rhetoric."

At Harvard University, Emily Unger discovered the implications of Hillel's policy of not partnering with pro-BDS organizations when she tried to run a joint event in November 2012 between her group, the Progressive Jewish Alliance, and the Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC).

The event, called "Jewish Voices Against the Occupation," brought in two speakers, one Israeli and one American, to talk about their experience in non-violent activism against Israel's policies regarding the Palestinian territories.

Harvard Hillel leaders agreed to host the event in Hillel's building, but changed their mind after learning the event was being co-sponsored by the PSC.

That's when Unger – who describes herself as a non-Zionist, religiously observant Jew – decided to take action.

"It's very important to not completely cut off the Jewish community from hearing Palestinian voices," she told *The CJN*. "We should be able to hear all of those views and debate them openly and not limit what political views are considered."

In January 2013, Unger co-founded the Open Hillel movement, which seeks to change Hillel's guidelines to make them more inclusive of all viewpoints, including those on the far right and far left.

A resolution passed by the Hillel chapter at Swarthmore College near Philadelphia this past December officially rejected the guidelines, declaring itself to be the first "Open Hillel."

Since then, Hillel International CEO and president Eric Fingerhut has called for a review of Hillel's chapter guidelines. Hillel International did not respond to requests for comment for this article.

Isaac Kates Rose, a University of Toronto student and national youth director of Hashomer Hatzair, a socialist-Zionist youth group, said he'd like to see Hillel chapters organize town hall events to discuss Hillel policies, and "how Hillel can be a centre for healthy conversation, even with those with whom we disagree vehemently.

"I would courageously advise we loosen those strictures and bring in speakers and groups who challenge us but also force us to have a nuanced understanding [of the issues]," he said.

But Scott Goldstein, executive director of Hillel Ottawa, said support for BDS is beyond the pale – and, therefore, working with groups that support it is prohibited under the guidelines – because it questions Israel's right to exist and doesn't promote positive dialogue.

However, Unger said she disagrees with the argument that a successful BDS campaign would destroy Israel as a Jewish state.

"I think that there are a lot of people, especially Jewish people, who support BDS as a way of putting pressure to end the occupation of the Palestinian territories... not to make Israel stop being a Jewish state," she said.

Levitan added that Hillel Ottawa has even refused to acknowledge that there are Jewish students who support targeted boycotts, such as only boycotting products made in West Bank settlements.

In response, Goldstein said Hillel opposes partial, targeted BDS actions, because such an approach "isn't an effective way of bringing dialogue."

Unger said she believes Hillel should open its doors even wider by including students who are morally against ethnic nation-states in general.

Goldstein said Hillel Ottawa welcomes all Jewish students to its events, and debates are welcome at its numerous Shabbat dinners, but political debates fall under the IAC's jurisdiction, and the IAC does endorse specific political positions. Thus, any events advertised through or sponsored by the IAC must be in support of Israel as a Jewish state.

"This [division] allows Jewish students who may be critical of Israel's policies to pursue Jewish campus life and feel welcome at all our events without feeling pressured to conform to the Israel component of our mandate," he said.

But religion aside, Unger said there's no reason to avoid partnering with non-Jewish students who do hold those beliefs.

"It's not productive to cut off dialogue. Lots of Palestinian students have legitimate and non-hateful reasons for supporting a secular bi-national state or supporting BDS to end occupation of their homeland," she said. "I think it's important for us to be able to hear those views even if we don't agree with them."

Still, Goldstein said that while there are many places on campus for these discussions to take place, Hillel is not one of them.

"They're welcome to express their views within their own forum but can't use our platform to express those views."

Hillel of Greater Toronto is based out of the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life at the University of Toronto. *[Cara Stern photos]*

Christian families could be cut off from agricultural lands

Canadian bishops urge change to barrier route

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) is calling on Foreign Minister John Baird to intervene on behalf of West Bank residents who will be adversely affected by an extension to Israel's security barrier that will pass through a Christian village.

CCCB president and archbishop of Gatineau Paul-Andre Durocher wrote a letter to Baird on Jan. 28, on the eve of an Israeli Supreme Court hearing to decide whether the Israeli government could go ahead with their proposed plan.

The hearing took place Jan. 29, and a final decision is expected this week.

The letter outlined the fact that if the barrier is extended through the Cremisan Valley – which lies in the West Bank on the Palestinian side of the Green Line adjacent to the towns of Beit Jala and Bethlehem – many of the 58 Christian families who live there will be "cut off from their agricultural land and some 400 impoverished children from their school," Durocher wrote.

"The barrier will harm those families whose livelihoods depend on these lands, and will cut off other families from their agricultural and recreational lands and water sources. Should the barrier be built as proposed, it will also be virtually impossible for the Salesian Sisters there to fulfil their mission of service to the local community."

John Baird

Durocher, who spoke with *The CJN* last week, explained that he is part of a delegation of bishops from around the world who visit annually with Catholic communities in and around Israel, including the Cremisan Valley community.

"They've expressed to us many times how seriously this will impact their livelihood. The sisters who run the school there, the brothers who have a monastery, everything will be completely disrupted. Even they say, 'Look, we have no trouble with the security wall. We understand that, but it doesn't have to be built here,'" Durocher said.

"Their feeling is that the security wall, if it was built on Israeli territory, not across what is presently considered occupied territory, it would suffice to guarantee the security of the settlements that are there. The point is to protect the settlements – it doesn't have to pass through their valley. We find that it's an unnecessary construction."

In his letter to Baird, Durocher wrote that his organization is "aware of Israel's need for security, and we fully support that right. Nevertheless, we believe the wall as planned will only deepen the wounds between Palestinians and Israelis… As it is, the security wall is already perceived by many as an illegal 'land grab.'"

According to the *Catholic Register*, at the Israeli Supreme Court hearing last week, retired Israeli Col. Shaul Arieli spoke on behalf of the Israeli Council for Peace and Security and proposed "an alternative route for the barrier that would still be beyond the Israeli border but would not reach into the Cremisan Valley."

But Israel's Ministry of Defence released a statement that said it "values the protection of both human life and the environment," but is "committed first and foremost to maintaining the safety and security of the citizens of Israel… The route was relocated to an area where the impact on the [water] terraces and the view will be most limited."

Durocher said he hopes the Israeli government will be receptive to his group's concerns.

"We're not trying to influence the Supreme Court's decision. We're calling on the government of Israel to kind of revisit the whole issue… Do they really need to pass the wall through there in order to guarantee security, or is there another way to do this that would allow these people to have access to their lands?" he said.

"We would definitely like our foreign ministry to raise this issue with Israel and to explain to them that it is a concern. There are also issues of religious freedoms that are involved here and so in that sense, we would like our foreign minister to raise the issue. I think our government is in a good position to raise issues like this with the Israeli government, because of its status as a good friend of Israel."

He said he has not yet heard back from the ministry on the issue. Calls to Baird's office were not returned by *The CJN*'s deadline.

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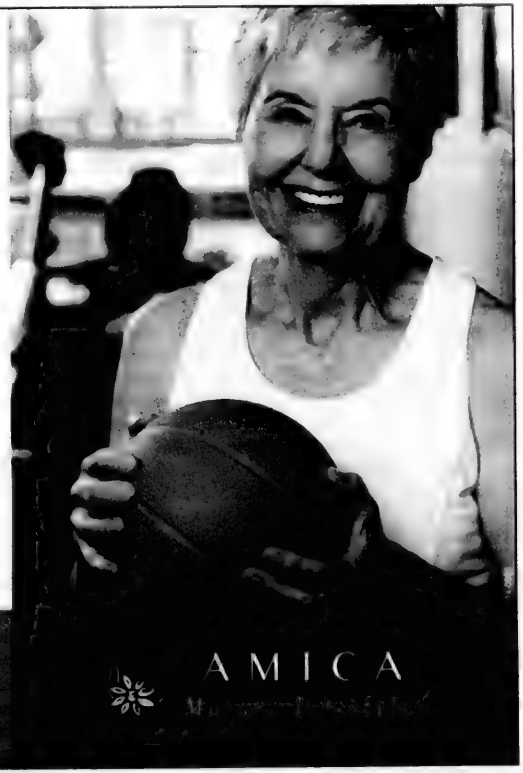

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Jonathan Spyer (*Paul Lungen photo*)

U.S. influence waning as Iran more assertive: analyst

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Middle East is witnessing "a change of profound importance" in which U.S. power is being eclipsed by a regional coalition led by Iran. At the same time, Sunni powers led by Saudi Arabia, feeling abandoned by their U.S. patron, are pushing back.

That was the assessment of Mideast analyst Jonathan Spyer, who last week addressed a business lunch lecture sponsored by the Speakers Action Group at the law offices of Bennett Jones. Spyer was joined by panellists Mike Fegelman, executive director of Honest Reporting Canada; media commentator John Thompson, a director of the Speakers Action Group; and Sohail Raza, executive member of Muslims Facing Tomorrow.

The Middle East is undergoing a transformational change in which an Iran-led bloc is "pushing forward" while American influence in the region is waning. "This is a change of profound importance," said Spyer, senior research fellow at the Global Research in International Affairs Center in Herzliya, Israel.

The once-expected fall of Syrian strongman Bashir Assad has failed to materialize as thousands of Shia fighters have poured into the country from Lebanon, Iraq and Iran to prop up his regime. The Sunni rebels have been pushed back, and "no one talks about Assad's fall. Nothing is imminent," Spyer said.

At the same time, former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak was forced to resign while the United States encouraged elections based on "a happy and irrationally naive conception of what the Muslim Brotherhood was."

U.S. allies "are terrified" at this turn of events, wondering why they should reside under the American umbrella when they could be so readily abandoned. "The King of Saudi Arabia above all others was terrified by this process," he said.

With the United States on the sidelines, the Abdel Fattah el-Sisi coup in Egypt took power back from the Muslim Brotherhood. "Undoubtedly this coup was a Saudi production" contrary to American desires. "It is an astonishing turn of events," Spyer said. "They feel their patron is no longer willing or able to defend their interests."

As for Israel, it continues to maintain security co-operation with the United States, despite "disastrous" American diplomacy in the region.

"Our friends are behaving with inexplicable strangeness in terms of their relations with the region. It is bizarre and it must stop."

To counteract declining American influence, Israel is forging new relationships with China and India. "There is a burgeoning security relationship with India" accompanied by growing trade ties.

Israel is well placed, both economically and socially, to deal with the new threats in the region. "I fear more for the Christian minorities in the Middle East than for Israel. The Christians do not have a structure [like Israel] to protect them," Spyer said.

Currently, in the Middle East, a single arc of conflict stretches from the Mediterranean all the way to Yemen.

"Ultimately, what all this is about is the failures of Arab states," in particular their inability to address issues of socio-economic development and political progress important to local populations.

In the midst of all this Islamic in-fighting, Israel remains largely a "spectator." It finds itself "next door to a massive historical process, likely in its early stages." Israel is a powerful state with the tools to defend itself, including its armed forces and a buoyant economy.

"But this will be the challenge for Israel for the decade or two to come."

Responding to Spyer's analysis, Raza traced the roots of the Mideast's sectarian conflicts back centuries and said, "There is no chance for the conflict to end soon."

No regime is going to allow its sectarian rivals to have power, especially now that the United States is negotiating with Iran. Shia jihadis are pouring into Syria from across the world, including some from Canada.

Fegelman said the Syrian conflict poses difficult problems for the media. It is hard to get into the country and it's extremely dangerous once you are there. It's also very difficult for the press to determine which reports from Syria are accurate and which are propaganda.

In addition, "there is a certain media fatigue" in covering the war, leading to a "bias by omission."

One story not being told concerns the plight of Palestinian refugees in Syria's Yarmouk camp, "who are starving to death." You'd think advocates of the Palestinian cause would be publicizing that story, he said.

From 85 to 96 Palestinians have died of starvation and illness in the camp since mid-2013, according to media reports.

Thompson said Al Qaeda is following a well-established blueprint in the Syrian war by bringing in foreign volunteers – including Canadians – training and indoctrinating them, exposing them to violence, and then sending them back to their countries of origin.

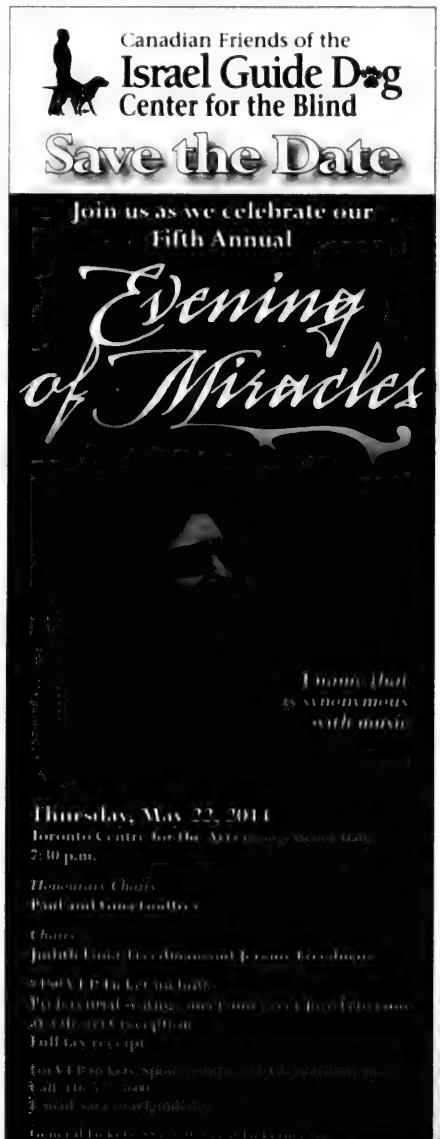
A similar pattern was established in Bosnia and Algeria in the 1990s, as well as in Iraq in 2003-04.

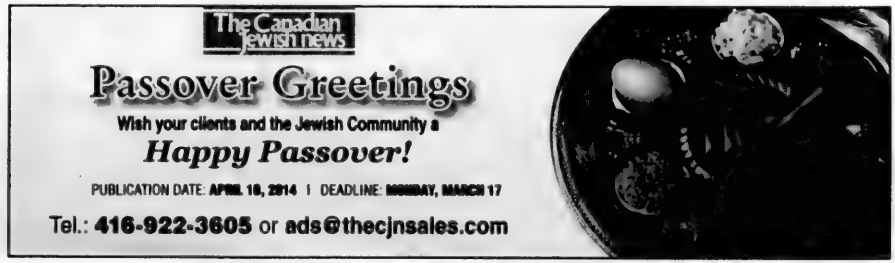
However, the Assad regime has been pretty successful in killing the Al Qaeda jihadis. "They're not coming back," he added.

Spyer said Al Qaeda now controls a significant chunk of territory on the Syria-Iraq border, posing a threat that Israel must address.

Israel's Shin Bet internal security service recently broke up an Al Qaeda cell based in Jerusalem, which was preparing to leave for Turkey and then go on to Syria.

"It's a new challenge," he said. "We'll be dealing with it for some time to come."

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Canadian YU students meet peers in Ukraine

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Three Canadian students headed abroad last month as part of a "service learning mission" that brought 20 Yeshiva University (YU) students to Kharkov, Ukraine, where they learned about the local Jewish community.

Aitan Magence, a 20-year-old biology student who went on the trip with his sister Yona, called the week-long visit the best experience of his life.

"I wasn't really expecting anything when we got there. I thought we were going to the hotel and unpack," said the Thornhill, Ont., native.

"But when we got there, all of our Ukrainian peers were at the airport with balloons… My first impression was, 'Wow, this is going to be an amazing week.'"

Zvi Zobin, a 20-year-old accounting major who is originally from Toronto, said he decided to go on the trip because he wanted to know more about the former Soviet Union, where his parents had grown up.

"When else would I get to go to Ukraine?" he said.

The goal of the trip, Magence said, was to learn about the global Jewish community, specifically about how Jews live around the world. To do that, they interacted with Ukrainian Jewish teenagers and young adults, learning about their lifestyles.

Zvi Zobin running a Tu b'Shvat activity for Grade 1 students at a Ukrainian Jewish day school.

Since the trip overlapped with Tu b'Shvat, the group spent one day at a Jewish day school teaching the kids songs. They also visited a group of seniors and a Chabad rabbi.

Both Magence and Zobin called that meeting with the rabbi in Sumy, Ukraine, one of the memorable parts of the trip. He told them about his life in Ukraine – how he can't simply go to a grocery store to find kosher food, but has to form relationships with local farmers in order to ensure his food is kosher.

"I never realized how difficult life would be if I couldn't go to the store and buy necessities," Magence said, adding that he was especially surprised when the American-born rabbi told the students he didn't view the challenges as sacrifices, but rather just part of Ukrainian life.

The students also spent time visiting the local Jewish community centre, where they learned that Ukrainian university-aged students organized much of the programming.

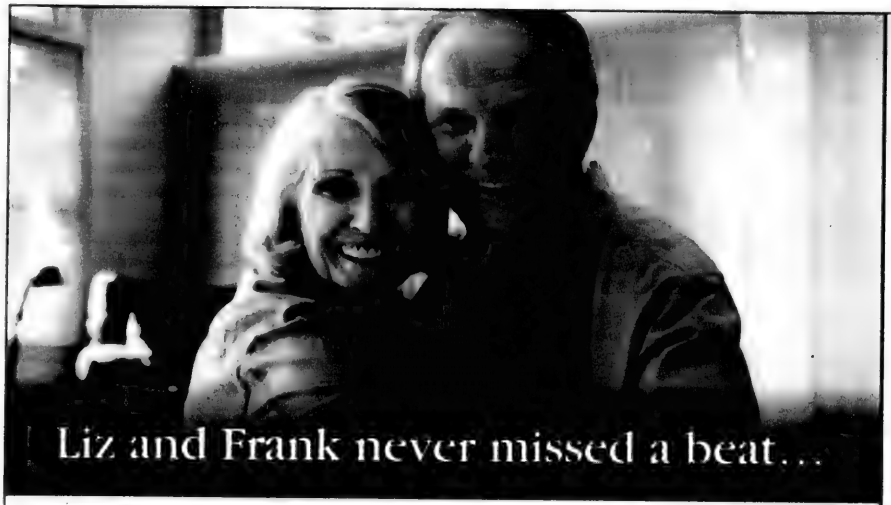
"There are people our age who are running all these programs in the JCC," he said. "So if we see something missing in our community, why shouldn't we stand up and help out?"

Despite being in Ukraine amid protests and civil unrest, both Magence and Zobin said they saw very little of it in Kharkov.

"I don't think it really affects them so much," Magence said, explaining that when pressed on the topic, their Ukrainian peers mostly focused on how the protests are damaging the capital, rather than discussing the politics of the situation.

Magence said for him, the most powerful moment of the trip was the final activity: singing, dancing and davening on Shabbat.

"Although we spoke different languages," he said, "we all came together and were united by the fact that we were all Jewish."



And now they're ready for the next step.

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Bat mitzvah project honours grandmother

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Marya Nurgitz, 12, created her bat mitzvah project to honour her late grandmother.

On Jan. 23, she invited a group of friends to work on a quilt she plans to donate to the Toronto Jewish Quilting Project, which provides quilts for people touched by cancer.

Marya, a Grade 7 student at Netivot HaTorah Day School, said her grandmother died in 1998 from cancer, "and I feel that [this project] honours her and includes her in my bat mitzvah spiritually, even though she isn't here physically."

She said that when her mother, Sarah, asked her how she wanted to celebrate her bat mitzvah, she knew immediately that she wanted to do a charity project.

"Everyone, as a child, thinks about me, me, me, and what they want for themselves. Obviously, that includes me as well. I decided I just had to celebrate my bat mitzvah with some sort of tzedakah."

Marya said she and her mother contacted Eva Karpati, a breast cancer survivor, who 10 years ago founded the Toronto Jewish Quilting Project, now a project of National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto section.

"I just loved the idea of a young, Jewish group meeting to quilt, and discovering a new art form," Karpati said. "People often think of groups getting together to quilt in church basements. Why not quilt in a Jewish environment? The camaraderie between women in a quilting group is amazing. Men are absolutely invited to attend our meetings, but somehow, they just don't come."

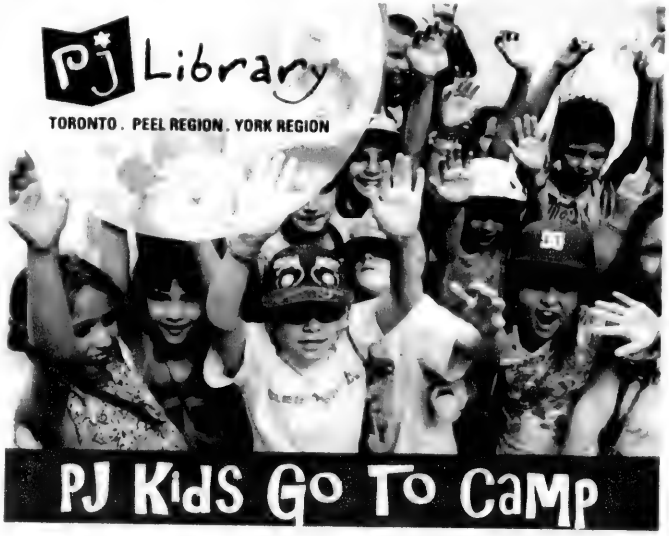
Marya said that before the actual event, she asked all the guests what they would like on their quilted square, perhaps their name or an item that means something to them. She chose images and emailed them to the girls, until they were satisfied.

"Then I drew each image by hand and traced it onto adhesive paper. This was ironed onto the fabric used for the image and cut out. Then I pulled off the paper and ironed the fabric onto the blue square. The whole process took about 40 hours.

"My friends liked the party a lot," Marya said. "We didn't completely finish the quilt, but we plan to get together again to finish it."

Karpati said she would love to see the group continue. "We have discussed starting a satellite group at Netivot."

Marya Nurgitz



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Ballets Jazz de Montréal returns to Israel

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal (BJM), an acclaimed 42-year-old company, is touring Israel this week, underscoring the growing cultural ties between Quebec and the Jewish state.

Just prior to its departure, artistic director Louis Robitaille said that it was with "immense joy" that the troupe was returning to Israel, where it toured in June 2011 for the first time in more than a generation.

That experience had been "coup de foudre" (love at first sight) for the young dancers because of "the magnificent hospitality, not to mention the incredible climate," Robitaille said at a Jan. 29 press conference held in the majestic atrium of the historic Edifice Gaston-Miron, BJM's headquarters.

BJM director general Jay Rankin said, "Quebecers, like Israelis, are a people who embrace the arts, above all, dance."

Israel's consul general in Montreal, Joel Lion, said this tour reinforces the friendship that has existed between Canada and Israel for 65 years.

Between the lines, the BJM's encore Israeli tour in less than three years is being seen as defying the boycott of Israel that certain members of the province's artistic community have called for in recent years.

From left, Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal co-founder Geneviève Salbaing, Israeli Consul General Joel Lion, BJM artistic director Louis Robitaille and general manager Jay Rankin are surrounded by dancers. *[Janice Arnold photo]*

BJM is performing at the Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv from Feb. 2 to 5, at the Jerusalem Theatre on Feb. 6, and at the Haifa Auditorium on Feb. 8. An entourage of 18 is there, including 13 dancers.

In 2011, the itinerary included shorter runs in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Be'er Sheva.

The current tour is supported by Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec – whose touring director, Hélène Boutet, was on hand to wish the troupe well – along with the Canada Council for the Arts and the Quebec Ministry of International Relations, with contributions from the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal, the Azrieli Foundation, the Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation, and the Irving Ludmer Family Foundation.

The program includes three dances from BJM's newer repertoire, including *Harry*, a narrative work created for the company at Robitaille's invitation by American-Israeli choreographer Barak Marshall in 2012.

At the press conference, dancers performed three excerpts from this high-energy work, which incorporates a dozen different types of music by singers as diverse as Maria Callas and Wayne Newton.

"It was a real challenge for the artists, as Barak asked them to play characters and express themselves not only in dance, but also with sounds and dialogue," Robitaille said.

Told through the title character's inner and external challenges, including war, *Harry*, Robitaille continued, is "primarily about human conflicts: struggles with oneself, those between men and women, and social and international conflicts."

Marshall has said of BJM: "It's one of the tops in the world, with a wide and varied repertoire... I was pretty overwhelmed by the incredible diversity and depth of the dancers."

Geneviève Salbaing, now 92, the Parisian-born dancer who was one of BJM's co-founders, with Eddy Toussaint and the late Eva von Gencsy, was also present.

She remarked that this exuberant, athletic work is reminiscent of the early spirit of the company.

The BJM's return was greeted enthusiastically by the *Jerusalem Post*, which reported that its 2011 tour had "thrilled" audiences.

BJM presents an average of 60 performances a year abroad in Europe, North and South America and Asia. Its first tour to Israel was more than 25 years ago and comprised appearances at kibbutzim, recalled technical director Daniel Granger.

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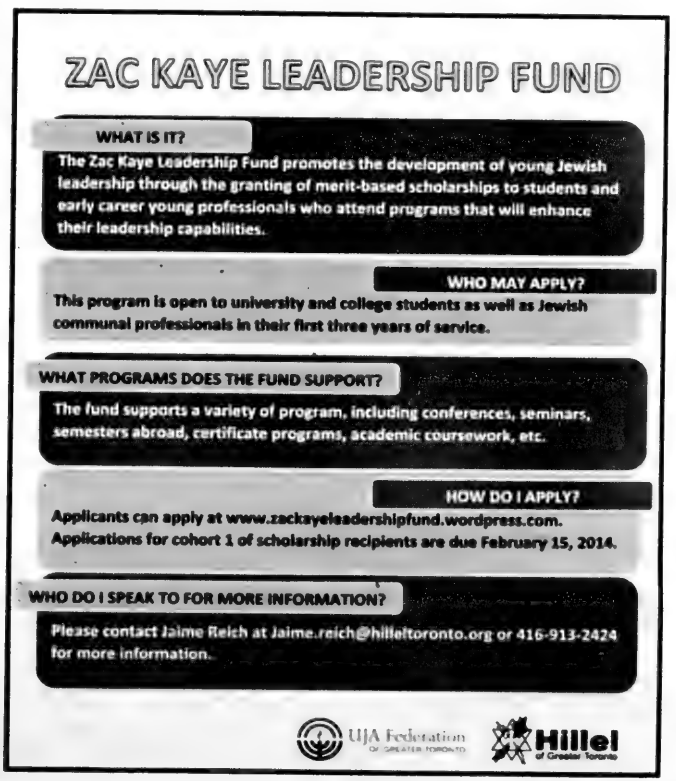
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Presented to you by Women in Green and the Forum for Sovereignty

Knesset Speaker Mk **Yuli Edelstein**

"Sovereignty is to be applied in a gradual and practical matter. We must return to the discourse of our rights to the land, from the historic aspect as well. We did not occupy a Palestinian state, because there wasn't any such state".

Minister of Housing **Uri Ariel**

"The alternative to the leftist 'Two-State vision' is one state west of the Jordan River –the State of Israel".

Deputy Minister **Tzipi Hotovely**

"The goal is for Judea and Samaria to be under Israeli sovereignty. It is ours and it was acquired legally in a bloody, defensive war."

Coalition Head MK **Yariv Levin**

"We must create the conditions that will prepare for annexation. We must gradually apply legislation regarding the residents and the territory, for example zoning and building codes."

MK **Miri Regev**

"The Likud Constitution requires application of sovereignty over Judea and Samaria. As the sky did not fall after the application of Israeli law to the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, thus it will be in Judea and Samaria".

Dani Dayan

Yesha council foreign minister

" Recently in Madrid I spoke to top Middle East policy makers about Israeli sovereignty –the only sovereignty relevant west of the Jordan River - and of our historical rights to the Land. They heard and read about Israeli sovereignty and the sky has not fallen "

Minister of Economy **Naftali Bennett**

"We must not and cannot establish a Palestinian State. The solution is immediate application of sovereignty over area C."

Deputy Minister **Zeev Elkin**

"Instead of talking over and over again about giving away land, the time has come to begin talking about a course of action leading to the application of sovereignty in Judea and Samaria."

Deputy Minister **Rabbi Eli Ben Dahan**

"No other people has any authority or sovereignty over this land".

Former Minister of Science **Daniel Hershkowitz**

"Along with settlement, which leads us in a practical way to the promise of sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, there must also be a public declaration to the entire world that this is our Land, and there is no better declaration than legal application of Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria"

Samaria Local Council head **Gershon Mesika**

"Sovereignty is the basic element by which every people and every state is able to express its rule in the field".

Caroline Glick

Journalist and writer, senior contributing editor of the Jerusalem Post

"There are millions of people who understand that the 'Two-State' solution is a disaster. They are just waiting for someone to tell them they can abandon it. Israel has implemented the Israeli 'One-State' solution twice – in Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Both experiences were successful"

נשים בירוק
WOMEN IN GREEN

Application of Israeli Sovereignty

The above quotes are from speeches made during the three "Sovereignty" conferences held by Women in Green and from articles written for the journal "Sovereignty" published by Women in Green and the Forum For Sovereignty.

The entire articles can be read at
www.ribonut.co.il

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DIVIDING A PENSION ON DIVORCE

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash

B. A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 32 years

Question: My husband and I are separating after six years. We both do not want to go through a lawyer but want everything to be legal. Our house is under my name. I understand that even though my husband is not the registered owner we need to divide the equity 50/50. Therefore, I am going to buy out his interest and give him half of the net equity. We plan to sign separation papers and file them with the local court ourselves, but we want everything to be legal. What are the appropriate procedures?

Answer: The law and procedures are so complex that you both need lawyers (independent legal advice) for such an agreement to be "legal" or legally enforceable. Anyone suggesting otherwise is mistaken. Moreover, asking me to give you "shortcuts" is no different then asking a surgeon to instruct a patient with a gallbladder stone on how to use a surgical knife after pointing out a few diagrams of the lower belly. For instance, some of the many issues a competent family law lawyer will resolve include the following:

1. Is there other property and debts on the date of marriage and on the date of separation? If so, and your husband has much more than you do, meaning a greater net worth over the course of the marriage, then maybe the split on the house equity should be much more than 50:50 in your favour. For instance, he might have a private pension that, after taxes, could be worth a great deal more than yours as of the date of separation. If so then the difference in value between your net worth and his will affect the split of the house equity, such that you might get 75% and he may only receive 25%. Or perhaps he has a business whose current value needs to be evaluated by a commercial valuator. Or he might own a yacht in Fiji?

2. If you buy out his interest in the home and he has co-signed on the mortgage then he will want the bank to release him from any continuing obligation. At the very least he will want a written indemnity from you to indemnity him from any lawsuit by the bank if you can't or don't pay as the bank loan becomes due.

3. These agreements are not filed with the court unless one of you receives child or spousal support and wants the payments to be enforced through the Ontario Government's Family Responsibility Office.

4. To be legal, you also need to formally exchange current income, asset and liability statements about each other in writing and be able to provide evidence that this has been done.

To my loyal readers: Recently I published a different article about matrimonial homes and how their equities were to be divided. It sparked a lot of interest and curiosity on how to calculate the split of equity in different fact scenarios. Watch for my follow-up!

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit ***www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.***

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Sponsored by the Community for Jewish Culture of B'Nai Brith Canada.

B.C. mayor signs deal with Israeli tech firm

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

When Surrey, B.C., Mayor Dianne Watts announced last April that she planned to turn one square mile of her City Centre into a leading centre for medical technology, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) in the Pacific region immediately started paying attention.

"When we heard of her intention to create an Innovation Boulevard, we knew the mayor needed to tap into Israel's spirit of ingenuity," CIJA Pacific region director Darren Mackoff said.

Mackoff and his team helped organize a six-day trade mission to the Holy Land for Watts last month, with a delegation that included individuals from the health technology business sector and representatives from Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia and Kwantlen Polytechnic University – all of them key stakeholders in Surrey's Innovation Boulevard.

Dianne Watts *(Wikimedia Commons)*

In January, just a month after her return home, Watts signed a deal with Israel Brain Technologies (IBT), the first international deal of its kind secured since she and her Innovation Boulevard co-chair, SFU neuroscientist and professor Ryan D'Arcy, announced the boulevard last year. Israel Brain Technologies, created by Israeli president and Nobel Peace Prize winner Shimon Peres, is the country's most prestigious neuro-technology consortium. It unites Israel's academics, neuroscientists and industry leaders under a single umbrella of brain research and innovation.

The deal will give the City of Surrey access to some of Israel's top thinkers and the development of innovative, life-saving medical advances, Mackoff said, but it will also give IBT the opportunity to engage in exchanges and to partner on specific projects with their counterparts in Western Canada.

In a press release, Watts said, "Israel and Surrey have common health-care challenges and share the goal of setting a new standard in medical care and innovation. By combining our remarkable pool of talents and expertise, I know that Surrey and Israel will together create ground-breaking and life changing advancements in health care."

Watts' CIJA-led educational mission was packed with 25 business meetings at Israeli universities, hospitals and centres of innovation, political briefings, tours of Israel's most significant historic and contemporary sites, and a strategic visit to Israel's northern border with Syria, on the Golan Heights.

"In addition to gaining a strong understanding and appreciation for Israel and the challenges the Jewish state faces in the region, it was extremely important that Mayor Watts left Israel with tangible collaborative partnerships between the city, trip delegates and their counterparts in Israel," Mackoff said.

The blizzard-like conditions in Jerusalem on the mayor's day of arrival meant CIJA had to do some quick, on-the-ground improvising and move the team to Tel Aviv at the last minute. Nonetheless, the itinerary was executed seamlessly. Mackoff travelled with the mayor and says she was tremendously moved and inspired by this visit.

"The Jewish and pro-Israel community in Western Canada has a firm friend in Mayor Watts," he reflected. "She saw first-hand what Israel is truly about – a country that has overcome tremendous obstacles to create a thriving democracy that is leading the world in scientific advancements."

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Chassidic councillor seeks to heal divisions

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Renegade or a canny handpick?

Mindy Pollak, who made history in November when she became the first chassidic woman elected to public office in Quebec – just as the values charter debate was red-hot – wants it known that she is emphatically neither.

Pollak, 25, has not deviated from the strict observance in which she was brought up and is adamant that the chassidic leadership did not choose her, behind the scenes, to represent them on the Outremont borough council because she projects a very different image of their community.

But she does wholly embrace the role of stereotype debunker without compromising her religious beliefs and way of life.

Pollak won the Claude Ryan district in the Nov. 3 Montreal election, the area with the borough's greatest concentration of Chassidim. She received a decisive 35 per cent of the vote, besting four other candidates including the Orthodox Sheldon Goldberg, who ran with successful mayoral candidate Denis Coderre, and independent Pierre Lacerte, who has been feuding with some Chassidim for a decade over alleged flouting of municipal regulations.

The turnout was 61 per cent, one of the highest in the entire city.

Pollak, interviewed in her tiny office at the borough hall, is apologetic for the clutter and the size – she'll be moving into larger space when renovations are completed.

Modestly dressed and wearing a sheitel, she is poised, warm and open to any questions.

The curiosity, even scrutiny, she aroused from the time she announced her candidacy in July was "what I expected. I was kind of hoping for it," she said. "I really wanted to portray the community in a different light."

Mindy Pollak

Far from being the community's official choice, Pollak faced outright hostility from some Chassidim, who feel that a woman should not be in politics. The very sight of posters with her photo was heresy to some.

This was also not unexpected, she said.

Pollak never dreamed of entering politics, she said, until she was approached by Projet Montréal, then the second opposition party. It was impressed with her groundbreaking work as co-founder of the Friends of Hutchison Street, which promotes harmonious relations between Chassidim and other residents.

A young chassidic woman teaming up with a woman twice her age and of Palestinian descent, Leila Marshy, going door to door trying to combat suspicion and misunderstanding on both sides of the cultural divide had caught the party's attention.

"At first I laughed [at the idea of running], but the more I thought about it, the more I thought I could make a difference," she said. "It was totally my decision."

Many Chassidim, a growing segment of the population, felt they needed a voice on council.

Up to election day, the community, made up of followers of various rabbinic dynasties, seemed divided, the majority appearing to favour Coderre, at least for city mayor.

Pollak did receive good wishes from the Vizhnitzer rebbe in Israel, but says that should not be interpreted as some kind of seal of approval.

While there may be matters she will consult rabbis on, Pollak is firm she is not being guided by them.

Pollak credits her British-born mother, Elka, with instilling in her an openness to other people.

Pollak's father is "Québécois," born here of Romanian parents.

All four of her grandparents were Holocaust survivors who were in the camps, she said.

A graduate of the Belz Community School, Pollak is equally articulate in English and French. She perfected her French while working as an esthetician in a spa within walking distance of her home. Most of her clients were francophones.

"I loved that job, connecting with people, helping them feel good about themselves," she said.

Pollak has reluctantly given that up for now to devote herself to being a councillor. It's work that she says "occupies my brain every minute of every single day." It's been a learning curve, and preparing the borough budget has been particularly daunting.

"People would say to me, 'You work? Really, you do that?' They're like, 'Wow'…

"We [Chassidim] need to get out of our little box to clear up the everyday misconceptions and prejudices people have."

Pollak stressed that day-to-day relations between Chassidim and non-Chassidim are good and that instances of tension that get reported distort reality. "It's a minority who make a lot of noise, and they are the ones we hear," she observed.

To read full story, go to cjnews.com

Friends launch Montreal women's blog site

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Lisa Brookman and Elizabeth Wiener have been best friends since their teenage years.

But neither West Islander would have imagined that WiseWomenMontreal.com, a free women's blog site they launched last Labour Day weekend, would result in their being recognized on the street.

But that's what is happening.

Brookman, a clinical psychotherapist, and Wiener, a teacher and professional style expert, have already made three appearances on Breakfast Television Montreal, with more scheduled.

And as of a few weeks ago, the site had recorded 18,000 "page views," which is considered impressive.

The site's slogan is: "Everyday wisdom for an extraordinary life."

It has all come about as the result of Brookman's brainchild about a year ago: create a Montreal-specific blog site for women that would bring together a large team of expert women bloggers – almost 30 in all – filing regularly on a range of subjects within their expertise that women care about, thereby eliminating the need to troll the web.

"We see it is a one-stop shop for all resources," said Brookman, who approached Wiener to join her for their blog site adventure.

WiseWomenMontreal's Lisa Brookman, left, and Elizabeth Wiener

The site covers its subjects under the general headings of Health, Beauty, Lifestyle and Family.

This would include blogs on yoga, fitness, doctor's visits and sexuality (under Health); "style 101," makeup and hair tips (under Beauty); home décor, travel, and women and money (under Lifestyle); and pregnancy, parenting and single motherhood (under Family).

And there's much more. The bona fides of the experts – whether the subject is sex or Japanese sake – are all described in detail on the site.

The site also allows inquiries, suggestions, blogs by users themselves and "guest wise women" blogs.

"The whole idea has been to empower women," said Wiener, who, like Brookman, is married with three children. "And everything is at your fingertips."

The two women appear to be very different.

Brookman said she is the dreamer, full of impulsive, creative ideas, whereas Wiener is the more cautious, analytic partner, the one who tends to look more before leaping.

Yet the two seem to complement each other perfectly – "and it works," Brookman said. "We might not agree on everything right away, but we always figure things out."

Getting the site up and running, and then having it continue to run smoothly, was – and remains – a challenge they face every day: assembling the "team," attracting sponsors and supporters, using their "developers," keeping up with the latest trends, writing and editing, editing, and more editing of the blogs that keep coming in.

Brookman and Wiener have also made extensive use of their own personal contacts and social media including Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram to get the word out, build support and win a regular following. If things go their way, plans include Wisewomen blog sites in Toronto and elsewhere.

And while making Wisewomen successful has become an overarching preoccupation in their daily lives, it has also meant juggling their own careers and family lives.

"But so far, we're managing to do it," Brookman said.

Second gift from charitable foundation

Baycrest mood clinic gets $1-million gift

CJN Staff

For the second time since 2004, Baycrest Health Science's Mood and Related Disorders Clinic has received a major gift of $1 million from the Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation.

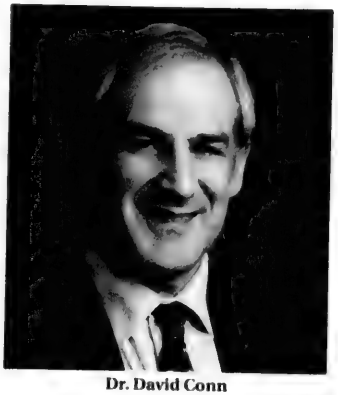
The first gift from the Toronto-based private charitable foundation provided the seed money to create the clinic, which has provided comprehensive mental health care to adults 65 and older across Ontario.

Since then, the clinic has established itself as one of Canada's leading models of care for older adults struggling with depression, stress, anxiety, chronic illness, pain and bereavement.

The new gift will be matched by an additional $1 million from the Baycrest Foundation. The funds will enable the clinic to help more vulnerable seniors across the province and conduct new research exploring the benefits of non-drug therapies such as mindfulness-based reduction and problem-solving therapy in older populations.

Dr. David Conn, vice-president of education at Baycrest, said, "we are grateful to the Wood Foundation for their generous support of this program. The new funding will allow us to serve more individuals suffering from mood disorders, utilizing a broad array of innovative interventions."

With the additional funds, the clinic will be able to hire additional staff to run extra clinics and provide problem-solving and group therapy, as well as assist with clinical research studies exploring the effectiveness of non-drug therapies for older adults with mood disorders.



Dr. David Conn

The gift will also enable the clinic to increase the frequency of its tele-psychiatry consultations and follow-ups to remote and under-served areas of the province, and launch a new geriatric mental health website this year to provide educational resources to older adults and their caregivers.

Dr. Cindy Grief, medical director of the clinic, said "this is an incredible opportunity for our clinic. With the Wood Foundation's gift, we'll have the resources to explore innovative non-pharmacological approaches to seniors' mental health and expand our outreach virtually."

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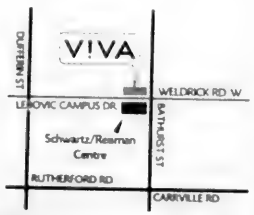

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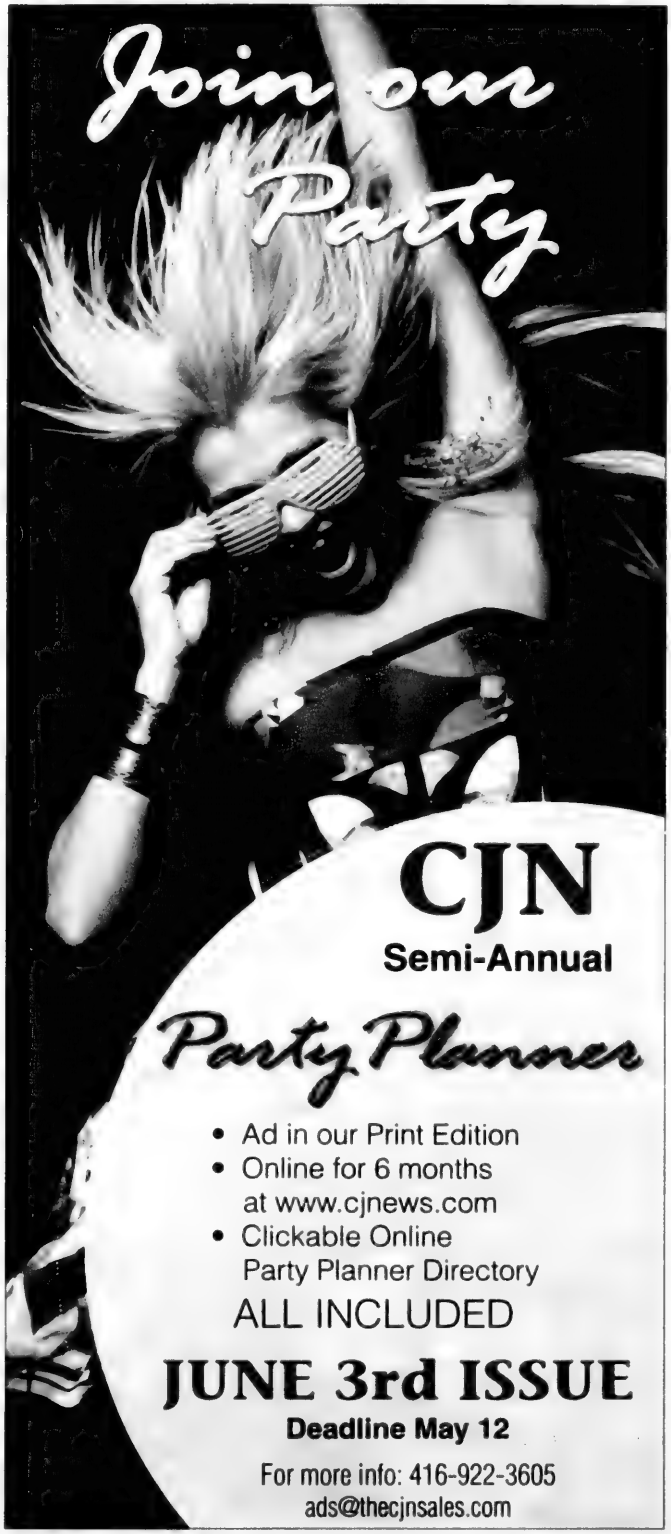


Frankel known for Skinnygirl products

Entrepreneur gives Toronto the skinny

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

The audience of more than 250 women was hooked the moment Bethenny Frankel walked on stage.

The New York TV reality show personality, best-selling author, entrepreneur and talk show host known for her Skinnygirl books and products, especially her Skinnygirl cocktails, is worth an estimated net of $25 million. She has been named one of the Top 100 Most Powerful Celebrities by *Forbes* Magazine.

"Bethenny has become a true inspiration to women around the world," the evening's co-chair, Michele Alter said at the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto event Jan. 23 held at the Park Hyatt.

In the lively question-and-answer, including tweets from social media, Frankel offered solid business tips, laughter, a little cursing and juicy stories.

Asked about her success, Frankel said, "Looking back, I was always driven and self-motivated. I remember my parents were away and I wanted to have a party but I couldn't afford it so I charged people to come to the party and pay for the alcohol. I am in the cocktail business – it was a foreshadowing.

"I was always a hustler," she added. "I grew up at the racetrack. I was at the betting windows from really early."

Shortly after graduating from the Natural Gourmet Culinary Institute, Frankel started her own company, Bethennybakes. Then, in 2005, she brought her business to television on *The Apprentice: Martha Stewart*, adding colour with her wit, wisdom and humour. In 2008, she joined the cast of Bravo's *Real Housewives of New York City* and with her rising celebrity status, has taken the stage as host of her own talk show, *Bethenny*.

At the UJA event moderated by TV personality Liza Fromer, no question was off limits except about Frankel's personal life.

So, what drives Frankel? "Good enough isn't good enough with anything. I am a perfectionist. I have a huge attention to detail and organization. I would rather not do it if I can't do it well. It is about ideas, great ideas and executing them."

When asked if her life has been on a fated path, Frankel responded, "Totally. I love that phrase. You have to be aware of the signs. In the car, you're on the road, but you don't know when you are going to see the signs and what's going to happen, but you must be aware of them, and I am very aware. I'm romantic that way – I like the story. You can see things in front of you and grab them and turn them into opportunities. I like embracing the way life happens."

Bethenny Frankel *[Susan Minuk photo]*

Frankel then shared her "secret sauce": "I work from my gut, from my instinct. Sometimes you have to listen to other people, the experts, but ultimately you have to make your own informed decision. Everyone told me that the 'cocktail' was not going to happen, and I just knew it was a good idea. You just have to know and go."

How does she handle the press, both good and bad? "In waves. The more success you have, the more people want to find something wrong. It's cliché but they want to tear you down. It rolls off my back at this point."

Frankel shared the experience of being a mother and how she manages to balance motherhood and business. Her daughter, Bryn, is three years old.

"I love the purity, the innocence and the hope. I love the fact that the only thing that Bryn has to do every day is enjoy her life and be happy. It's my job to provide that.

"I'm on a tight schedule, but the minute the set is done, I get in the car and pick up Bryn. We go for pizza, or go ice-skating, or to the playground. I have a playroom at the studio – you just make it work."

Lisa Draper, 2014 UJA campaign co-chair, announced that the annual campaign has raised more than $52.3 million from 16,000 donors. "This represents an increase of over 5.3 per cent over last year," she said. "However… we still have more people to reach in our community."

The evening concluded with two guests winning a draw to Bethenny's New York City talk show, followed by a dessert reception.

Moscovitch not worried about terrorism

Continued from page 1

Moscovitch said he's not nervous about terrorism, despite concerns some have expressed since an Islamic militant group claimed responsibility for two recent suicide bombings in Volgograd and threatened via video to strike Sochi during the Olympic Games, and the fact that security officials have been hunting for three potential suicide bombers, including one they believe may already be stationed in Sochi.

"The way I see it, is the Olympics draw in the top winter athletes from around the world, and the host country brings in the best of the best to protect us," he said. "That's their job, and they're going to do absolutely everything possible to keep us safe. And I think they will do a good job at that."

He said all Olympics have their threats no matter where they're hosted, although he admitted some places have more serious threats than others. But that's not going to stop him from competing.

"I'm not going to be naive about it, but at the same time, I won't spend time worrying about it. I'm going there to do a job," he said.

He said the hardest part of competing is staying in the moment.

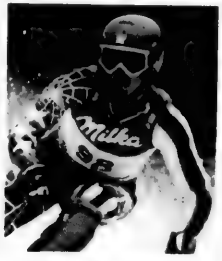
"No matter how trained you are, when you go to step foot on the ice and they call your name, anything can happen," he said. "With that much pressure and excitement and adrenaline, your mind can go in any direction."

To overcome that challenge, Moscovitch is treating the Olympics like any other competition.

"I hope I can bask in the Olympic energy and feeling before and after [the routine]," he said. "If there's a little bit of added Olympic energy, that's great and I'll use that, but I don't want it to feel very different [from] anything I've done in my career."

Israeli Olympic Team

Vladislav BYKANOV
Age: 24
Birthplace: Ukraine
Competing in: Short track speed skating
Best expectation: 8-12
Recent accomplishment: Top 10 in European Championships



Virgile VANDEPUT
Age: 19
Birthplace: Belgium
Competing in: Alpine skiing
Best expectation: 15-20
Recent accomplishment: Top 70 in 2014 Alpine World Ski Championships

Alexei BYCHENKO
Age: 25
Birthplace: Ukraine
Competing in: Men's figure skating
Best expectation: 8-12
Recent accomplishment: 10th in seniors men's event at 2014 European Skating Championships

Andrea DAVIDOVICH & Evgeni KRASNOPOLSKI
Ages: 16 & 25
Birthplaces: United States & Ukraine
Competing in: Pairs figure skating
Best expectation: 8-12
Recent accomplishment: 7th in 2014 European Skating Championships

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Lodzer Centre Congregation
12 Heaton Street
Toronto, Ontario
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- Jonathan Halevi, *Shalom Toronto, Jer. Centre for Public Affairs*
- Sayeh Hassan, *lawyer - Iranian pro-democracy activist*
- Prof. David Bensoussan, *CUR Academic Council, U. of Quebec*
- Lawrence Solomon, *Financial Post*

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Doors open at 12 pm. Light refreshments will be served
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Excavating the City of David

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

The City of David is arguably the most important piece of real estate in the history of the Jewish People. It has been excavated numerous times by various scholars over the last century and a half. It has produced some astounding discoveries and stirred up some heated controversy.

A number of well-known excavations have sifted its soil in the last 50 years. The first of these was headed by Dame Kathleen Kenyon, the legendary British archeologist, in the early 1960s. Kenyon's excavations had a strong Canadian connection. Her associate director was A. Douglas Tushingham, the chief archeologist of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

Kenyon and Tushingham had first worked together at the legendary site of Jericho in the early 1950s, and they had come up with some spectacular discoveries. They showed that Jericho had been one of the earliest settlements in the world, with a history that stretched back over 10,000 years. The dig was controversial in that it challenged the biblical account of Joshua's destruction producing no evidence whatsoever of this iconic event.

It was at Jericho that Kenyon introduced the method of excavation that bears her name and that of the great Scottish archeologist, Sir Mortimer Wheeler, with whom Kenyon had worked and whose technique she adapted to the Middle East. It was a technique that stressed meticulous excavation principles coupled with scientific methodology and precision recording of finds in a stratigraphic context. One could also argue that it was the excavation of Jericho, and the ROM's participation in it, that sparked an interest in Near Eastern biblical archeology across Canada, thanks to the intensive coverage of the excavation by the Canadian press.

It was to the City of David in Jerusalem that Kenyon and Tushingham next turned their attention, hoping to come up with discoveries that would match the scope of those they had made at Jericho. Unfortunately that was not to be.

The Wheeler-Kenyon method was challenged by Jerusalem's rough, hilly and rocky terrain. But even more of a challenge was to be provided by the political climate of the Middle East. The Six Day War broke out in 1967 ensnaring the expedition in its tentacles and forcing Kathleen Kenyon to halt the excavations.

Excavations at the City of David resumed in the late 1970s. The man who was to be in charge was the great Israeli archeologist, Yigael Yadin, who had excavated the legendary site of Masada in the early 1960s and was now the head of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Institute of Archaeology, the foremost school of archeology in Israel. But Yadin had the foresight to realize that these excavations would need a young, vigorous excavator to lead them.

He chose his former student, Yigal Shiloh, to head the new excavations at the City of David and to confront the daunting challenge that they would present. Shiloh proved to be up to the challenge and made some spectacular discoveries that would rewrite the early history of Jerusalem.

The strong and steadfast women of yore

Midrashic Moments
Rachael Turkienicz

The Torah readings at this time of year are some of the most intriguing and defining of the year. The Israelites are standing at Sinai experiencing Divine revelation and we are simultaneously facing our greatest and our worst moment.

Revelation with God is the culmination of a long-awaited covenant that begins with our ancestors. Through family angst, national wars, kidnapping, exile and the torture of slavery, the vision of a personal meeting with God is the fulfilment of the hopes of generations of Israelites. Standing at Mount Sinai is the experience of that long-awaited moment.

At the same time, Israel is frightened by Moses' absence and quickly reverts back to the devil it knows: Egyptian ritual. The former slaves must have assumed that their leader has disappeared along with the invisible God and they must create a new one or perish. The mob turns to Aaron, Moses' brother, and demands that he fashion a god to lead them.

Aaron instructs them to take the gold from their wives and bring it to him. The sages in the midrash inform us that it was the men who approached Aaron, and when he sent them back to their wives to get the gold, the women refused. These ancient women stood adamantly against idolatry and refused to participate or to enable their men.

Long after the incident of the golden calf, Israel is taught how to properly build a place of worship, the Tabernacle. When the Torah describes how to construct this holy place, the outer walls of the Tabernacle are made of curtains that will all be attached one to the other. The Hebrew in the Torah describes these curtains as joined "each woman to her sister."

The beautiful image is created honouring the female that preserved the holiness of monotheism against the lure of the golden calf. The Torah represents to us a powerful image of women standing arm in arm, strengthening the frame of the Tabernacle.

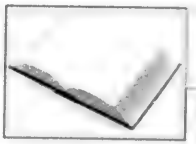
According to the Talmud, women were rewarded for the steadfast faith they displayed at Mount Sinai. Originally, the first day of each Hebrew month, Rosh Chodesh, was designated for the 12 tribes of Israel. Each tribe was to have its own particular Rosh Chodesh. As a result of the sin of the golden calf, the Divine plan shifted and the women were given all the days of Rosh Chodesh.

Once a year, on Shavuot, we celebrate that moment at Mount Sinai when we received the Torah. But on every Rosh Chodesh, we celebrate a day meant to pay homage to every Jewish woman.

Rachael Turkienicz is the director of Rachaelscentre.org

Open your eyes to daily miracles

Rabbi David Seed



Rabbinic Reflections

I don't think I need to tell anyone how difficult this winter has been thus far. At the same time, the experience has brought to light two terms that have now become part of our vocabulary. The first, "polar vortex," describes the unusual movement of the polar air in a southerly direction, giving us the prolonged, frigid weather we've been having. The other is less familiar, because it describes a rare phenomenon we've encountered – "cryoseism."

Also called an ice quake or freeze quake, cryoseism comes from the words "cryo" meaning cold and "seism," which refers to a shaking of the earth. Simply put, when the water in the rock and earth freezes due to abnormally low temperatures and then expands, it causes loud bangs and noises, usually in the middle of the night. Many people have called the police, worried about possible intruders. They became frightened at what they were hearing, not knowing its cause. However, once we understood the reasons behind this unusual activity, everyone was finally relieved the next time they heard these strange noises in the night.

But it got me thinking: does the fact that we now understand these rare events make them any less special, or, I might dare say, miraculous? We read of miracles in the Torah, especially in the portions of the past weeks – the 10 plagues, the splitting of the sea, the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. How do we account for them? According to some, there are scientific explanations for each of them, parts of nature that came together to create these events in the way they did. For others, it's sufficient to know that God is behind these happenings. They have no need for science to explain why these took place. They are simply manifestations of the great power and wonders of the Almighty.

However, even if we can explain some of the more unusual episodes of the Torah or even that of a cryoseism, does that mean there are no miracles at all, either then or now? On the other hand, do the explanations make any of them less miraculous?

In our prayer book, we recite in each *Amidah* the following" "We thank You and praise You morning, noon and night for Your miracles which daily attend us and for Your wondrous kindnesses."

What does our tradition mean by this? Where are these miracles that attend us daily? Who has seen them? In this phrase, simple yet profound, I believe that we are being taught that life and all it contains, from the time we wake in the morning until we lay our heads down at night, everything can be seen as a miracle if only we learn to appreciate all the gifts given to us each day. Understanding the reasoning behind any event does not have to diminish the miraculous nature of our world and our lives. All we need do is to open our eyes and then live accordingly.

Rabbi David Seed is a rabbi at Adath Israel Congregation in Toronto.

We have truly come a long way

From the Bimah

Rabbi Philip Scheim

One of the more interesting sets of books in my library is an edition of a classical Torah commentary authored by the eminent scholar Rabbi Baruch HaLevi Epstein, known as the *Torah Temimah*. Originally published in Lithuania in 1902, each book of the Torah has its own small volume, including the Torah text, the commentary of Rashi and Rabbi Epstein's *Torah Temimah* commentary alongside. As is often the case with such editions of the Torah, at the back of each volume is a small-print edition of the Shabbat service, so that one could manage to *daven* and follow the Torah reading with the same easy-to-hold volume.

A fascinating feature of this edition is the text of the blessing for the government. In this case, it's a blessing for the Czar, and it begins as follows: "He who gives salvation to kings and authority to princes, may He bless and protect His Majesty Czar Nicolas Alexandrovitch, his wife, mother and children [all mentioned by name]."

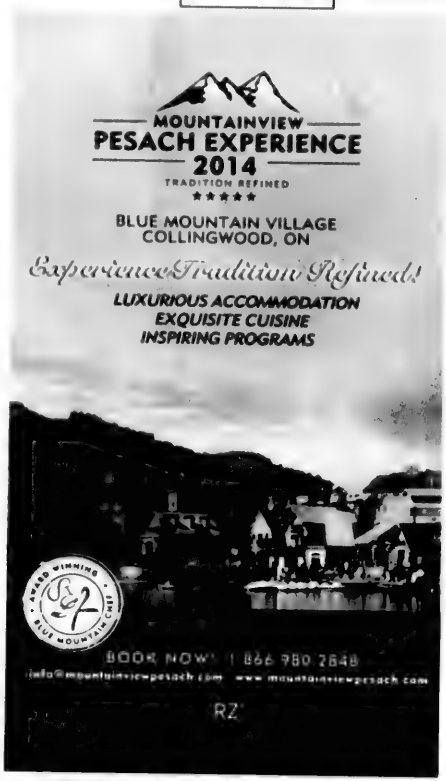
What's remarkable about this text, which was recited in synagogues throughout pre-revolutionary Russia, is the fact that Jews were praying for the welfare of a ruler who did little to stop the Kishinev pogrom and numerous other examples of virulent anti-Semitism. This prayer clearly was recited not out of love, not with kavanah, not with sincere intent, but out of obligation and fear.

I hadn't thought of this text for years, but was reminded of it last month, when I was privileged to be part of the delegation accompanying Prime Minister Stephen Harper on his official visit to Israel. It occurred to me how, not so long ago, national leaders were not our friends, and any expression of loyalty and prayers for their well-being may have masked our true feelings. It occurred to me how far we had come in history, in the progression of the Jewish People, when we could be in the company of a leader for whom any prayer we would be reciting would come from the depths of our heart, with full kavanah, with deep feeling and emotion. How far we had come!

Harper's speech to the Knesset and his subsequent remarks to reporters and words spoken throughout his four days in Israel reflected his feeling that the existence, continued strength and vitality of the State of Israel is a manifestation of justice in the world and a centuries-long-overdue undoing of the wrongs of history, when Jews were denied their own land.

Our experience in Israel with the prime minister reminded all of our Canadian delegation of how far we have come in having a leader who stands up against much of the world and many forces at home, in support of that which lies so close to our hearts – our beloved State of Israel. That we have a leader who, likewise, holds Israel close to his heart, brings to mind our traditional expression of gratitude to the Almighty, who has kept us, as a people, alive, sustained us, and brought us to this profoundly encouraging moment in history.

Rabbi Scheim is spiritual leader of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation, Toronto.



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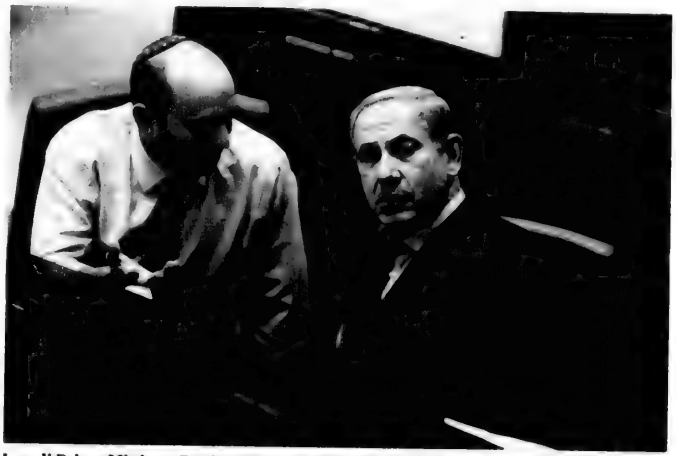
Settlement issue spurs coalition tensions

David Berlin
Special to The CJN

Ever since the leader of Israel's Communist party, Meir Vilner, popularized the phrase "*Yisrael, Palesteen: shtei medinot leshtei amim*" ("Israel Palestine; two states for two peoples") in the late 1970s, the idea of two states for two people – better known as " the two-state solution" – has been understood to mean two ethnically/culturally homogenous nation- states sharing the land west of the Jordan River.

Analysis

On this view, Israel – which is mostly Jewish, but includes 1.3 million Arabs – would in the future co-exist alongside Palestine, which would be home to both Christians and Muslim Arabs. More recently, the ethnic/cultural purity of Israel has been zealously pursued by the Russian-born Israeli foreign minister, Avigdor Liberman, who has declared that any final-status agreement must include large land swaps in which Arab-Israeli towns such as Umm el Fahm in the Northern Galilee would be annexed to the future Palestinian state, even as Jewish settlements in the West Bank would be threaded to produce a new Israeli map.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, and Minister of Economy Naftali Bennett during a session in the Knesset last July. *[Israel Sun photo]*

Liberman's numerous provocations have incensed Arab-Israeli leaders and helped undermine the loyalty of many Arab citizens of Israel who have lived under Israeli rule since the establishment of the state in 1948. Especially hurt and enraged is the Druze population, whose sons not only serve in the IDF, but have been instrumental in the formation of some of the IDF's most formidable units, including the legendary Shaked reconnaissance unit in which I had the honour of serving.

Naftali Bennett, leader of Israel's third-largest political party, the Jewish Home, was ushered into office largely on the basis of his declaration that the Zionist pioneer's dream of Israel as a secular cosmopolitan state is dead and that Israelis, including old-school Israelis, should replace Theodor Herzl's multicultural fantasy with the dominant view of Israel as a Jewish homeland. Over the course of his campaign, Bennett castigated ultra-Orthodox Jews for spoiling Judaism for their secular counterparts. Judaism, Bennett claimed, needed to remain a big tent receptive to Jews of all stripes. After the 2012 election, in which his upstart party won 12 seats, Bennett joined the Likud-led coalition, believing that, like him, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had eschewed or never really bought into Herzl's idea of Israel as a commonwealth of diverse cultures.

When Netanyahu publicly suggested that a final-status agreement might see some remote Jewish settlements remaining under Palestinian rule, Bennett was caught entirely off guard. For a moment, the young leader (Bennett is 41) must have wondered whether the prime minister was in fact abandoning the idea of Jewish unity. If that were the case, Bennett, who had once been Netanyahu's chief of staff, would not tolerate it.

Continued on page 31

Netanyahu, Kerry chat after public criticism

JTA

JERUSALEM— Benjamin Netanyahu and John Kerry discussed the developing framework agreement in a telephone call hours after the Israeli prime minister accused the U.S. secretary of state of promoting a boycott in a speech.

The two leaders spoke on Sunday night, *Ha'aretz* reported. The newspaper cited unnamed senior U.S. officials as saying the conversation dealt mostly with the framework agreement. The conversation came after Kerry met earlier on Sunday with Israeli Justice Minister and chief Israeli peace negotiator Tzipi Livni, and negotiator Isaac Molho.

Earlier on Sunday, Netanyahu, and other Israeli government officials, rapped Kerry for warning that Israel would face more international boycotts if the peace process fails, during an address to the Munich Security Conference.

Netanyahu called boycotts "immoral and unjust." He also said that boycotts push the peace process further away by causing the Palestinians "to adhere to their intransigent positions," and that "no pressure will cause me to concede the vital interests of the State of Israel, especially the security of Israel's citizens."

The U.S. State Department responded to the criticism levelled at Kerry.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, and U.S. Secretary Of State John Kerry meeting during the World Economic Forum in Davos last month.
[Kobi Gideon/ GPO]

"Secretary Kerry has a proud record of over three decades of steadfast support for Israel's security and well-being, including staunch opposition to boycotts," State Department spokesperson Jen Psaki said in a statement Sunday. "Secretary Kerry has always expected opposition and difficult moments in the process, but he also expects all parties to accurately portray his record and statements."

Kerry is expected to introduce his framework agreement proposal to the mostly stalled U.S.-brokered Israeli-Palestinian peace talks in the coming weeks.

Transfer of settlement funds halted

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel's finance minister halted the transfer of state funds to the settlements following a television report that the money was being misused.

Yair Lapid reportedly stopped the transfers on Saturday while the allegations in a report on Israel Channel 2 the previous night are being investigated.

According to the report, more than $42 million given to the settlements by the previous government to offset losses from a West Bank construction freeze were used inappropriately, specifically by being transferred to the settlers' Yesha Council for advocacy purposes.

Lapid called on those investigating the issue – including the head of the budget division, the accountant general and the legal adviser – to submit their conclusions in a week, *Ha'aretz* reported. Channel 2 reported that the settlements received the money in secret payments as compensation for losing out on city taxes from houses that were not built during the 10-month settlement building freeze that ended in September 2010.

Thousands of housing construction starts were delayed during the freeze. The funds were transferred as "security grants," according to Channel 2.

Yair Lapid
[Israel Sun photo]

"In light of reports that those same funds are not serving their original purpose, such as security and school and kindergarten maintenance, but are being transferred in an allegedly illegal way to the Settlers' Council, which uses them for political ends, some of which contravene government policies, the finance minister has ordered an immediate freeze on future payments," the statement Saturday night from the Finance Ministry said. Likud Party government minister Yuval Steinitz, who served as finance minister when the payments were authorized, confirmed that the payments were made on orders of the Prime Minister's Office, the *Times of Israel* reported.

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Public apology demanded

Continued from page 29

And rather than clarify matters with Netanyahu, Bennett took an opportunity on Jan. 29 to lash out publicly and in a manner that reminded some Israeli pundits of his campaign faux pas in which this inexperienced leader and former army officer declared that if he were ordered to evacuate settlers, he would disobey orders. That outburst unhinged a large swath of Bennett's supporters and moved his party from second position behind front-running Likud to third behind Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid. This latest outburst, some journalists speculated, could cost Bennett his seat in cabinet.

Indeed, Netanyahu's office demanded a public apology, which Bennett withheld for a while and finally offered without ever backing off his substantive criticism. In private, Bennett spoke of Netanyahu's position as a hoax aimed at riling the Palestinian leadership and showing U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, who has been preparing to present an American "framework" for a peace deal, just how committed to resolving the conflict he is.

Bennett has said that if Netanyahu were to declare his support for an American initiative that calls for a Palestinian state to be established along the 1967 borders with east Jerusalem as its capital, he would quit the coalition. Two of Netanyahu's other coalition partners, Justice Minister Tzipi Livni and Lapid, the finance minister, would likely leave the government if Netanyahu doesn't continue to support the American initiative.

The notion that settlers could and would remain under Palestinian rule is not new. In the run-up to the 2005 disengagement from Gaza, several settler leaders declared their unconditional commitment to the Holy Land. Jewish settlers in the Gush Katif bloc in southern Gaza served the Israeli government with several major petitions insisting on their right to stay put. Then-prime minister Ariel Sharon shrugged them off.

In the West Bank, a small group of settlers in the Gush Etzion region have adopted the strategy made famous by the ultra-Orthodox teachings of recently departed Rabbi Menachem Froman, who argued that Orthodox Jews should not defer to ephemeral political arrangements and must remain steadfastly committed to the Promised Land. Rabbi Froman went so far as to broker a draft agreement with Hamas that permitted Jewish settlers to remain true to this most profound conviction.

David Berlin is the founding editor of the Walrus magazine. His book The Moral Lives of Israelis: Reinventing the Dream State was recently issued in Vintage Paperback.

Johansson, Oxfam part ways

JTA

Actor Scarlett Johansson ended her relationship with Oxfam following a protracted debate over her role as spokesperson for the Israeli company SodaStream.

In a statement Jan. 29, Johansson said she and the humanitarian organization have "a fundamental difference of opinion in regards to the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement" against Israel. SodaStream, which manufactures home soda makers, operates a factory in the West Bank settlement of Ma'aleh Adumim.

Scarlett Johansson *(Wikimedia Commons)*

Johansson has served as a global ambassador for Oxfam for eight years, travelling to India, Sri Lanka and Kenya on its behalf to highlight the problem of global poverty.

"She is very proud of her accomplishments and fundraising efforts during her tenure with Oxfam," said the statement released by her spokesperson.

In its own statement, released Jan. 30, Oxfam said that while it "respects the independence of our ambassadors, Ms. Johansson's role promoting the company SodaStream is incompatible with her role as an Oxfam global ambassador.

It added: "Oxfam believes that businesses, such as SodaStream, that operate in settlements further the ongoing poverty and denial of rights of the Palestinian communities that we work to support. Oxfam is opposed to all trade from Israeli settlements, which are illegal under international law."

SodaStream signed Johansson to be its first global brand ambassador, and she appeared in a U.S. television ad for the company during the Super Bowl. The company employs Israeli and Palestinian workers at its West Bank factory.

Pro-Palestinian groups had called on Oxfam to sever its ties with the actor.

On Jan. 28, representatives of Jewish Voice for Peace, the Boston Coalition for Palestinian Rights, American Jews for a Just Peace and the First Church in Cambridge Israel/Palestine Task Team met at Oxfam America's Boston headquarters and urged the humanitarian organization to drop Johansson, who is Jewish, over her defence of SodaStream's presence in the West Bank.

Johansson defended SodaStream and her involvement with the company in a statement released Jan. 24 on the *Huffington Post*.

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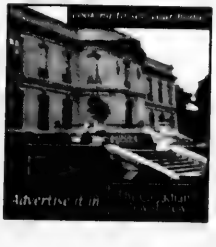

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Montreal director's Shoah doc up for Oscar Award

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

Montreal director Malcolm Clarke thought that some people might consider Alice Herz-Sommer controversial for being "thankful" – her word – for a very long life that included living through the Holocaust.

Clarke's remarkable, Oscar-nominated documentary short, *The Lady in Number 6: Music Saved My Life*, reveals Herz-Sommer, now 110 and the world's oldest known Holocaust survivor, to be a person who never let the Holocaust dampen her optimistic spirit and who survived her ordeal through her love of music.

The British-born Clarke, a non-Jew who has lived in Quebec since the mid-1990s, told *The CJN* he was "quite shocked" when he first heard Herz-Sommer express gratitude for everything she's lived through.

But filming her in her small London apartment "Number 6," accompanied by Montreal producer Frederic Bohbot and a film crew, he realized that despite her positive attitude toward life, she understood Nazi evil all too well.

Clarke told *The CJN* that while she appreciated that there may have been Nazis who loved Beethoven, Herz-Sommer "held no illusions about the horrors that took place." She felt that such love "would not redeem what they did one bit."

Clarke spoke briefly with *The CJN* after the Jan. 27 screening of his 38-minute film, which was followed by a panel discussion organized by the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC) as part of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Panellists included psychologist Henry Greenspan and survivors Rena Schondorf, Ted Bolgar and Jean Kutscher.

Clarke, an Oscar winner for a previous short documentary, *You Don't Have to Die* (1989), and for the feature-length documentary *Prisoner of Paradise* (2002), which was also Holocaust-themed, described to the MHMC audience how he "gussied up" more than 12 hours of interview footage of Herz-Sommer, taken over a four-day period, with archival material, to construct *The Lady in Number 6*.

He said the film took about a year and a half to complete and premiered in London three months ago.

Filming was the easy part, Clarke said, given Herz-Sommer's irrepressible nature and readiness to speak about anything and everything – particularly her love of music.

"All we had to do was stand to one side," he said.

Clarke confessed that he was initially reluctant to make another Holocaust-related film after *Prisoner of Paradise*, which was about a Jewish cabaret artist who performed in the Nazis' "show camp" Theresienstadt, and had required Clarke to pore over archival material for countless hours.

But once he met Herz-Sommer during a stop-off in London a few years ago, he realized her story had to be told.

"I knew I had been hooked."

As in *Prisoner of Paradise*, Theresienstadt plays a central role in *The Lady in Number 6*. It's where the Prague-born Herz-Sommer – then a 39-year-old accomplished concert pianist from a home frequented by Franz Kafka and Gustav Mahler – was taken in 1943 with her husband, Leopold, and young son, Raphael. Her husband would later die in another camp, while her son died years after the war at age 64.

In the concentration camp, as Herz-Sommer says in the film, she managed to perform 100 concerts, including all of the Chopin Études.

Even some Nazi soldiers would listen in. It was not for the "entertainment," she explains, "but as moral support" for the internees, most of whom would eventually be deported to the Auschwitz death camp.

Alice Herz-Sommer is the world's oldest known Holocaust survivor.

Despite the hardships in the camp, music was Herz-Sommer's salvation – "my God," as she puts it – keeping her spirit unbowed. In the film, she utters the word "music" many times, as if it were a mantra.

Clarke said even though he never saw an "irritable" side of her, Herz-Sommer doesn't view her past "through rose-tinted glasses."

Yet, despite the evil she witnessed and endured, she never lost the capacity to see the humanity of individual Germans.

"She is just one of those odd people who refuses to allow experience to grind her down," Clarke said.

In the film, she is seen practising pieces by Bach and other composers on her apartment piano, her fingers slowed a bit, but her technique intact.

While Herz-Sommer has "slowed down" a little since the film was made, Clarke said she still lives alone, plays Scrabble with friends, and practises piano every day.

Producer Nicholas Reed is also up for an Oscar along with Clarke.

The Prime Ministers

Members of Bnei Akiva attended a special screening of *The Prime Ministers* at Cineplex Empress Walk in Toronto recently. Based on Israeli diplomat's Yehuda Avner's best-selling book, *The Prime Ministers* takes the audience inside the offices of Israel's prime ministers through the eyes of an insider. Consul General of Israel DJ Schneeweiss was among the 350 people in attendance.

[Katan Studios photo]

Hollywood glitterati take to 'super cool' Lazypants

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Admit it. After a long day, all you want to do when you get home is kick back and relax, maybe catch an episode of *Breaking Bad*, shed your work duds, whether a business suit or something a little less formal, and put on something comfortable.

Like maybe sweatpants, a sweatshirt, and those comfy socks that might have a hole or two but are just what you need to make the ensemble complete.

Adam Bledin, 30, knows exactly where you're coming from. He's been there himself.

Back when he was in high school and facing a late-day gym class, he was more likely to head home, watch an episode of *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, lying on the couch in his sweatpants. Pretty soon, he got to calling them his "lazy pants," for good reason.

The name stuck with him over the years, and later as a businessman, he introduced a line of denim jeans with a throwaway line of sweatpants that he called – what else – Lazypants.

The thing is, Lazypants proved to be the bigger seller of the two. They were so big that he parlayed that consumer preference into a highly successful line of casual apparel under the Lazypants label.

Featuring his trademark and uncluttered three-bird logo and super comfortable Turkish fabric, the sweatpants proved a hit – so much so that some of the beautiful people in Hollywood have been seen wearing the product, providing a kind of advertising that only a ton of money could buy.

Celebrities such as reality show star Kourtney Kardashian, actress Mila Kunis, model Alessandra Ambrosio, actress Naya Rivera, comedian Martin Short and actor Billy Baldwin have been spotted wearing Lazypants.

The apparel was sold out of a trendy Los Angeles boutique called Kitson and gave proof to the slogan, "Sweatpants are super cool," said Bledin.

Where sweatpants were once seen primarily on those working out or lounging about, today people – mostly women and young girls – are happy to don the apparel when they're out and about, said Bledin.

"This is a product that everybody likes," he said. "It's all about comfort, softness. And there was an open market space."

Bledin speculates that's what accounts for the difference in success between the sweatpants and the denim line, which fizzled owing to a saturated marketplace.

Sweatpants are another matter entirely. It was a niche that did not have nearly as many retail options. And they were a perfect item for the times, in which economic stresses have led more people to stay at home and relax in comfortable attire.

As an entrepreneur with a sense of style and design, he put together his own line that has taken the market by storm. His catch line: "Why sweat when you can be lazy?"

In his first year in business, Bledin sold 600 units. Last year, sales reached 280,000. That's a rate of growth over 18 months that makes you do a double take.

In addition to sweatpants, the Lazypants line includes hoodies, hats, kids clothes, blankets, shorts and crew-neck sweaters. Prices range from $78 to $138 for pants and $118 to $148 for hoodies.

"It's a prestige price," Bledin acknowledged. "We're right at the bottom of prestige." High-end designers sweatpants can sell for as much as $1,600, he pointed out.

Lazypants has a growing Canadian presence. The company retained the Slavins Agency to place the products in Canadian retail outlets. So far, Lazypants apparel is carried by TNT, Sporting Life, North by Northwest and Honey. Retailers outside Toronto also carry their product, and the company even had a store in Kuwait order 1,000 pieces.

"They sold out and ordered more," said Bledin. "We can't keep up with demand."

Teenage girls and young women are the main demographic for sales. At bar and bat mitzvahs, they've proven to be highly sought-after giveaways, and a number of summer camps have stocked up on the items, adding their own logos to make them distinctive, Bledin added.

"Our main focus now is more the United Stated," he continued. "The possibilities are endless, really."

Helping him navigate all this uncharted territory is Fraser Kitson Ross, the founder of the Los Angeles store that bears his name.

Ross is a Canadian who opened Ice Boutique on Cumberland Avenue in Toronto's trendy Yorkville area in 1989. He closed the store in 2004. Bledin said he and Ross have a rapport, based in part on their Canadian backgrounds. Ross is his mentor who helps him with his business decisions.

Kitson is continuing to open stores across the United States and is a go-to place for "celebrity shopping destination, and Lazypants is a featured brand." Bledin expects Lazypants to be available in Portland, Los Angeles and Las Vegas by March.

Sales could reach $3 million to $5 million this year: "I think it's achievable in every way," he said. "We're at the point of looking at a strategic investor," someone with the capital to put into the company, but who's also familiar with the industry and who could lend their expertise to the enterprise.

After that, who knows? Perhaps expansion to Japan, Australia, South Korea or Russia. The sky is the limit.

Not bad for a guy who used to enjoy lounging on his couch in the comfort of his lazy pants.

Adam Bledin modelling some of Lazypants apparel.

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
President

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Biography of Forward *editor does great service*

The Rise of Abraham Cahan
Seth Lipsky
(Nextbook/Schocken)

Reviewed by Bill Gladstone

Ninety years ago, New York newspaper editor Abraham Cahan was at the epicentre of international Jewish affairs – not a newsmaker himself – but an opinion-maker, someone who had an extraordinary and powerful influence on the Jewish masses in New York, around the Diaspora and in pre-state Israel.

As editor of the *The Daily Yiddish Forwerts (Forward)* from 1902 to the postwar era, Cahan saw *The Forwerts'* circulation rise from a measly 6,000 to an astonishing 250,000 by about 1924. In the teens and '20s he traveled to Europe and Jewish Palestine and met with Jewish and world leaders, most of whom appreciated the awesome power he wielded with his Yiddish typewriter.

Born in Lithuania in 1860, Cahan did not learn English until after he arrived in America in his early 20s, yet he also managed to distinguish himself in the sphere of Jewish literature. Embracing the modern trend of realism, he crafted numerous stories about Jewish life in America for major magazines and attracted the attention of leading critics such as William Dean Howells, who became his champion. Cahan's masterpiece, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, was published in 1917 and remains an outstanding example of American Jewish immigrant fiction.

Seth Lipsky, a knowledgeable insider who founded the modern-day English-language version of *The Forward*, has written a well-researched and nicely balanced biography of his illustrious predecessor.

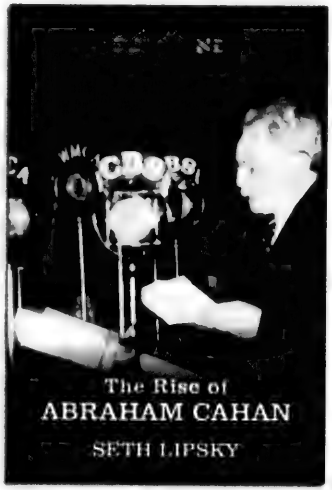
Since I am intrigued by the Jewish immigrant experience in America and by Cahan in particular, I was delighted to discover this book and especially that Lipsky was its author. My high expectations were not disappointed. Seemingly effortlessly, Lipsky recreates the world of our immigrant ancestors of a century ago and brings to life their cares, concerns and political issues as Cahan himself would have perceived them.

Lipsky's preface opens with this sentence: "A portrait of Abraham Cahan is the first thing that greets a visitor to *The Forward* in New York City."

Full disclosure: I have written many pieces for *The Forward* and once met Lipsky in the *Forward's* office, under that very portrait if memory serves.

Cahan served an early stint at *The Forwerts* in the 1890s but left because, although a socialist and strongly pro-union, he wasn't willing to toe the paper's dry, ideological socialist line. He spent five years at a thriving New York paper, *The Commercial Advertiser*, serving under the famed muck-raking journalist-editor Lincoln Steffens. When Cahan requested assignments that would bring him in close contact with life, Steffens assigned him to the police headquarters on Mulberry Street, which immersed him in the street life of the Lower East Side.

Cahan was told to call in large breaking news stories from a pay phone. The first time he did so, he found a public telephone in a drugstore but needed help because he had never used a phone before. Cahan wrote many stories about Jewish life on the Lower East Side for *The*



Commercial Advertiser, all necessary fodder for his fiction.

In 1902 *The Forwerts* lured him back as editor, granting him a free hand without interference because the paper was in danger of folding. Cahan's first decree was that writers drop their pretentious high-falutin' Yiddish for a more popular, street-level variety. He also broadened the paper's scope beyond its narrow socialist worldview. "I have been in the outside world, I have discovered that we, the socialists, have no patent on honesty and knowledge," he said. "The outside world is more tolerant of us than we are of it."

Socialists, he added, needed to know something about the world beyond the Lower East Side. "It's as important to teach people to carry a handkerchief in their pockets as it is to carry a union card. And it's as important to respect the opinions of others as it is to have opinions of one's own."

His populist reforms were an instant hit and the paper's circulation tripled to about 19,000 within four months. Shortly after the Kishinev pogrom of 1905, New York's Jewish community reached one million, so there was still plenty of room for growth. Cahan's objective was to help the masses of newly-arrived Jewish immigrants better acclimatize themselves to life in America.

When readers sent him letters detailing their personal problems, Cahan realized the letters were a "Godsend." He established *The Bintel Brief*, a daily advice column that became immensely popular. The circulation continued to skyrocket.

In 1921 Cahan hired the great Yiddish writer Israel Joshua Singer as his Warsaw correspondent and later serialized his wildly popular novel *The Brothers Ashkenazi*. I. J. Singer joined *The Forwert's* staff upon reaching America in 1934. A year later his lesser-known brother Isaac Bashevis Singer came to New York and also began working for the paper. Forty-three years later, in 1978, Isaac Bashevis won the Nobel Prize in literature for stories that first appeared in *The Forwerts*.

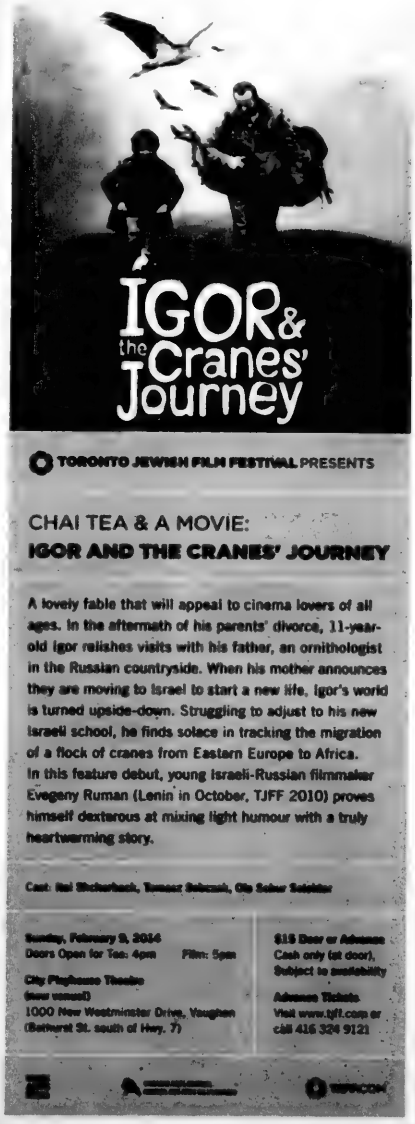
Lipsky details Cahan's bitter battles with the playwright Jacob Gordin and the novelist Sholem Asch, also his meetings with Chaim Weizmann, David Ben-Gurion, Alfred Dreyfus, Vladimir Lenin, the Belzer Rebbe and other important figures. He also recounts Cahan's politics: he was pro-German regarding World War I until America entered the conflict. Not until the 1917 Russian Revolution did Cahan (and the Jewish world in general) throw its support overwhelmingly towards the Allies, Lipsky writes, mainly because a German victory would have threatened the socialist gains of the Russian Revolution as well as democracy in Europe.

Like many Jews, Cahan was initially lukewarm towards the Balfour Declaration of 1917, and only belatedly aligned himself more fully with the Zionists, apologizing for his earlier harsh criti-cisms. In the late '30s, however, he was unflinchingly anti-Fascist and anti-Nazi, calling the Munich Agreement of 1938 a "shameful document" and describing Hitler as the "fascist devil" who "made a fool of his terrified opponents, of the democratic countries, and of the whole civilized world." His oft-stated wish late in life was to outlive Hitler and see his downfall– "I don't care what happens to me after that," he reportedly said.

When he died in August 1951, his funeral attracted some 10,000 people to the streets around the newspaper's building on East Broadway; the service was broadcast on loudspeakers.

Lipsky has done a great service in re-kindling the memory of this American Jewish colossus with such intelligence, discernment – and the sort of direct, inviting prose of which Cahan himself would have heartily approved.

Bill Gladstone is a Toronto writer, publisher and genealogist. His website is www.billgladstone.ca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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS ABOUT FILM NOIR CLASSIC

Film buffs, and especially fans of American film noir, will certainly have heard of director **Jules Dassin's** remarkable 1948 film *The Naked City*, in which actor **Barry Fitzgerald** plays a veteran Irish police detective in New York. The film is best-known for its line, "There are eight million stories in the naked city. This has been one of them," (later used in a popular TV show).

Less known, perhaps, is the fact that several important Jewish actors appear in uncredited small roles in the film. Yiddish stage and screen actors **Celia Adler** and **Molly Picon** are the manager of a dress shop and operator of a beverage stall respectively. **David Opatoshu** and **Nehemiah Persoff** also appear briefly in the film – it was Persoff's first screen appearance.

Additionally, the film was said to have been inspired by a 1945 book of photographs titled *Naked City* by famed New York crime photographer **Weegee (Arthur Fellig)** and was based on a story by **Marvin Wald**. Producer **Mark Hellinger**, who narrated, was a high-powered journalist and screenwriter who died before the film was released. The film won Academy Awards for cinematography and editing.

• • •

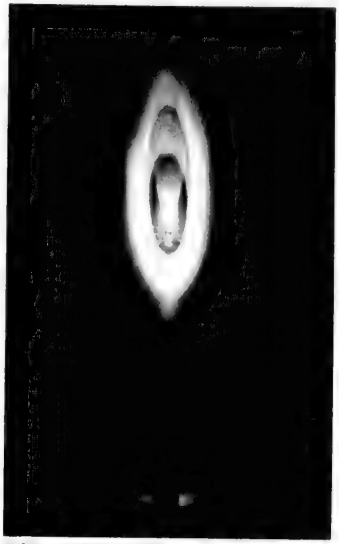
Austrian Composers: Violinist **Zachary Ebin** and pianist **Maria Dolnycky** perform *From Vienna to Hollywood: Music of Austrian Composers*, featuring the music of **Mozart**, **Schubert**, **Pleyel**, **Korngold** and **Kreisler**. Sponsored by the Austrian Cultural Forum. $20, $15. KUMF Art Gallery, 2118-A Bloor St. W., Suite 204 (east of Runnymede). Sunday, Feb. 9, 3 p.m. 416-621-9287, www.zacharyebin.com

• • •

Friends of Yiddish: Violinist **Michael Ziskind** and singer **Arkadi Tulchinski** perform "*hartsike lider*" (heartfelt songs) at FOY's A Zemerl in Vinter concert. $5; FOY members free. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave., between Finch and Sheppard. Sunday, Feb. 9, 2 p.m. Please RSVP by Feb. 6. 416-736-8073 or yiddish18@yahoo.ca

• • •

Children & Jewish Lit: *Kidlit!*, a Jewish literary festival for children, offers children a "day of fun to celebrate the rich universe of children's Jewish literature." Activities include a make-your-own-book station, writing workshops, authors' readings, storytelling and more. Presented by the Koffler Centre of the Arts and Prosserman JCC. 4588 Bathurst St., Family Day, Monday, Feb. 17, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Registration and tickets, kofflerarts.org or prossermanjcc.com, 416-638-1881.



Sylvia Safdie's *The Absent Present* is an exhibiton of video and sculpture.

• • •

Theatre Events

• Civic Light-Opera Company presents *Some Enchanted Evening*, featuring the Broadway and Hollywood work of **Rodgers & Hammerstein** – *Oklahoma!, Carousel, State Fair, South Pacific, The King and I, Flower Drum Song, The Sound of Music* and others. Tickets $28. Fairview Library Theatre, Feb. 12 to 23. www.musictheatretoronto.com, 416-755-1717

• Encore Entertainment's production of **Lillian Hellman's** *The Children's Hour* continues at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St., to Feb. 9. 1-855-985-2787, www.encoreshows.com

• Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre presents *Handle With Care*, a romantic comedy by **Jason Odell Williams**. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, Feb. 20 to March 2. $48 to $19. www.teatrontheatre.com

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Host **Gloria Valentine** interviews **Lily Poritz Miller**, author of the novels *In A Pale Blue Light* and *The Newcomers*. Rogers TV (Cable 10), Thursday, Feb. 6, 6:30 p.m

• Jazz pianist **Mark Eisenman** and trio are at the Jazz Bistro, Feb. 6, 7 and 8, and pianist-vocalist **Fern Lindzon** and jazz trio perform there Feb. 11. 251 Victoria St. Reservations, 416-363-5299.

• **Shlomo Schwartzberg** continues his series on film director **Steven Spielberg** with a look at the films *Hook, Jurassic Park, Schindler's List* and *Amistad*. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Feb. 10, 7 to 9 p.m. $11.25 drop-in, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Max Minsky and Me*, "one of the few recent movies depicting the travails of Germany's reborn Jewish community." In German with English subtitles. $15, $10. In honour of Family Day, young people 10 to 18 are admitted free with accompanying adults. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday, Feb. 16, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Box office opens one hour before screening times. 416-924-6211, ext. 606

• • •

At the Galleries

• The Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art presents *The Absent Present*, an exhibit of three video works and a sculpture by **Sylvia Safdie**. Shot during the artist's first visit to Auschwitz, the videos focus on natural phenomena: the uncharacteristically heavy rainfalls at the time of her visit. Opens Thursday, Feb. 6, 401 Richmond St. W., Suite 124. www.prefix.ca, 416-591-0357

• *Harrisa, Honey & Hyssop*, a photography exhibit by **Nelli Sheffer**, examines the origins of North African foods that tantalize the Israeli palate. Miles Nadal JCC Gallery to Feb. 24.

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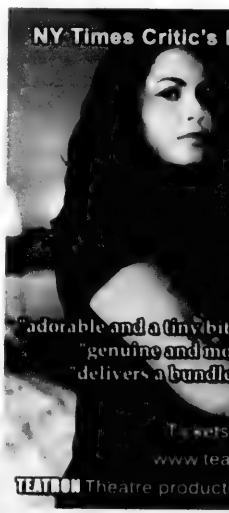

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"adorable and a tiny bit magical... delivers big laughs" - Naples News
"genuine and moving... brings tears to the eyes" - Pioneer Press
"delivers a bundle of laughs... what a treat" - Syracuse Post-Journal

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www.teatrontheatre.com Groups 416-781-5527
TEATRON Theatre production Toronto Centre for the Arts 5040 Yonge St. Toronto

Montreal singer picks up Grammy Award

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Montreal singer/songwriter Jennifer Gasoi won a Grammy for best children's album at the annual awards ceremony Jan.26

Her achievement is especially remarkable because she is an independent artist and her winning album *Throw a Penny in the Wishing Well* is self-produced.

Gasoi is the first Canadian to bag the best children's album prize.

"It came out of left field," said Gasoi of the news in December of her nomination. "Children's album is one of the most competitive fields, and some of the best music is coming out of that genre."

Gasoi performs an average of only about five concerts a year, but she expects that to change dramatically as invitations pour in from all over the world.

Throw a Penny in the Wishing Well is her second album. She wrote all of its 18 songs and arranged it, secured the funding and hired the best musicians she could afford.

"I really did it all on my own," said Gasoi after returning home from Los Angeles still a little breathless from keeping up with the sudden flood of interest from the media, industry and public. "It hasn't stopped... It's pretty overwhelming."

Throw a Penny was nominated for a Juno Award in Canada, as was her debut album, 2004's *Songs for You*, which also garnered the Parents' Choice gold award. Last year, she was shortlisted for Sirius XM's Indie Children's Artist of the Year.

Gasoi employs a wide variety of music from swing to bluegrass to calypso and, always, a little klezmer as a nod to her heritage – and it's all eminently danceable. Her work is distinctive for its intelligent lyrics performed in a voice that would be at home in a jazz club, which is why the songs appeal to adults, too.

Gasoi had a promising career as an adult jazz singer before she made the switch to younger audiences – and from her native Vancouver to Montreal.

Musical since she was a toddler, she studied classical piano for 12 years and later jazz piano, voice and composition. In Montreal, she continues to do some adult cabaret, notably at the Upstairs Jazz Bar on Mackay Street.

Gasoi studied at McGill University from 1992 to 1996, and her father, dentist Ivan Gasoi, was from Montreal, so she felt drawn to the city when she wanted to get out of her "comfort zone" on the West Coast.

She hadn't really thought about children's music – she has no kids of her own – but a young cousin and some other kids liked what she tried out on them.

"I don't talk down to children. I speak to them as equals. That's why adults also respond. There are layers of meaning in the lyrics about living the best life you can," Gasoi said.

"The littlest ones just love the music – they feel the heart and love in it."

Montreal's vibrant music scene, with its strong indie spirit and diversity also attracted her. "Montreal is a really creative city that values the arts so much... I live in the Plateau and am exposed to all kinds of musical styles and cultures here. I think by osmosis, I've incorporated a lot of that into my music."

How did she get where she is today? Gasoi unabashedly cites "hard work, perseverance and vision," and above all a belief in herself, as the attributes that have seen her through the struggling years.

Ecstatic as she was in December when nominated, Gasoi worried about what to wear to the Grammys.

Jennifer Gasoi

"It was just before Christmas and nothing was open. I really only had about three weeks," she said. She chose Westmount designer Astri Prugger, who with Gasoi's input, created a strapless, red below-the-knee-length gown, with corsage appliqués across its flouncy skirt.

"It has a vintage feel," said the brunette Gasoi. "It evokes my jazz background."

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Stripped-down video performance at the Koffler

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

A woman stands naked on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, spinning a hula hoop. The hoop, however, is made of barbed wire that bruises her chest. As the woman rotates her body to keep the hoop up, we grimace at how painful it must be for her to avoid the hoop's jagged edges.

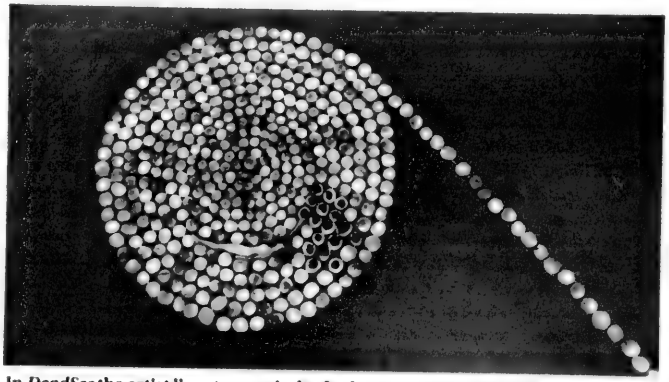
To visual artist Sigalit Landau, who stripped down to record herself for this video performance called *Barbed Hula*, the space within the hoop is one of freedom as well as restriction. Landau says her performance is symbolic of learning to live within the borders of a country like Israel.

"My videos are very much mirroring things in me," Landau said in an email from her home in Tel Aviv. "I only [perform] if there is suffering involved... no one should suffer for my art but me."

Landau is one of Israel's most internationally renowned artists. Her video works are the focus of her first solo exhibition in Canada, *Moving to Stand Still*, which runs at the Koffler Gallery in Toronto from Feb. 6 to April 6.

Moving to Stand Still will feature six of Landau's most essential video artworks. The exhibit's title speaks to the constant movement of both the Jewish People throughout history and the artist at its centre. Landau was born in Jerusalem in 1969, but also spent her childhood in Philadelphia, London and parts of Quebec.

Landau began making short films to educate soldiers, when she served in the Israeli army. Although she said she prefers making installations and sculptures, film creates a whole new space of possibilities, especially when it focuses on water and the body.



In *DeadSee* the artist lies atop a spiral raft of 500 watermelons on the Dead Sea.

Sigalit Landau

"Video... is contemporary but has its roots in storytelling, painting, dreams," she said. "Some materials are not possible to inhabit the gallery space."

Her videos look at many current topics in Israel, such as war, agricultural exploitation and Jewish-Arab relations. One focus of her work is the history of the Jewish People in Israel and their shifting identity.

"As a people that have a history of being in exile, being thrown out and displaced... [Israeli Jews] haven't really learned to live with borders or with this very defined idea of a homeland," says Mona Filip, curator of the Koffler Gallery.

One of the videos from the exhibit that looks at borders is titled *Azkelon*. The name is a combination of Gaza and Ashkelon, a coastal city just north of the Gaza Strip.

In the video, three teens are on a beach, playing a game where they throw a knife into the ground and create a literal line in the sand, dividing their space from the other players' territory. It is a clear metaphor for Israel's continually shifting borders.

In another of her videos, *DeadSee*, Landau appears nude again, lying atop a spiral raft of 500 watermelons floating on the Dead Sea. *DeadSee* is one of Landau's many videos full of contrasts, Filip says.

"The [Dead Sea] is the heart of the desert," she says. "At the same time, it's the site of all this agricultural exploitation that is further endangering that place."

The irony that a sweet fruit like a watermelon can still thrive in such a salty environment is an apt metaphor for life persevering in the harshest of circumstances – a reality clear to many Israelis.

"[Israeli] society, creative as it is, diverse as it may seem, is living from one catastrophe to the next, despite the fact that for 65 years, the state exists," Landau said. "My works show in a normal way how abnormal things are getting."

Another of Landau's striking works, *Salted Lake*, is a tribute to her parents, who survived the Holocaust. The video focuses on boots encased in Dead Sea salt crystals, sitting on top of a frozen lake in Gdansk, Poland. Slowly, the shoes melt through the ice, a symbol for the disappearance of Jewish life in Europe.

Moving to Stand Still is the Koffler Gallery's second exhibition at Artscape Youngplace, their new home in downtown Toronto that's quickly becoming a part of the local arts circuit.

Toronto marks Landau's only North American stop on a worldwide tour that includes openings in Rome, Moscow and Johannesburg.

Music superstars set to perform in Israel

CJN Staff

A number of international music superstars have recently announced one-off performances in Israel this spring and summer.

International pop superstar Justin Timberlake will present his first-ever performance in Israel as part of his "20/20 Experience World Tour" at Tel Aviv's Hayarkon Park on May 28.

Legendary singer/songwriter and rock icon Neil Young, along with his band Crazy Horse, will perform at Hayarkon Park on July 17. This will be his first show in Israel since 1993.

Seminal rock band The Pixies will headline a two-day music festival at Tel Aviv-Jaffa's Bloomfield Stadium on June 17, followed by a performance by Soundgarden on June 18.

"We are thrilled to host a selection of concerts by some of the world's top musical artists in Tel Aviv this year, which attests to the city's growing reputation as a hotspot for international performers," said Ami Allon, consul for tourism at the Canadian Israel Government Tourist Office.

The concerts follow performances by Rihanna and the Red Hot Chili Peppers in Israel last year.

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Correction

In the article "Spotlight to shine on Israeli culture" (Jan. 23), the Toronto Jewish Film Society was incorrectly identified as a presenter of a film screening of *Igor and The Cranes' Journey*. We apologize for the error.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

BULLIED STUDENTS NOT ALONE

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Joshua Miller has a message for the bullies who teased and taunted him in the schoolyard. That message is, "Thank you."

Without them, the University of Toronto student says he would not have pushed himself to start Louder Than Noise, a youth-run non-profit organization that brings together marginalized and bullied students from across Ontario.

By the time Miller was in Grade 10, he had already transferred between multiple schools due to incessant bullying. As he went through some dark days, he began writing poems and short stories, and kept a journal. The creative release energized him.

He says his thoughts then went to kids across the country struggling with the same anxiety and pain. Miller created a "poetry wall" on Facebook for student writers and musicians to post and share their art.

"This was something that I wanted to share with other youth… so they could do something that they love while helping themselves out in a supportive community," Miller told *The CJN*.

"I figured I would turn something that could be bad, like the Internet, especially with cyberbullying, into a positive thing."

As Miller, now 19, describes, Louder Than Noise's role is to "be a peer supportive community for bullied youth and youth who deal with mental health problems like social anxiety and depression." The youths congregate online and at a few events every year to share their passions, while defying the stigmas and labels they have been associated with.

The name comes from Miller's vision of a sound that a generation of youth makes that can rise above a singular voice, making a difference in the world.

The Thornhill, Ont. native says he continues to write poetry and short stories – that is, when there is a lag in his schedule. Beyond his work in the honours arts management program at the University of Toronto, where he is learning more about running a non-profit arts-based group like Louder Than Noise, he aspires to go into politics and journalism.

"The idea of politics and getting involved, being at the helm of making change happen… that would be a tremendous achievement and honour to be able to have," he says. Miller credits a year he spent as a City Youth Councillor, representing young people from Scarborough East, as a big learning experience.

Even though he has a learning disability, Miller finished high school as an Ontario Scholar. In 2013, Youth in Motion selected him as one of Canada's Top 20 Under 20 for his work with Louder Than Noise and more than 500 hours of community service.

Miller says that the organization's goals were also the result of his parents, who instilled Jewish values of tzedakah and tikkun olam within him.

"I want to do as much good for the Jewish community as I possibly can," he says. "I was raised to have those values in my life, to use them whenever I can and to always be kind… to always help out."

Miller says that Louder Than Noise has become a second family to him. Still serving as the group's executive director, he is now establishing a chapter at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus, for next year.

In March, he will host the next Louder Than Noise event. Then, Miller hopes to begin a speaker series in which an inspiring community figure, like a head of a non-profit organization, can engage and motivate youths to be leaders. He says he imagines that these talks could be like *Inside the Actors Studio* interviews, except with community leaders instead of movie stars.

So, now that Miller has stood up for himself, defying the bullies, what advice does he have for students going through a similar struggle or strain?

"Just know that there are people out there going through the exact same thing as you," he says. "Although I do not know you, I love you very much and I don't like to see you struggle in this hard place that you're in. I know that you can push on and you have the power to do so.

"There's always someone out there who wants to listen. Never think that you're alone in this."

The volume of a statement like that just cannot go quietly.

To find out more, visit louderthannoise.com.

Joshua Miller (*Jordan Adler photos*)

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of Feb. 20 is Feb. 10. The deadline for the issue of Feb. 27 is Feb. 17. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Feb. 6

ANCIENT ISRAELITE WORSHIP

Rabbi Eva Goldfinger, of Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, discusses "Evolving Polytheistic Worship Among Ancient Israelites," 7 p.m. $20. Address when you RSVP. Call **Roby,** 416-385-3910.

YIDDISH VINKL

Ester Reiter discusses "The Jewish Women's Labour Leagues and Women Activists in the 1920s and 1930s in Canada," noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 includes lunch buffet. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

Friday, Jan. 7

OPEN DOORS, OPEN MINDS

Dr. Bahram Jam, a member of the Zoroastrian religious community, speaks at Temple Kol Ami's Shabbat services, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 8

RON DAVIS

Ron Davis performs a fusion of jazz piano and symphony music, 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. Tickets $20/$25. Proceeds go to a summer camp for children of fallen IDF soldiers. For tickets, go to www.shomayim.org/rondavis.

COMEDY NIGHT

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation holds a comedy night with comedian **Marc Weiner** and jazz guitarist **Stan Samole,** 8 p.m. Tickets $18/$20. Call 905-886-3810.

Sunday, Feb. 9

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Friends of Yiddish hosts a winter concert with violinist **Michael Ziskind** and singer **Arkadi Tulchinski,** 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. Free for Friends of Yiddish members, $5 for guests. RSVP **Sandy** at 416-736-8073, or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

POKER TOURNAMENT

Temple Kol Ami holds a charity poker tournament, 2 p.m. Tickets $40. Call 905-709-2620.

ISRAEL, IRAN AND THE US

Canadian Institute for Jewish Research holds a conference on "The Approaching Nuclear Showdown: Israel, Iran and the U.S. Post-Geneva Accords," 12:30 p.m. Lodzer Centre Congregation, 12 Heaton St. Speakers include **Jonathan Halevi, Sayeh Hassan, David Bensoussan** and **Lawrence Solomon.** Tickets $10/$18. RSVP 855-303-5544 or email cijr@israpet.org.

HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation is going to see the Harlem Globetrotters at Copps Coliseum. For tickets, call **Rich Winkler** at 905-886-3810, ext. 135, or email rich@bayt.ca.

Monday, Feb. 10

ORGAN DONATION

An evening on organ donation from a Jewish viewpoint, will be held 7:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. **Rabbi Reuven Bulka,** organ donors, recipients and doctors will speak.

Tuesday, Feb. 11

THE KLEZMATICS

The movie *Klezmatics: On Holy Ground* will be shown at 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $5.

JEWISH SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Rabbi Miriam Margles discusses "Jewish Spiritual Practice for the Roller Coaster of Life," 7 p.m., Temple Sinai, tonight and Feb. 25. RSVP 416-487-3281.

Wednesday, Feb. 12

MORASHA CLASSES

Shayna Kravetz teaches "Ten Tough Torah Questions – Part II," **Feb. 12-March 12**, 9:45 a.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum teaches "When the Bible is Confusing: A Dynamic Solution," **Feb. 12-March 12,** 11:15 a.m. To register, call **Loretta,** 416-789-7400.

RESILIENCY IN CHILDREN

Stan Davis discusses "Building Resiliency in Children," 7 p.m., Leo Baeck Day School, 36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill. RSVP ncrsvp@leobaeck.ca.

RABBIS IN CONVERSATION

Rabbis Aaron Flanzraich and **John Moscowitz** discuss "Beyond the Pew Study: What is the Future of our Jewish Communities?" 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue.

Continued on page 41

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Continued from page 40

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Why Jesus didn't have to die for our sins," fifth in a six-part counter-missionary series, 8 p.m., Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. Free. To register, call 416-789-0020, or email toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Feb. 13

BULGARIA DURING THE WAR

Bulgarian Consul General **Ivo Mouskourov** discusses "Bulgarians Hiding Jews during the War," 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion. $3/$6.

Upcoming Events

MAZON SKATING PARTY

Mazon Canada holds a skating party, **Feb. 17,** 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Upper Canada College.

FIDDLER SING-A-LONG

Makom holds a Sing Along *Fiddler on the Roof* fundraiser. Prizes for the best costumes. 8 p.m. **Feb. 22**, Al Green Theatre. Tickets $36/$45. For tickets, www.makomto.org/fiddler.

ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

An open house about summer programs for adults with special needs will be held at at 7:30 p.m., DANI Centre, 501 Clarke Ave. W., Thornhill. Co-sponsored by Camp Moshava and Moshava Ba'ir. For more information, email ssokol@dani-toronto.com.

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Women Fully Clothed, four female comedians, will perform at Hadassah's Tamid Chapter's Girls Night Out, 7 p.m., **Feb. 27**, St. Michael's College School, 1515 Bathurst St. $40. For tickets, call 416-630-8373, or email info@toronto.chw.ca.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Russian-, Hebrew- and English-speaking volunteers are needed to support clients or family members with life-threatening conditions. Next training session in February-March.

Volunteers are also needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

FAMILY & IMMIGRATION LAW

Lawyer **Adela Crossley** will discuss immigration and family law, **Feb. 19.** Free. For location, call Act to End Violence Against Women, 905-695-5374, or email acttoendvaw.org.

YOUNG JUDAEA

Young Judaea holds its leadership convention Feb. 28-March 2. See www.youngjudaea.ca for details.

FAMILY CAREGIVERS

A support group for people caring for parents with cognitive or physical impairments will meet Thursdays, 7 p.m., starting **Feb. 20** at the Day Centre for Seniors, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Living with Teens: A 6-session group for parents of teens. Topics include: setting limits, letting go, drugs, alcohol and sexuality. Starts Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn how to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly divorced or separated individuals. Starts Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at the Lebovic Community Centre, 9600 Bathurst St.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women under 50 who have lost a spouse in the last few years, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Association of Jewish Seniors presents **Suzanne Cohen Share** discussing "Accessibility: Know Your Rights" Feb. 20, Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. Breakfast at 9:30 a.m., presentation at 10 a.m. Free for members, $2 for guests.Call **Arnold Foss** 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+ Culture, Education, Community, Miles Nadal JCC. Faye Kellerstein and **Jordan Klapman** perform "The Most Beautiful Yiddish Love Songs Ever Written," Feb. 13, 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.). $4. **The Yiddish Swingtet** perform Klezmer music for Purim, March 6. RSVP by Feb. 28. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. Feb. 11, **Amanda Shubert** discusses "Undressing Shakespeare and Romantic Comedy," 10 a.m.; Feb. 12, "Love is in the Air," lunch and concert at noon.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Feb. 13, barber/hairdresser 10 a.m. Casino Woodbine, March 26 (register in advance). Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the 2014/2015 school year for the daycare and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

PJ Library gives kids a taste of summer camp, Feb. 16, 3-5 p.m. with representatives from 10 summer camps. Register at http://pjkidsgotocamp.eventbrite.ca.

A Jewish Literary Festival for Children will be held Feb. 17, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Featuring authors' readings, book sales, and a make-your-own-book station.

The book club discusses *The Invisible Bridge* by **Julie Orringer** Feb. 24, 1 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Harissa, Honey and Hyssop, photos by **Nelli Sheffer,** is on display in the gallery until Feb. 24.

Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses the work of **Steven Spielberg**, Mondays 7-9 p.m., until March 17. Feb. 10: *Alternate Tones.*

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Max Minsky and Me*, Feb. 16 at 4 and 7:30 p.m. with guest speaker **Mark Clamen.** Box office opens one hour before screening start time. Tickets $10/$15. Kids 10-18 are free.

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Mystical Meaning of the Hebrew Aleph-Bet," Feb. 23, 11 a.m.

A play reading of *Tough Jews* by **Michael Ross Albert,** will be held March 1, 7 p.m.

Purim Carnival, March 2, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register. The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Health and fitness: One-day MELT Method, neck and back workshop, Feb. 16, 11 a.m.; MELT Method-full body, Feb. 11-March 18, 7 p.m. or Feb. 19-March 26, 11 a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org or 416-898-1818, ext. 574

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

A healthy skin workshop will be offered Feb. 6, 11 a.m.

A workshop on dating in midlife, for men and women over 40, will be held Feb. 18 at 7 p.m.

An osteoarthritis workshop will be held Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

The movie *The Frisco Kid* will be shown Feb. 24, 1 p.m.,

Israeli cuisine with a twist of Iraqi and French cuisine will be discussed Feb. 26 at 7 p.m.

Book club with reviewer **Bruria Cooperman** meets Feb. 28, 10:30 a.m. To register for programs, call **Andrea,** ext. 3006, or email adaiam@srcentre.ca.

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Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Leonard & Shelley Stigler, Sharon & Jerry Filip, Susan & Barry Aisenthal proudly announce the engagement of Randi & Richard. Excited Bubbie Doris Kwasnik

Ian & Bettina Morris, Israel & Fatima Correa announce the engagement of their children Allen & Vanessa. Wedding will take place Rosh Chodesh, Adar II 5774

Daniel and Mitchell welcome their sister Isla Lindsay. Parents are Dr. David and Jessie Rauchwerger. Grandparents Estelle and Sheldon Wald, Dr. Martin and Lena Rauchwerger

Happy 75th birthday Gramma Manya Gilbert!

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on "**Family Moments**"

Mazel Tov Syd & Roz Ticker on your 65th anniversary Feb. 19! All our love, Chuck & Susan, Ghita & Wayne, Melanie, Joanna, Jennifer and Sari

Visiting the stone

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

In the beginning, we'd go often. On her birthday, on Mother's Day, before Yom Kippur and, sometimes, just because. We'd huddle around her tombstone, three figures in a vast, lonely cemetery, remembering, with sorrow, the emptiness left behind after my mother's passing.

But it wasn't long before I started coming up with excuses, reasons that I couldn't join the rest of the family graveside. The grave would bring me right back to her burial. And her burial, in turn, flooded my mind with horrible thoughts of what she'd endured in hospital in the three months before she took her final breath. The bustle of those sterile corridors, nurses bent over their paperwork. The sadness in my mother's eyes as she became increasingly aware that medicine had nothing more to offer her. The pain she went through as she withered from a strong, beautiful woman to a corpse in a shroud. As the months ticked past after her death, I had to banish those memories, lock them away in the name of self-preservation. If I hadn't, they'd haunt and torment me night after night.

It's not how she'd want to be remembered, that much I knew. So I focused on the good memories, the ones that brought a smile to my face. I'd feel her hovering presence when I lit the Shabbat candles each Friday, when I'd say a special prayer for her. And when I was asked to join the family at her grave, I'd politely decline. It was a place I just didn't want to go.

It's been years, now, since I was last there. I hope fervently that the dead have no cognizance of their graveside visitors, for if they do, there's likely a lot of underground disappointment in the cemetery. Guilt? I have plenty of it. Mine appears in the form of a recurring dream wherein my mother has been steadily declining in an institutional home for years, and I have completely forgotten to visit. When I finally remember that she's there, I find a shell of a woman, barely alive. I sit at her bedside, wracked with sorrow at my lack of caring and concern for this woman at the centre of my life, and at all the years I have wasted by not visiting. My fear, in this dream, is that she will never know how deeply and fully I loved her. I wake up feeling awful, with a morning after chased by a black cloud of guilt and shame.

Yet at the very idea of standing by her tombstone, my mind reaches for excuses. Which part of her is really down there, I wonder. I don't feel her spirit as I stand beside that flat stone, placing a pebble or a small bouquet from my garden at the inscription of her name. I've performed these actions and found they don't help me feel close to her. If there's no connection there, is there any point in going?

I'm not alone in feeling this way. I know this because the cemetery is almost always deserted, but for the maintenance staff, cutting the grass, clearing away the residues of pebbles and withered bouquets and preparing sites for the newly deceased. The cemetery is a place of tears and sorrow, not one where lives are celebrated. When I want to feel close to my mother, I hear her laughter in my head and remember the wonderful warmth of her frequent embraces. This brings her into my soul in a way that no forlorn moments in the cold, whistling wind of the cemetery can ever do.

PLAY PEOPLE: As part of an awareness initiative, the student-led tikkun olam committee at Leo Baeck Day School's south campus recently held a "Right to Play Day" to teach students about the work the Right to Play organization does worldwide in encouraging children's participation in play and sports. The committee also organized a sports equipment drive, which donated items to Jewish Family & Child's Jerome D. Diamond Adolescent Centre. Pictured are committee members Tevy Weinstein and Ethan Milavsky. *[Seth Goldsweig photo]*

The Monday morning cooking club

Carolyn Blackman
Special to The CJN

On a Monday morning about eight years ago, a group of Jewish women from Sydney, Australia, got together to talk about food and share recipes.

The meeting, with debates and discussions about various recipes, was such a success, it grew into the weekly Monday Morning Cooking Club.

Six women, Merelyn Frank Chalmers, Natanya Eskin, Lauren Fink, Lisa Goldberg, Paula Horwitz and Jacqui Israel, eventually compiled their favourite recipes, and turned them into a book called none other than the *Monday Morning Cooking Club*.

In putting together the book, the women "emailed everyone they knew, and then everyone *they* knew, and asked them, 'Who is the best cook you know?' We asked again and again, and slowly a list began to take shape. We wrote those cooks and asked for their best recipes. Eventually hundreds trickled in, and we chose the best. Each recipe needed a story or history, or else be unique."

The women met each week and prepared about four or five different recipes, until eventually a list of recipes to be included in the book took shape.

"We asked them for recipes they were known for, those with which they fed their families for years. We also wanted stories behind those recipes, which we could share with our readers," Goldberg said in an email interview from Sydney.

She said the recipes were "tested and retested and tested again until we felt they were failproof. Our families were very well fed, particularly on Mondays."

Their goal in writing the book, she said, was to raise money for charities, including WIZO and OzHarvest, an organization that donates excess food to charities.

The women also wanted to create a "first-class cookbook that could sit in any bookstore alongside cookbooks from the best chefs in the world."

Their work wasn't just for other people, though. "When we were standing around the kitchen island, rolling mamoul, a Middle Eastern pastry [like shortbread] stuffed with dates, pecans and pine nuts, it was a therapeutic experience shared by our sisterhood. And for us, after a stressful day, there is nothing better than baking our favourite cake or batch of biscuits and taking some time out from the world.

"The Jewish community is obsessed with food. Without wanting to detract from the religious significance of many Jewish holidays and important dates, the Jewish community thrives on preparing feasts and feeding people with their love."

In describing Australian Jewish food, Goldberg said the Australian Jewish community can best be seen as a melting pot. "We have a high proportion of postwar migration from Europe, Asia and the Middle East, comprising Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, as well as a substantial South African influx in more recent years.

"People arrive on our shores longing for the food they have left behind, and these memories and dishes have been incorporated throughout our community. As a result, Jewish food in Australia is diverse, avaried and delicious."

Merelyn Frank Chalmers, said that Hungarian paprikash was included in the book to honour her Hungarian mother, Yolanda, who survived the Holocaust. "We ate paprikash probably five nights a week. This was something that she just threw together when I wasn't feeling well."

They considered it nothing special, she said, but when Chalmers moved to Sydney and met other children of Hungarian parents, she learned that they all grew up on the same dish. "This dish really reminds me of my mum."

MUM'S RICE PAPRIKASH

1/3 cup olive oil
2 lb. veal stew
3 large onions, chopped finely
1/4 cup white wine
2 cups boiling water
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 red pepper, sliced
1 heaping tbsp. mild paprika
1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper, or to taste
1 cup long-grain rice
2 carrots, peeled and cut into chunks
1 small tomato, chopped

Heat the olive oil in a frying pan on a medium-high heat and fry the veal until very brown. Remove from the pan and set aside. Add the onions to the pan and fry until very brown, adding more oil if necessary.

Return the veal to the pan and add the wine and boiling water. Add the garlic, red pepper, paprika and cayenne pepper.

Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.

Add the rice, carrots and tomato, stir to combine, then continue to simmer for a further 30 minutes, or until the veal is tender and the rice is cooked. Stir regularly and add more boiling water as required. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

SARA'S PICKLED BRISKET

Sara first made this for her husband's 50th birthday. She had wanted to make American pastrami and was not able to find a recipe. She experimented, and has been using this version for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur for 30 years.

1 pickled beef brisket
1 cup white vinegar
1 cup sugar
9 bay leaves
1 small handful black peppercorns
4 cloves garlic crushed
4 large onions, sliced
1 cup honey
1 tbsp. vegetable oil

If possible, start this recipe the day before. Put the brisket in a large saucepan and cover with water. Add the vinegar and sugar, then bring to the boil, skimming any scum off the surface. Taste to check you have an equal and strong flavour of both vinegar and sugar, and adjust if necessary. Add the bay leaves and peppercorns. Cover the pan with a lid, and simmer rapidly for about two hours until fork tender.

Drain, and place the brisket in a non-stick roasting pan. Rub the garlic over the meat while it is still warm, and allow to cool a little before refrigerating overnight, if possible.

When ready to cook, preheat the oven to 375. Cover the meat with sliced onion and pour over the honey. Drizzle with the oil. Roast, uncovered, for about 45 minutes, basting frequently until the meat is tender and the onions are golden.

Slice thickly across the grain and serve warm with mashed potatoes and cabbage, or in a sandwich on fresh rye bread with mustard, pickled cucumber and coleslaw.

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People walk past a panhandler on Bloor Street. Veteran social worker Simon Kalkstein of Jewish Family & Child helps Jewish clients from his nearby office in the Annex. *(Cara Stern photo)*

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We need more SodaStreams

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Down and out in downtown Toronto

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Simon Kalkstein, supervisor of the Gordon S. Wolfe branch of Jewish Family & Child, laughed when asked if his job is 9 to 5.

On the day of his interview with *The CJN* at the downtown branch, located on Madison Avenue in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood, he was scheduled to help a client with a hoarding problem hire a cleaner for his apartment before an inspection by community housing.

"He's a bright guy who doesn't take care of himself," Kalkstein said.

He also had a visit planned with a woman who is bipolar and likes to come in and talk, as well as a consultation with a family whose disabled son is looking for a job. "I hope to get him into a sheltered workshop.

"That's what I know about so far. I never know what will come up," said Kalkstein, 65, a social worker who has been with the agency for almost 38 years.

He started with JF&CS on Beverley Street downtown, moved to the Lipa Green Building on Bathurst Street north of Sheppard Avenue, and in 1988 became supervisor at the downtown branch, then located at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

Continued on page 19

Opinion

Looking back, looking ahead

Irwin Cotler

I recall fondly my first visit to Parliament. The year was 1951, and my father took me, an 11-year-old, to the House of Commons and spoke words that still resonate to this day: "Son, this is the Parliament of Canada. This is *vox populi* – 'the voice of the people'."

Today, such sentiments might be greeted with a certain degree of cynicism – particularly as one observes the cacophony of question period or the toxicity in the political arena. Fortunately, I retain both great respect and reverence for this institution, which I have come to view as the centrepiece of our democracy and the cradle for the pursuit of justice.

When I announced that I would not seek re-election – having served some 15 years – I had the opportunity to reflect on my time here. When I was elected, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, my predecessor in Mount Royal, imparted important words of wisdom: "You can compromise on matters of policy, but never compromise on matters of principle." I have sought to pursue that course, and to act on matters of principle as they underpin issues of policy.

Though it is perhaps not well known, I never intended to run for Parliament, as I was perfectly happy as a McGill University law professor and human rights lawyer. When the vacancy arose in the riding as a result of MP Sheila Finestone's appointment to the Senate, there was a field of candidates already vying for the seat. I had no interest in running and turned away any request to do so. Nonetheless, a draft movement developed, the other candidates dropped out, the nomination deadline was imminent, and, as Finestone had one year left in her mandate, I looked upon going to Ottawa as a sabbatical. I can acknowledge that I had no intention of serving five years, let alone the 15 I will have served by the end of this year.

As I continued to serve in Parliament, which I consider to be one of the highest forms of public service, I was invited by prime minister Paul Martin to join his cabinet as minister of justice and attorney general of Canada.

Continued on page 19

Ki Tisa
Candlelighting: 5:29
Havdalah: 6:33
Greater Toronto Area

Montreal agencies ready to take in Lev Tahor kids

Please see page 16

Iranian TV shows simulated bombing of Tel Aviv — see page 27

CANADA

Water Bill Ruling

MONTREAL — The Boisbriand Jewish community must pay an accumulated $2.6 million in water taxes, the Quebec Court of Appeal has ruled after hearing the group's contestation of the overdue municipal bill. The community consists of 3,000 Tasher Chassidim, who haven't paid water taxes since 2005. The Jan. 31 decision by the province's highest court upholds a December 2012 Quebec Court judgment that the town has the right to collect the debt from the community, a ruling consistent with three lower court decisions in 2010 and 2011. The community was also ordered to pay the town's legal costs. The Tashers' lawyer said they may seek leave to appeal to the Supreme Court.

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WORLD

Hate Incidents Down

LONDON — Anti-Semitic incidents in Britain fell 18 per cent over the previous year, an annual survey says. The Community Security Trust (CST), which advises Britain's Jewish community on security, recorded 529 anti-Semitic incidents in 2013, compared to 649 incidents in 2012. Incidents included 69 violent assaults, the same number as 2012. Eighty-six incidents involved the use of social media for anti-Semitic threats or abuse, versus 81 such incidents the previous year. The most common in 2013 involved verbal abuse randomly directed at visibly Jewish people in public, with 185 incidents. The CST has recorded U.K. anti-Semitic incidents since 1984. The most was 931 in 2009.

Space Centre Planned

TEL AVIV — A new educational centre for space, technology and science named for the late Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon will be built in central Israel. The Ramon Campus is a joint project of the Ramon Foundation and Bar-Ilan University. A meeting to launch it was held Feb. 6 at the university. Ramon was a payload specialist aboard the U.S. Space Shuttle Columbia, which disintegrated as it re-entered earth's atmosphere in February 2003.

Hospital Gets Gift

TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani reportedly donated $400,000 to the Jewish hospital in Tehran. The *New York Times* bureau chief in Tehran, Thomas Erdbrink, tweeted the news Feb. 6, citing the semi-official *Mehr* news service. At the same time, the official *IRNA* news agency said Rouhani donated $170,000 to the hospital, reportedly part of an effort on his part to pay attention to Iran's minorities. The Dr. Sapir Hospital and Charity Center was founded in 1942 and is Iran's only Jewish hospital. Iran is home to some 25,000 Jews. Rouhani has seemingly been distancing himself from his predecessor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who regularly denied the Holocaust and threatened Israel.

Ex-Montrealer Arrested In Actor's Death

NEW YORK — Montreal-born Robert Vineberg, 57, a struggling jazz and pop saxophonist, was one of four people arrested in connection with the Feb. 2 heroin overdose death of Acadamy Award-winning actor Philip Seymour Hoffman.

Robert Vineberg

Police reportedly found 250 heroin bags in Vineberg's possession at his Greenwich Village home, the *New York Daily News* reported.

Vineberg, also known as Robert Aaron, has lived in New York since he was a teenager and is a former musician and record producer who has worked with such figures as David Bowie, Paul Simon, Wyclef Jean, Tom Jones and the late Amy Winehouse.

He was indicted Feb. 5 in a Manhattan court on charges of possessing heroin with intent to sell. His cellphone number was also reportedly found on Hoffman's phone.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Muslim condo project draws opposition

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Hundreds of people packed Vaughan's city council chambers – as well as two overflow rooms – Feb. 4 for a town hall meeting on plans to build a highrise condo complex catering to Muslims in the predominately Jewish suburb of Thornhill Woods.

The Islamic Shia Ithna Asheri Jamaat (ISIJ) wants to build subsidized housing in the form of two 17-storey towers, 61 townhouses as well as assisted living facilities for seniors on its 30-acre property adjacent to the Jaffari Centre mosque at 9000 Bathurst St., south of Rutherford Road. The Jaffari Centre is near the Ner Israel Yeshiva of Toronto, an Orthodox Jewish school for boys.

Rom Koubi, chair of the Association to Preserve Thornhill Woods, the organization behind a petition that has so far garnered more than 4,000 signatures from people who oppose the ISIJ's proposal to rezone the low-density suburb, was one of the many who spoke at the three-hour gathering.

He said the exceptions to zoning bylaws that the developers are seeking to accommodate the highrise buildings, "do not make sense for Thornhill Woods."

Those who opposed the plan were careful to focus their arguments around zoning bylaws and the impact that 500 new living units and more than 1,400 residents would have on the suburb's infrastructure, traffic and parking, as well as local schools that are already at capacity.

Many also voiced concerns about the ISIJ's initial plan to make the development open only to Muslims.

On Feb. 3, Shabbir Jeraj, president of the Jaffari Centre told *City News* that the condo development would only be open to Muslim families, "because we are building it, we are paying for it. How is that inconsistent with other communities that have come before us and established similar developments?"

Some of the hundreds of people who came out to a community meeting on a proposed high-rise condo complex catering to the Muslim community.
[Sheri Shefa photo]

Speaking to council, Koubi cited the ISIJ proposal's intention to keep the development Muslim only, and its claim that such the complex would be similar to other centres, such as the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan .

Continued on page 11

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Kerry bumbles into trouble with BDS remarks

Tempers flared last week between Israel and the United States over U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's warnings that, if the peace process failed, Israel would face growing boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigns. Tempers also flared within Israeli government circles over reactions to Kerry. Overall, it was not a pretty scene, and responses revealed reason for concern on several levels.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

On Feb. 1, at the Munich Security Conference, Kerry reflected on the state of the peace talks and what might happen if they failed: "Today's status quo absolutely, to a certainty, I promise you 100 per cent, cannot be maintained. It's not sustainable. It's illusionary." He then turned his attention specifically to Israel: "You see for Israel, there's an increasing delegitimization campaign that has been building up. People are very sensitive to it. There are talks of boycotts and other kinds of things."

Senior Israeli cabinet ministers charged that Kerry had threatened Israel and even endorsed BDS. Although this was not the first time Kerry had referred to the looming threats of BDS, even Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, at least initially, voiced his own criticism of Kerry's remarks. Israeli Strategic Affairs Minister Yuval Steinitz called his statements "offensive, unfair and intolerable."

The *New York Times*' Isabel Kershner wrote (Feb. 2) that the "the heated exchange comes as the Obama administration prepares to complete and present a 'framework' accord in the coming weeks, which would be a first step toward a comprehensive agreement and serve as a basis for a continuation of negotiations."

Kershner noted that the U.S. State Department immediately replied to the criticisms, saying that Kerry had always opposed calls for anti-Israel boycotts. It urged all parties "to accurately portray his record and statements."

Some Israeli cabinet ministers, such as Justice Minister Tzipi Livini (also Israel's chief negotiator with the Palestinians) and Finance Minister Yair Lapid, came to Kerry's defence, saying he was only warning against what might transpire, not that he was favouring anti-Israel measures. Lapid recently warned that Israel is indeed vulnerable to a boycott by its largest trading partner, the European Union, and that even a partial boycott could cost Israel billions of dollars and thousands of jobs.

The *Times of Israel* noted that "Livni has defended Kerry's statements and harshly criticized right-wing lawmakers who had lambasted the top American diplomat, accusing them of undermining diplomatic relations with Israel's closest ally." It quoted her: "'Some of those who speak harshly against the U.S. secretary of state would lower their eyes in embarrassment if they knew what Kerry has done to prevent these threats and these boycotts.'"

Still others pointed out that, while Kerry certainly wasn't endorsing boycotts, his raising the spectre of increased BDS was inept, demonstrating his failure to understand the Israeli public's concerns about being isolated and under assault – attitudes that will only diminish their willingness to take risks for peace.

For instance, Patrick Martin ("Israel views trade boycott as strategic threat," *Globe and Mail*, Feb. 5) cited former Israeli ambassador to Washington Michael Oren's comment that "This approach can be counterproductive… Israel doesn't make concessions when it's threatened. The way to get Israel to make concessions is to make it feel secure."

In his Feb. 5 column, *Times of Israel* editor David Horovitz, a respected moderate, reiterated Oren's consternation: "U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry may feel heartfelt concern about the growing campaign to delegitimize Israel and to boycott it. One of the least smart and least constructive ways to tackle the danger, however, is by issuing an anguished public prediction that this is what awaits Israel if his peace effort fails."

Horovitz added: "Let me stress that I have no time for those on the rejectionist right who waded in to publicly assail the secretary. The Naftali Bennetts, Ofir Akunises and Danny Danons of this world dismally seize every opportunity to advance their one-state non-solution."

The rancour over BDS is merely one aspect of a complex of negotiations for which there apparently are no immediate solutions, let alone agreement on the issues.

Dedicated to Barry Rubin (1950-2014)

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

ENVOY VISITS

New Israeli Ambassador Rafi Barak, right, made his first formal visit to Toronto Feb. 3, meeting with Premier Kathleen Wynne, left, as well as Lieut.-Gov. David Onley, various provincial cabinet ministers, senior Toronto business leaders and leading academics. Barak's visit focused on technology, innovation, and strengthening Ontario-Israel commercial and economic relations. UJA Federation of Greater Toronto also hosted a community leadership reception for the ambassador.

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Contributing their fair share

It seems inevitable now that Israel's ultra-Orthodox community will be forced to contribute many more of its young people to army service in the not-too-distant future. This eventuality became all the more clear last week when Finance Minister Yair Lapid halted government payments to ultra-Orthodox yeshivas following an injunction issued by the High Court of Justice against the continued funding of yeshiva students who dodge the draft.

Lapid's decision reflected determined efforts to force the ultra-Orthodox to contribute their fair share of soldiers stretching back at least a decade (and, in a less organized and popular way, to the birth of the state). The Tal Law passed by the Knesset in July 2002 – the very law ultra-Orthodox students have relied upon to avoid army service ever since – was in itself a significant step toward enforced, mandatory conscription for the majority of haredim. When the Tal Law expired a year and a half ago and Yesh Atid (Lapid's political party, which campaigned on bringing the ultra-Orthodox to account) placed second in the January 2013 election, it became clear there was no turning back.

Even so, there was nothing wrong with the ultra-Orthodox protests last week, which followed the arrest of a yeshiva student for the crime of draft dodging. Yes, a few demonstrators proved more violent than the rest, but it's important to remember why the haredi community is so bothered by the matter of providing soldiers to defend the state: because it truly believes doing so would be an act of rebellion against God. In the end, just because the law compels Israel down this path doesn't mean Israelis shouldn't show some sensitivity toward the many ultra-Orthodox Jews facing a radically different future.

In the wake of the haredi protests, a schism developed within Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's governing coalition. Lapid and the Yesh Atid ranks demanded that ultra-Orthodox draft-dodgers face criminal prosecution, while the religious Zionist Habayit Hayehudi faction, led by Economy Minister Naftali Bennett, argued financial sanctions alone are sufficient. Fining yeshiva students who refuse the army isn't a long-term solution – that path leads to allowing any Israeli to pay their way out of the draft, an arrangement many wealthy families would likely find attractive as an alternative to service.

Omitting criminal sanctions might be reasonable for now to ease the ultra-Orthodox transition into a new reality, but, ultimately, haredi yeshiva students, with few exceptions, should face the same protocol as other Israelis, and that means you get to choose between going to the army or going to jail.

There remains the question of whether the IDF in fact needs these thousands of extra ultra-Orthodox recruits. On this matter, authorities are of two minds – some say the army has more than enough soldiers without adding the ultra-Orthodox (who are less likely to be educated in the sorts of subject areas that would come in handy in training and combat), while others claim the IDF can always find useful places to plug in new bodies.

But even if the army doesn't need the ultra-Orthodox, there must be some way the haredim can give back to the state, beyond the walls of the yeshiva.

What's fair is fair.

yoni

Dry Bones

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A BDS 'compromise'

A recent story ("Where's the line in campus debates about Israel?" *The CJN*, Feb. 6) reported about a controversy within Hillel about its decision to disallow Jewish organizations that support the boycott of Israel, or at least Israeli "settlement" products and services, from using Hillel as a platform.

May I suggest a compromise? Hillel should allow these organizations to express their views as long as they simultaneously oppose the Palestinian fiction of "right" of return and demand that the Palestinians remove Jew- and Israeli-hatred from their educational curricula.

Ken Frankel
Montreal

Ukraine's fight concerns us all

I am a longtime subscriber with a serious interest in politics, both Canadian and international. I have been consumed with the events in Ukraine since November, not only because my paternal ancestors lived there, but also because of its active fight for democracy. I have been disappointed to see that *Canadian Jewish News* has ignored this story.

I believe Ukraine has significance for Jews, not only for those who live there, but for those of us who hate totalitarian or anti-democratic regimes. If the Jewish community in Canada does not see the need to show an interest in Ukraine, may I suggest that they read "An Open Address to the Jews of the World," by the Jewish historian Vitaliy Nakhmanovich, which was recently published by the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress: http://eajc.org/page34/news43050.html.

Marla Waltman
Toronto

The meaning of 'never again'

Avrum Rosensweig asks whether "never again" has an expiration date ("An expiry date for 'never again'? *The CJN*, Feb. 6).

The answer is, yes it does.

"Never again" will expire when decent, good-intentioned people distort its purpose and meaning for political aims. Rosensweig urges us "to re-embrace our commitment to 'never again,'" particularly toward refugee claimants to Canada, who are "regularly turned away from our hospitals, and more, seriously, our shores."

Rosensweig should know that "never again" was our vow to never again permit the enemies of the Jewish People to succeed in the vilest expression of their hatred. "Never again" had nothing whatsoever to do with the issues Rosensweig cites, as justifiable as they may be, regarding our present Canadian government policies.

Sam Mitnick
Cote St. Luc, Que.

A prayer for the Queen

I was fascinated to read Rabbi Philip Scheim's column ("We have truly come a long way," *The CJN*, Feb 6) about saying prayers on Shabbat for Prime Minister Stephen Harper. The problem is that Harper is not the head of state, the Queen is, as you will see if you look at Canadian coins and stamps. For this reason, the Kiever shul in Toronto uses the form of prayer, standard throughout the British Commonwealth, which refers to the Queen, not Harper. This usage was formerly common throughout Canada, but dropped out of use in recent years. There is a halachic opinion that since the Queen is only a constitutional monarch, she has no power and, therefore, is not worth praying for, but the fact remains that all acts of Parliament have to be signed by her or her proxy, the governor general. The advantage of praying for the Queen is that you can still pray for the welfare of Canada, regardless of who you vote for.

Charles Heller
Toronto

Trip to Sighet

The municipality of Sighet–Maramorish, Romania, and the Sighet Jewish community is planning memorial ceremonies from May 16 to 20 to commemorate the deportations of the Jews from Sighet during World War II. There will be opportunities to visit the local Jewish cemetery, archives and walk in the footsteps of your ancestors. An exhibit will be launched and we are looking for pictures prewar and postwar, as well books, memoirs or research papers. For more information, please email Peninah Zilberman at peninah118@gmail.com, or call 416-781-0330.

Peninah Silberman
Toronto

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Harper has made Israel a wedge issue

Historic trip a case study of Canada's diplomatic two-step

Adam Goldenberg

Last month, as Prime Minister Stephen Harper visited Ramallah, an Israeli journalist asked him to clarify Canada's position on the legality of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. He refused to answer.

"Any attempt to have me, while present in the Middle East, single out the State of Israel for criticism, I will not do," Harper said.

Later that day, he stood before the Knesset in Jerusalem and described such "criticism that selectively condemns only the Jewish state" as "the new anti-Semitism."

Yet, the government of Canada's official position, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs, is that "Israeli settlements in the occupied territories [including the West Bank] are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention," and that "the settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace."

In other words – and by the prime minister's own standards – the Conservative government is willing to "single out the State of Israel for criticism."

Does that make Stephen Harper an anti-Semite?

That suggestion is absurd, of course, but it follows from the prime minister's logic, not mine. Nor is his name-calling the point. The gulf between the government's words and its actions – between its style and its substance – rebuts the Conservative claim that the prime minister's approach to the Middle East is purely "principled."

Canada's opposition to Israel's West Bank settlements is "principled," after all – it's based on our country's longstanding, principled commitment to international law.

It should surprise no one that Harper's maiden voyage to Israel was a case study in the diplomatic two-step that the region has always required. Every Canadian government, including the present one, has had at least some reservations about at least some of Israel's policies. The difference, as Harper's studied silence on settlements illustrates, has been one of emphasis – of style more than substance.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper addresses the Knesset during his recent visit to Israel. *[Amos Ben Gershom /GPO]*

Not that style is insignificant. The prime minister's stubborn refusal to criticize the Israeli government publicly has won him friends both in Jerusalem and among Canadian Jews. For better or worse, Harper has earned a reputation as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's most reliable – and predictable –cheerleader.

No doubt Harper's support for Israel is genuine, a cocktail of ideological neo-conservatism, Christian evangelicalism, and an earnest desire for the approval of Jewish Conservative partisans. Yet, there's also no doubt that his fellow Tories have exploited his heartfelt support for Israel in a manner that reflects political choices, not principled ones.

Mark Adler, the Conservative MP for York Centre, emphasized this point rather succinctly during Harper's trip to Israel. At the Western Wall, Adler tried to elbow his way into a photo with his boss. "It's the re-election!" he begged the prime minister's staff, as the cameras rolled.

The prime minister's guest list tells a similar story of political stagecraft. Jason Kenney, the minister responsible for the Conservatives' charm offensive to Jews and other minority groups, joined Harper on his Israel trip. So did Stockwell Day, a former minister who was among the Jewish community's most enthusiastic suitors while in cabinet.

The prime minister hardly required so much Tory star-power simply to impress his Israeli hosts. No, his target audience was more local: Canadian Jews.

The Conservatives are betting that the 21 rabbis and assorted Tory-friendly Jewish leaders from across the country who followed Harper to the Holy Land would return to Canada to preach the Gospel of Stephen – and Jason and Stockwell, to boot. That strategy is already working, as clergy sermonize about the prime minister and his Conservative apostles from the pulpit.

This political strategy, as much as anything else, explains why Harper bit his tongue in Ramallah, rather than admit that his government opposes Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Netanyahu knows where Canada stands on the issue. Harper even expressed his objections directly to his Israeli counterpart during a closed-door meeting last month. But the Conservatives' most ardent Jewish supporters back home are often blind, willfully or otherwise, to the actual nuances of Canada's Middle East policy. Reminding Canadian Jews – including the ones he brought with him to Israel – that his government sometimes does, in fact, "single out the State of Israel for criticism" was not on the prime minister's political itinerary.

If Harper's support for Israel were truly "principled," he would seek to share it as widely as possible, particularly across party lines. Instead, the Tories, in many cases aided and abetted by the leaders of Jewish organizations, have systematically sought to marginalize Canadians, both Jewish and not, who support Israel but not Harper.

A case in point: In 2008, Georganne Burke, then an aide to Conservative Minister of State Gary Goodyear, made news when she tried to bully Toronto's Zareinu Educational Centre, a school for disabled children, into cancelling a Chanukah celebration. Why? Because then Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff had been invited to help light the candles.

Burke's partisan thuggery was part and parcel of the ongoing Conservative campaign to monopolize the political life of Canada's Jewish community. Yet, as Harper's plane left Ottawa for Tel Aviv, there was Burke, snugly aboard. For her partisan harassment of Jewish schoolchildren, she was rewarded with, as she tweeted from Jerusalem during the trip, "a great adventure."

This is the dark underbelly of the prime minister's otherwise laudable support for the Jewish state: his party has snatched vice from the jaws of virtue and turned Israel into a partisan bauble, a mere wedge to divide the electorate.

In Israel, Stephen Harper did his level best not to undermine his party's efforts. Not only did he downplay Canada's principled opposition to Israel's West Bank settlements, but he also suggested that it would be "the new anti-Semitism" even to state his own government's position. The prime minister's Canadian audience, dazzled by his duplicity, beheld his politics and called it principle.

At a certain point, the spin starts to refute itself.

Adam Goldenberg is a Kirby Simon Human Rights Fellow at Yale Law School, a former Liberal speechwriter, and a contributor to CBC News: The National. Follow him on Twitter at @adamgoldenberg.

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BDS and Oxfam defeated at the Super Bowl

Gerald Steinberg
in Jerusalem

The ongoing political war against Israel, being waged through a highly aggressive campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS), was handed its most significant defeat at the Super Bowl in New Jersey, and on hundreds of millions of screens around the world. The television commercials, including one for the Israeli firm SodaStream, featuring actress Scarlett Johansson, were more interesting than the game.

In the weeks before the big event, Johansson came under intense pressure from the BDS-bully squad, which demanded that she pull out and disassociate herself from the Israeli connection. The actress was also a "global ambassador" for the international humanitarian aid group Oxfam, whose leaders repeated these BDS-based demands, in sync with radical anti-Israel groups such as Electronic Intifada. To her immense credit, Johansson rejected the bullying and the accompanying personal attacks, and instead, told Oxfam to find another "ambassador."

By standing firm, Johansson and the owners of SodaStream demonstrated that even the most full-blown BDS attacks can be defeated. In its counterattack, SodaStream exposed the myths that underlie the boycotts and the broader delegitimization campaigns targeting Israel, including the fact that the 500 Palestinian Arab employees at the Ma'aleh Adumim plant (a "settlement" located on the outskirts of Jerusalem) enjoyed the same pay and health benefits as their Israeli counterparts.

In contrast to previous battles, in this case, it was the proponents and enablers of BDS that were put on the defensive, and they didn't do well in this role. Oxfam denied that it was involved in BDS, but the facts proved the contrary. Between 2011 and 2013, the Dutch branch, known as Oxfam Novib, provided almost $500,000 (largely from government funds provided ostensibly for humanitarian aid) to one of the most radical BDS leaders, the Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP). This group also received funds from Oxfam GB (Great Britain). The discrepancy between Oxfam's claims and the documentation of it's role in BDS was highlighted by SodaStream executives and in a number of media articles.

Although CWP is technically an Israel-based NGO, almost all of its activities are focused externally in promoting boycott campaigns, particularly in Europe. (For political purposes, ever since the NGO Forum of the infamous 2001 UN Durban anti-racism conference, the Arab and European leaders of BDS often use fringe Israeli and Jewish groups as facades, and this is the case with CWP.) In addition to Oxfam, other funders for CWP's radical and immoral agenda include government-funded German NGOs, as well the United Church of Canada and anti-Israel church groups in Ireland and Holland.

Another myth exposed in the SodaStream-Johansson showdown is the claim that BDS is "limited" to opposing the post-1967 war occupation and settlements. This myth was quoted by many journalists, who did not go beyond press statements. However, at the 2001 Durban NGO Forum, thousands of boycott advocates clearly stated that their goal is the elimination of Jewish sovereign equality, regardless of borders – in their words, "the complete international isolation of Israel as an apartheid state." This objective hasn't changed.

Omar Barghouti, among the radical leaders and ideologues of the BDS bully squad, has said that the "only ethical solution is a (single) democratic, secular and civic state in historic Palestine" which means "by definition, Jews will be a minority." In refuting the myth of limited goals, the fundamentally immoral objectives of BDS have been thrust into the open.

In order to move beyond this battle, a wider confrontation is necessary with the BDS industry, which is supported by tens of millions of dollars annually. These massive budgets, manipulated via hidden European government sources, are funnelled to radical NGOs, as well as anti-Israel church groups that often include classical anti-Semitic replacement theology (meaning that Christians have "replaced" the Jews). Beyond Oxfam, other "moral" superpowers taking an active part in the immoral war against Israel include Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, whose leaders repeatedly demonstrate their personal and highly destructive anti-Israel obsessions.

The most important lesson is that notwithstanding their financial backing and political support, BDS anti-Israel bullying and intimidation can be defeated, as demonstrated by SodaStream and Scarlett Johansson.

Reform Judaism is making inroads in Israel

Yair Lootsteen
in Jerusalem

Life is easier in North America than here in Israel. Making a decent living is less onerous, there are no ongoing security concerns, people are generally more polite, the driving is less stressful, the streets cleaner, the shops and malls a bit more posh.

But I wouldn't live anywhere but Israel. My family and I have good lives. We travel a lot. My kids are growing up as independent, responsible young adults. They're getting a good public education. The weather is pretty darn good. Tiny Israel has diverse natural treasures. And most Israelis really are sabras – tough, sometimes prickly, but soft, sweet and sensitive on the inside, once you cut through their thick epidermis.

Don't get me wrong: you live in a great place, too. In the years since I made aliyah from Toronto in 1979, I've been asked many times why I left a place like Canada. Surprisingly, my answer hasn't really changed. The bottom line – and I'm not proselytizing – is that I simply feel more at home here. It's the place I believe I belong and the place I feel belongs to me. I care more about what happens here than in other places in the world.

And it's because I care about this country and the direction it's going that I'm troubled by several things happening here. One of them concerns a lack of Jewish religious pluralism.

I recently spent three weeks in North America involved in matters relating to Reform Judaism, both abroad and here in Israel. Having become increasingly involved in the Israeli Reform movement over the last few years, I was asked to speak at different venues in Southern Ontario and Calgary on behalf of ARZA Canada during its Israel Week. I also participated in the Union of Reform Judaism's (URJ) Biennial in San Diego.

Visiting North America, I was impressed by the strength of Reform Judaism and its well-regarded position as the largest religious Jewish stream on the continent. An Orthodox Israeli acquaintance who was at the biennial in a semi-official capacity told me how astounded he was to feel the energy of 5,000 committed Jews convening and praying together. He had never seen anything like it.

I learned a lot in San Diego about challenges facing the URJ and its 900-plus synagogues – the Pew Report findings being only one of them – but also about great success stories.

In many ways, being a Reform Jew in Israel is more challenging than in North America. Israel is the only western democracy where not all Jews are treated equally. Ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox communities get huge government subsidies. Liberal Jewish streams receive almost no funding, and most of the financial support they *do* get has been the result of prolonged legal battles. There's an Orthodox monopoly on state-run religious services. Marriages, conversions and the like performed by Reform or Conservative rabbis are not recognized.

And some things happening here would sound loud alarms bells if they occurred outside Israel. On Jan. 29, the walls of Kehillat Ra'anan, Ra'anana's only Reform synagogue, were desecrated. Graffiti was sprayed across the building's façade. Particularly shocking were repeated references to Maimonides' Laws of Repentance, Chapter III, 14, stating among other things, that "None of them have a place in the world to come, even if they are Jews," and to Psalm 139: 21-22, "Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you? I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them as my enemies."

This type of anti-Semitic hate-crime wouldn't be tolerated in other places. Here it went almost unreported in the national press and wasn't condemned by anyone in government. And this isn't the first time this synagogue was targeted. Its walls were sprayed in the past and several of its windows were broken. The police didn't solve those crimes, and I have little expectation they'll do so this time, either.

Despite the Ra'anana incident, not all is bleak. The Reform movement is growing in Israel. There are now more than 40 congregations around the country. The movement's Israel Religious Action Center continues making important legal inroads. There's optimism in the air, and Israelis are increasingly realizing there's more than one way to be Jewish in Israel, too.

This is a worthy struggle. Persevering, we will make Israel an even better place for my children, and yours.

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Panel asks if GMOs are safe and ethical

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

As humans, we can alter genetic codes, but does that mean we should do it? That question was at the heart of the topic addressed by the panel on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) at a recent conference in Toronto.

The panel on "Canola, Corn, Soy… OY! A Multi-Faith and Multi-Sector Response to Genetically Modified Foods" took place at the Shoresh Food Conference Feb. 2 at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. It brought together a representative from Judaism, Islam and Christianity, who spoke of how each group approaches the question of GMOs.

"Do we have the right to go into genetic code and play around and create whatever we want to create?" Rabbi Jordan Helfman asked, setting up what turned out to be a central component in determining the religious arguments for and against the procedure.

Many of the arguments against GMOs are in opposition to the actions of agricultural biotechnology corporation Monsanto. The company has created RoundUp, a herbicide used to kill weeds. It has also genetically modified crops to be resistant to this herbicide.

Panellists on the issues involved with the use of GMOs include, from left, Rabbi Jordan Helfman, Shari Golberg (moderator) and Ziyaad Mia. [*Cara Stern photo*]

While several major science organizations have concluded that GMOs aren't any riskier than other forms of plant-breeding technologies, many people are not convinced. Opponents of GMOs are sometimes concerned about how the herbicides could affect those who eat GMOs, or how the technology affects independent farmers. Others focus specifically on the moral argument presented by Rabbi Helfman.

One of the major objections to the use of GMOs is that they do not need to be labelled in Canada, said panellist Lucy Sharratt from the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, which describes itself as a group that provides information to governments for policy development.

She argued that there isn't enough scientific evidence to show that GMOs are safe for consumption. She said the public was not consulted when GMOs were brought into Canada.

"Many scientists…would argue this is an immature technology that we're applying in our food," she said, explaining that it is particularly prevalent in corn, canola, soy and sugar beets. "The risk evaluation for this technology excludes farmers and religious communities."

There is no consensus among the religious communities in determining where GMOs fit into religious laws.

Rabbi Helfman outlined numerous issues with GMOs in Jewish law, and described why one of the key components in determining the Jewish viewpoint has to do with kashrut.

"Whenever we talk about genetically modified foods, pigs always come up in Judaism," he said, explaining that the jury is out on whether pigs could become kosher if it were possible to find the genetic code that causes split hooves, for example.

He said one concern is that if a pig gene is used to alter the genetic code of produce or another animal, "does that pig gene make this item treif?" He then explained that Jewish law might allow it if the code comprises only a miniscule portion of a full pig's genetic code.

Ziyaad Mia, a lawyer who spoke on the Muslim philosophy on GMOs, said Muslims struggle with the debate in much the same way as Jews in terms of whether they could be considered halal.

He said the Qur'an prohibits disruption of the fundamental balance of the world. Unlike in Judaism, human beings are not given dominion over the earth in Islam, he explained, adding that his concern is primarily with animal welfare.

"We need to look at them as subjects, not objects," he said. "I'm a little uncomfortable with GMOs because we're looking at everything as an instrument."

Catherine Wright, a PhD candidate in Christian ethics at the University of Toronto, shared the Christian thoughts on GMOs, and was the most decisive of the religious representatives on the issue.

"Genetic engineering messes with life, it messes with truth, it messes with our common inheritance, it messes with justice, it messes with health… and relationships," she said.

All three discussed whether GMOs are harmful or beneficial to the world. Proponents of the technology often argue that it would help eradicate hunger by increasing the yield of food. However, the panellists questioned the validity of this theory.

"Instead of feeding the world, it will exacerbate hunger and malnutrition," Wright said. "It's about power and profit."

Rabbi Helfman said he, as well as many other rabbis, do not feel qualified to determine the impact of GMOs on the world. He questioned the way corporations have patented GMO crops, leading to the question of whether it's right to patent a living organism. However, he said it would be bad to say it is categorically wrong, and each seed must be examined on its own.

But Mia said it's a little clearer in Islam, though Muslim experts have not come to a definitive conclusion.

"Islam would say we shouldn't allow ownership of things that are essential to life," he said, though he added that if GMOs can fight hunger, they might be sanctioned in Islam.

However, he said that what's most important in his mind is examining the reasons why companies produce GMOs.

"Whenever there is money to be made, I get suspicious and dig a little deeper," he said.

Given that companies don't need to label GMOs, Sharratt said those who are concerned with the technology and how it fits into religious ethics can only definitively avoid it by buying organic.

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Correction

The article "Is Harper-led Canada Israel's New Best Friend?" (Jan. 30) incorrectly stated that York University was the first university to host Israel Apartheid Week. In fact, Israel Apartheid Week had previously been held at the University of Toronto. *The CJN* regrets the error.

Lebovic centre remains open to everyone

Continued from page 3

Kuobi noted that "the Lebovic community was partially funded by the government... The [Lebovic] centre is open to every person regardless of colour, religion, or race. Anyone can be a member. It is a fully inclusive cultural centre."

Thornhill Woods resident Limor Twena, a mother of three, added, "I appreciate the multicultural aspect of the neighbourhood... But I have a problem with creating a community within a community that is going to be segregated and won't allow me to participate and serve me... because I'm not of that faith."

Speaking to *CTV News* in a story posted Feb. 5, Shafiq Punjani, a developer of the project, said the development would be open to everybody.

"In fact, it's something that the Ontario law obviously governs. There is a human rights code in place, and we fully intended to live to the letter of the law," Punjani said.

In a statement issued by the ISIJ following the meeting, Jeraj said, "While we are still in the planning phase, our intention is to design the development with the broader community in mind. As such, we envision that many parts of the development will be open to all residents of Vaughan and the surrounding areas, including the playing fields and tennis courts."

Morris Hadida, a real estate broker with Sutton Group Associates who lives in Thornhill Woods, told *The CJN* that much of the opposition to the plan "has nothing to do with them being Muslim. It's the highrise subsidized housing.

"Highrise subsidized housing causes two problems: one, it's an eyesore. People move to the suburbs not to be around highrise buildings."

Another issue, Hadida said, is that the development could devalue the homes in the area, most of which are worth more than $850,000.

"I had the experience where I moved from Toronto because my bungalow was backing onto a condo, and it did affect property values... I know the houses directly in the area would suffer in value... if they're backing onto subsidized properties," he said.

"If they wanted to do just townhouses and not highrises, that would be one thing, even subsidized townhouses... Out of sight out of mind is one thing, but when it's in your face, it really will hurt the market... The fact that there is potential for this, it will hurt the market this spring."

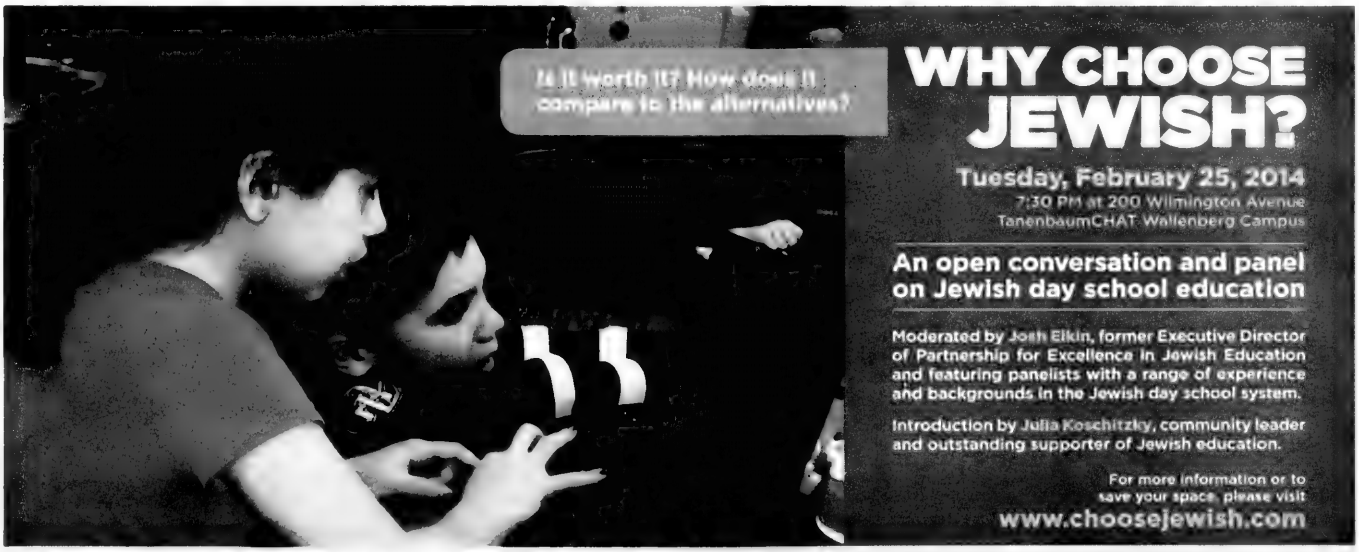
While those who spoke out against the proposal heavily outnumbered those in support, members of the Muslim community appealed to the council to approve a plan that they feel would benefit both the Muslim community and the surrounding community of Thornhill Woods by creating jobs and recreational facilities such as tennis courts.

Rom Koubi
[Sheri Shefa photo]

One woman who spoke in support of the development said it would help her community maintain its religious identity in a way that "goes beyond the scope of a school, or an educational system. The lifestyle that I refer to has to do with the development of our property at 9000 Bathurst so that not only are our children's education needs are met, but rather our whole life experience is enriched."

But another woman countered that opposition to the plan "has nothing to do with... stopping someone from practising their religion or faith. This has to do with not wanting our community to have highrise buildings, not wanting our community to be so dense and fearing our children walking to school. The issue is that we want our community to stay the way it is, the way the city zoned it to be."

Following the meeting, Vaughan Ward 4 Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco, who represents the area and is the Liberal candidate in Thornhill, posted a message on a Facebook group called "Preserve Thornhill Woods Community – Say NO to High Rise buildings" that the next step is to put together a community task force "and work together with the applicant and staff to address the various issues that were brought forward this evening and to come up with a mutually agreeable plan. This may take months, but I believe this is the best route to take."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Lawrence Cherniak

Longtime NCSY volunteer 'changed the community'

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Lawrence Cherniak, who died on Feb. 2 at age 71 after a long illness, will be remembered for his role in the growth and development in Canada of the National Conference of Synagogue Youth, the Orthodox Union's youth movement.

Obituary

Lawrence Cherniak

Rabbi Glenn Black, CEO of NCSY Canada, said that "Lawrie was an integral part of building NCSY in Toronto and Canada. He served on our board for several decades, in particular guiding our development and fundraising departments, and no matter what challenges he faced, he always kept NCSY's interests and its future at the top of his priorities."

In his eulogy, Rabbi Black said that Cherniak, who was trained as a teacher, was one of Canada's oldest NCSY volunteers. "He [along with] David Woolf, Zale Newman, and the late Nosson Westreich built the organization in its earliest days with a handful of dedicated participants into an integral outreach force in the community, one that today affects the lives of thousands of Jewish teens across Canada each year."

Rabbi Black said that the vision "Lawrie shared with us changed the community. NCSY's legacy of thousands of families impacted by Yiddishkeit is his legacy. It grew from his passion and his persistence for Klal Yisrael's needs. His time, his inspiring talks, his countless interactions with teens – if we could emulate even a fraction of his energy and devotion in those earlier years, we would be achieving great things."

He said that Cherniak "took responsibility for each child, as any parent would. A parent is not someone who simply creates a child, but someone who brings them to a higher form of existence, through Torah and life of mitzvot.

"It was this way that he raised [his children] Symee and [the late] Michael. And it was in his nature to take responsibility for so many other children. He adopted every one of these NCSY kids. They all became his own."

Rabbi Black said that when NCSY was looking for partners to bring the families of unaffiliated participants together with families from various synagogues to build meaningful relationships, "[Lawrie] and his wife, Debbie, sponsored and facilitated family Shabbat dinners, that brought together more than 800 people to five synagogues in Toronto. He and Debbie reached out to their friends and family to encourage them to participate in this huge undertaking."

Zale Newman, who knew Cherniak for 45 years, said that from a young age, "Lawrence was involved in the spirit of Judaism and in youth groups.

"He had a limited Jewish background, but went on the study at Yeshiva University, and to become a Talmud scholar."

Cherniak was invested in NCSY, said Newman, and his mission was to make sure the youth became, and remained connected to the Jewish People. He never gave up on that mission."

Cherniak leaves his wife Debbie, daughter Symee, seven grandchildren, his mother Lucy Cherniak-Weinstein, sister Linda Colman, and brothers Lloyd and Leon Cherniak.

CHALLAH BAKERS: On Jan. 30, the House ran its second annual Challah-palooza event, where more than 60 young Jewish professionals, including Lori Kagal and Alon Halbrich, baked hundreds of challahs that were later donated to several community organizations, including Out of the Cold and Jewish Family & Child. The event was part of the House's ongoing monthly Challah for Chesed series. *[Snapshot Magnets photo]*

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Lone clergy on trip to Japan

Rabbi joins medical team to study palliative care

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

It was a "privilege beyond privilege" to exchange knowledge about palliative care with Japanese specialists while on a recent trip to that country, says Rabbi Rena Arshinoff.

She was part of a team of four Canadians from southern Ontario who travelled to Nagoya for three weeks last spring, sponsored by Rotary International, to study palliative care, learn from each other and share experiences.

She was the only clergy on the three-week trip to Japan, which also included a palliative care physician and two nurses.

"We were welcomed into the hospitals with open arms, and even the patients allowed us into their lives," she said in an interview.

Rabbi Arshinoff, 60, a Montreal native who is married with three children and one grandchild, was trained as a nurse, and did graduate work in epidemiology. She spent 20 years doing clinical research, until she became interested in working with people.

She got more immersed in Judaism when she was saying *Kaddish* for her father and had a bat mitzvah at age 48. She eventually entered Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, and was ordained in 2008.

Currently, she combines her interest in health care and rabbinics as a chaplain at Toronto Western Hospital in its neuroscience program, and she is pursuing a doctoral degree in palliative care from Lancaster University in England.

Rabbi Arshinoff is only the second rabbi in Canada to receive the credential of specialist in pastoral care from the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care.

She became interested in the field of palliative care, she said, because it makes up part of her main interests – grief, healing, rabbinics and chaplaincy.

"When I was approached by Rotary International to take part in the Japanese program, I immediately became excited. I was being given the opportunity of a lifetime. The Japanese delegation spent three weeks with us here, and we returned to Japan with them," she said.

She said the standards of medical care in Japan are comparable to North America's, but spiritual care is lacking.

"Japanese culture does not allow people to talk freely about death, dying and terminal illness," she said.

"Japan has state of the art machinery, CT scanners, MRI machines, radiation equipment, and advanced medical training, [but] what they lack and desperately want to learn is how to provide holistic and spiritual care to patients, their families, and health-care staff.

"They are aware that the spiritual component of health-care delivery is lacking in their model, and they want to learn from us. [Hearing this] was a affirmation of the work that I do."

Rabbi Arshinoff said that at each hospital the team visited, they were asked about spiritual support for nurses. "It was the first time that anyone ever had permission to talk about these issues."

In the west, we are more open and direct, "but not everyone is able to have these conversations easily. Immersing myself in Japanese culture taught me about palliative care there and here," she said.

Rabbi Rena Arshinoff in Japan

"Palliative care is a set of principles, which help provide people with dignity and the ability to make decisions. Professionals provide a wide range of support for people living with illness.

"It provides patients with the ability to plan their life the way they want to live. People can have a beautiful death, and we can help make it beautiful.

"We share the passion to help people, and we want them to have dignity and control. Illness has a way of taking control of people, and we like to be the masters of our own destiny."

In a dvar Torah she recently delivered at Congregation Darchei Noam, Rabbi Arshinoff said it's incumbent upon each of us to learn about other cultures if we are to understand the context in which people function.

"Sometimes there seems to be no words that offer comfort, and sometimes we don't know how to offer what words do exist. But we don't always need to offer words – we need to offer our presence. Even in silence, our presence speaks words."

Anne Frank exhibit underway in Vancouver

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre (VHEC) has opened a travelling exhibit from the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. Titled *Anne Frank – A History for Today*, its opening night coincided with International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 28 and the 69th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, Jan. 27, 1945.

It's the third exhibit on Anne Frank put on by VHEC over the past 20 years, "but we thought it was a timely opportunity to revisit this and contemplate why Anne Frank remains such an iconic figure for the 21st century," said Nina Krieger, executive director.

Anne Frank House sent Julie Couture, co-ordinator of Canadian projects for Anne Frank House, to Vancouver to assist with the exhibit's installation and docent training. The exhibit consists of up to 40 panels from Amsterdam containing reproductions of photos, documents and texts that narrate the background of the Holocaust and Anne Frank's story.

Portrait of Anne Frank, April 1941 (AFF Basel, CH / AFS Amsterdam, NL)

The exhibit is targeted primarily at students and teachers, Krieger said, with programs offered for grades 6 through 12 and a comprehensive teachers guide available on VHEC's website to support the school program with pre- and post-visit activities. More than 50 schools have booked the 90-minute tour to date, and each tour will be led by a docent. The centre requests a $100 fee per tour, but "no school is ever turned away on the basis of financial need," Krieger said.

The program also includes *Out of the Archive: A Companion to Anne Frank – A History for Today*, wherein a separate room contains artefacts from Vancouver's survivor community. Among the artefacts are two identity cards that belonged to the mother of Louise Sorenson, Krieger said. "One is stamped with a 'J' for Jew, while the other is her forged identity card that didn't have the 'J' stamp and allowed her to survive," Krieger said. There's also a recipe book containing recipes recorded from memory in Ravensbruck Concentration Camp. The recipe book speaks of writing as a form of resistance, linking it to Anne's resistance in diarizing her life.

"These items continue the conversation about childhood, faith, identity, rescue, hiding and resistance," Krieger said. "They are absolute treasures that we're thrilled to bring out for students and teachers to engage with."

The exhibit is open to the public weekdays and occasional Sundays, by donation. For information, visit www.vhec.org.

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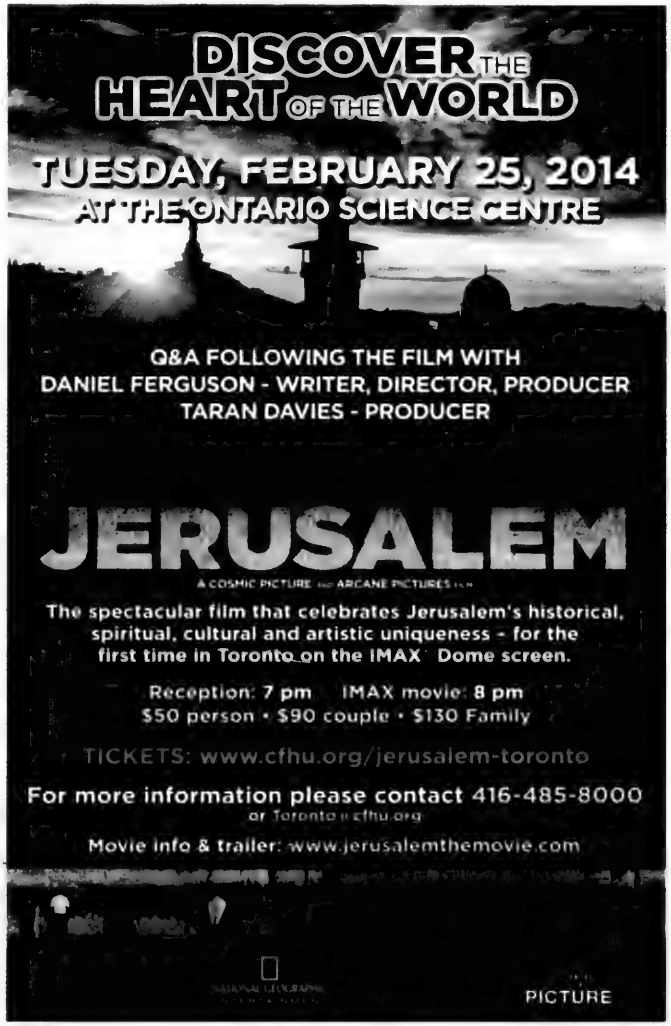
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PICTURE

Haredi sect to appeal Ontario court ruling

Jewish agencies ready to foster Lev Tahor kids

Daniel Wolgelerenter
CJN Staff

A few Lev Tahor children gather to play. *[Paul Lungen photo]*

Jewish agencies in Montreal are ready to place 13 Lev Tahor children in appropriate temporary homes after an Ontario court ruling ordered them back to Quebec and into foster care, a Jewish community representative says.

Meanwhile, leaders of the controversial anti-Zionist haredi sect near Chatham, Ont., say they intend to appeal the Feb. 3 decision by Judge Stephen Fuerth of the Ontario Court of Justice. The group's lawyer, Chris Knowles, told *The CJN* the papers will be filed this week.

David Ouellette, associate director of Quebec public affairs at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, which is speaking for other Jewish agencies on this issue, said his group welcomes the ruling, which upheld a November decision by a Quebec youth court judge that ordered 14 children from three Lev Tahor families to be placed in foster care for 30 days and assessed.

But Fuerth delayed the implementation of his ruling for the same amount of time in order to give the group an opportunity to prepare an appeal. (Fuerth's order exempted a 17-year-old mother named in the Quebec ruling, but not her infant child, because she's considered an adult under Ontario law.)

"We have full confidence in the Quebec authorities and in the ruling of the Quebec Superior Court, which was validated by the Ontario Court of Justice," Ouellette told *The CJN*.

"We're concerned about the well-being of the children, and we understand that the Department of Youth Protection [DYP] in Quebec has solid reasons to have these children removed and placed in foster families."

Ouellete said evidence presented by the DYP in Quebec "details cases of utter negligence toward the children," including allegations of forced underage marriage, failure to provide adequate education and inappropriate discipline of children using force.

He said Jewish social service agencies such as Agence Ometz and Batshaw Youth and Family Centres have been working closely with the DYP since last spring to provide it with Yiddish and Hebrew interpreters – the group's main spoken languages – and to find appropriate potential foster care for the children with haredi and chassidic families.

About 200 members of Lev Tahor left their enclave north of Montreal overnight on Nov. 17-18, a day before some of its members were to appear in youth court in Quebec about the allegations, and just days before the original court ruling there on Nov. 27. They settled near Chatham.

Sect leaders say the move had been planned since last spring in response to what they considered harassment by Quebec authorities over how its children were being educated.

But in the group's submission to the Ontario court, Fuerth noted, Lev Tahor leaders acknowledged that they "felt it necessary to have a contingency plan in the event that the Quebec government would initiate action such as the apprehension of our children."

Fuerth said in his ruling that "the manner and haste of the exit to Ontario… were more consistent with flight than an orderly and planned move."

The judge disagreed with the sect's argument that the Ontario court didn't have jurisdiction to enforce the Quebec order, saying it had to recognize it. "To do otherwise would simply encourage jurisdictional chaos as others try to escape the lawful processes where children habitually reside."

He also dismissed Charter of Rights claims by the group based on freedom of religion, movement and security of the person, saying the Quebec court was a more appropriate forum for such arguments, and that such rights need to be weighed against the rights of children to protection from harm.

Speaking to *The CJN*, Lev Tahor organizer Nachman Helbrans, son of the group's founder, Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, admitted, "If there had not been court proceedings, maybe we would have waited a few months" to move, or sect members would have moved more gradually instead of en masse.

Helbrans said the group is "very disappointed" in the Ontario ruling.

"We are determined to file an appeal and to use all legal avenues open to us to bring justice," he said.

"There are many grounds to appeal this decision. There are many errors of facts and errors of law," he added, saying the group disagrees with the judge's finding the court had jurisdiction to rule on the case under Ontario law.

An appeal of the Quebec youth court decision is due to be heard Feb. 20.

Last week, a judge in Ste-Jerome, Que., ruled that evidence gathered in raids on the group in Quebec and Ontario could be made public. The ruling came in response to a petition by news outlets *Postmedia*, the *Toronto Star*, CBC, the *Globe and Mail*, *CTV News*, *Sun Media* and *Shaw Media*. Access to the material reportedly was granted because there were no objections to the request from Lev Tahor, the Crown or the DYP.

The Crown has until Feb. 14 to make the documents public and will likely redact the names of the children involved, as well as information that could harm its case, the news outlets lawyer told Postmedia.

Helbrans said that Lev Tahor continues to deny all the allegations being made against it, and that attempts to put its children in foster care, even with ultra-Orthodox families, are just a first step to eventually transferring them to secular homes and taking the "Lev Tahor *chinuch* [education] out of them."

He said some of the children in the community are having nightmares about being removed from their homes, which they've seen happen twice before, including late last year when two children were removed and later returned after social workers noticed what looked like a bruise on one child's face. Her mother said it was from a marker.

Helbrans said Lev Tahor leaders are trying to reassure the children "that *Hakodesh Baruch Hu* [God] saves Jewish *kinder* every time."

Helbrans also disclosed that the group has stopped co-operating with Chatham-Kent Children's Services, which had been closely monitoring Lev Tahor with near-daily visits since its arrival in the area.

The last visit was late last month, but the group is no longer co-operating with them, because they say they were intrusive and repetitive, and didn't turn up evidence of abuse or neglect.

The group's leaders were scheduled to meet with Children's Services representatives this week about their case.

Dubbed the "Jewish Taliban" because women in the sect have been seen wearing burka-like clothing, Lev Tahor contends the animosity toward it stems from its roots in Israel, and the fact it's openly anti-Zionist and believes only the Messiah can establish a Jewish state.

The group first moved to Quebec about 20 years ago. At the time, an Israeli official expressed concerns to Quebec news outlets about the welfare of its children.

Rabbi Helbrans, the group's founder, had served two years in jail after being convicted in New York of kidnapping a 13-year-old boy he'd been tutoring.

The group formed around him after he returned to Israel. Its original members are Israeli-born, but most of the children were born in this country.

Arabic channel hopes to find spot on Canadian dials

Al Jazeera seeks looser distribution restrictions

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Radio-Television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has asked for comments on a request by the *Al Jazeera* news network to remove restrictions the regulator has placed on its Arabic channel that have kept it off Canadian television.

The Qatar-based channel, which is owned by the emirate and has been accused of being anti-Semitic and anti-American, was approved for distribution in Canada in 2004 on the condition that all hate speech would be edited out of its broadcasts by potential cable and satellite distributors. *Al Jazeera* blames the added responsibility and high costs of monitoring the channel 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for its absence from Canadian TV screens.

Kimeran Daley, head of North American distribution for *Al Jazeera*, said there is a lot of demand for the *Al Jazeera Arabic* channel in Canada. The channel is currently available to Canadians online, and she said Canada ranks fourth in the number of people watching the stream on the Internet.

"It's really not a matter of entering the Canadian market. We're already here," she said. "We just want to make sure we're available on the TV in your living room."

From *Al Jazeera Arabic* channel (*YouTube screenshot*)

Martin Sampson, director of communications and marketing for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), said he has concerns that some of the commentators on the network may be too anti-Semitic for Canadian airwaves.

He said he recently saw a clip where a commentator said the Holocaust was divinely inspired.

"My personal opinion is that's abusive, and most members of the Jewish community would find that to be unacceptable," he said.

Anita Bromberg, national director of legal affairs for B'nai Brith Canada, said her past concerns have included *Al Jazeera* broadcasts of people who are sympathetic to Holocaust denial and terrorism.

In response to whether the channel could guarantee it would be free of hate speech, Daley said the channel allows all sides of an issue to be represented in discussions.

"We encourage all members of the Canadian community, including the Jewish community, to use it as a platform," she said.

Right now, the channel is aired unedited in countries such as Israel, the United Kingdom and France, Daley said, adding that she hopes the company's "very high editorial standards" would satisfy Canadian broadcast policy.

Bromberg countered that Canadians may not be as knowledgeable on Middle East issues as Israelis, for example, and thus might not be able to recognize a bias against the Jewish state.

"As best as we can see now, subject to our further review, there remains reasons to be concerned that a monitoring system should be in place," she said, adding that she thinks a self-monitoring system similar to the one B'nai Brith helped put in place with the former Canadian Jewish Congress to monitor *Al Jazeera English* may be a good idea for the Arabic channel.

However, she said the high expense of monitoring, especially given the language barrier, should fall on the network, not the Jewish community.

She said B'nai Brith is reviewing the channel and working on outlining its concerns to the CRTC.

Sampson said although CIJA is still evaluating whether to submit comments to the CRTC, he hopes the commission will "apply their own regulations, and will do what's right… to ensure that Canadians aren't subject to abusive comment."

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Kalkstein originally hired as an intake worker

Continued from page 1

"I was hired originally as an intake worker because I spoke fluent Yiddish," said Kalkstein, who was born in Germany after World War II to Holocaust survivors.

"The downtown Jewish population was about 8,000 when I moved down. Now it's somewhere around 20,000, and the demographics have changed. There is the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School and a thriving supplementary Hebrew school. There are a lot of young, middle-class families."

The clientele at his branch, however, is to a large extent made up of single parent families, alcoholics, drug addicts, as well as people who are disabled.

"We see the marginal population. As a United Way agency, anyone can come see us, but to receive assistance from UJA Federation [of Greater Toronto], they must be Jewish. The downtown branch carries almost 50 per cent of the agency's financial assistance."

Interrupting the meeting for a few minutes to talk to a man who needed money, Kalkstein said, "We see a little more of the underside of the world than most people. There are a lot of *tzuris* out there. We're reaching out in some way, but we're not solving big issues. Homelessness, mental health issues and poverty are still out there, but we're getting involved in people's lives and doing what we can."

Simon Kalkstein

When visiting one woman, Kalkstein said he often runs out to buy her food supplies. "Social workers don't typically shop for clients, but she can't get out. What does it hurt to help her out?"

He said that thanks to federation, he is able to give people money to help ward off situational homelessness.

An elderly man called him recently, he said, and told him his wife was being discharged from the hospital and needed help at home.

"If he hires help, though, he won't have money for rent," Kalkstein said.

"Years ago, he and his wife were in a shelter, and he asked me in Yiddish if they would have to move back. I had them get a letter from the landlord saying they couldn't pay their rent, and we got him some funds. Meanwhile, we arranged for his wife to get government money for subsequent months."

He said that too often, people have to make choices. "They can pay their rent, but not their hydro, they can eat but not pay their rent. We help cover them so they can carry on. We rescue them so they don't get in trouble."

There is often a pattern behind those who find themselves homeless, he said.

"I see a bright young man who had no education. He probably didn't finish Grade 8. He grew up with poverty and drugs in his life, and never really had a chance. He comes here and leaves some of his stuff with us, because he trusts me. He even has his mail forwarded here. We're a place of safety to him."

Toronto has a fairly affluent Jewish community, Kalkstein said, and federation has committed to help the poor. A recent $1-million donation to the agency, from Shirley Granovsky, will be designated toward helping break the cycle of poverty.

He said if he were a young social worker, "I would do this all over again. It's gratifying for me to be involved in acts of loving kindness. We are our brothers' keepers, and we have a sense of responsibility to them."

Cotler guided by parents' Jewish values

Continued from page 1

I am particularly proud of my time as minister, during which I introduced Canada's first law to combat human trafficking, crafted the Civil Marriage Act – landmark legislation that extended marriage equality to gays and lesbians, while at the same time, guaranteeing religious freedom – and made the quashing of wrongful convictions a priority.

During my tenure as minister, we democratized the process of appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada, appointed two outstanding women justices, making the Supreme Court of Canada the most gender representative supreme court in the world, while also appointing the first aboriginal justice and first visible minority justice to an appellate court.

Along the way, I was guided by Jewish values imparted in the teachings of my parents. Indeed, after being sworn in as minister, I began my media scrum stating that "I will be guided in my work by one over-arching principle, that of *tzedek, tzedek tirdof* – justice, justice shall ye pursue," which my father taught me "was equal to all the other commandments combined," to which my mother, hearing my father's teachings, would add: "If you want to pursue justice, you have to feel the injustice about you – and combat the injustice – otherwise pursuing justice is a theoretical abstraction."

Accordingly, I was guided in my work by such values as *zachor* – "remembrance" – which led to me proposing, and the House unanimously adopting, a motion to establish a National Day of Reflection on the Prevention of Genocide.

I was also taught early on by my mother, who exemplified this throughout her life, that "life and death are on the tip of the tongue," which led to my making the combating of incitement to hate and genocide a priority, launching the National Justice Initiative Against Racism and Hate, and founding and chairing the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Anti-Semitism.

Another foundational Jewish value – "Thou shall not stand idly by while thy brothers' and sisters' blood is being shed" – inspired my involvement in the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, and led to my chairing of the Save Darfur Parliamentary Coalition, Iran Accountability Week, the Inter-Parliamentary Group for Human Rights in Iran and the Justice for Sergei Magnitsky Interparliamentary Group.

Beyond 2015, I look forward to remaining active in public life, lecturing and writing on the issues of the day, advancing the causes of human rights and international justice in particular, protecting the vulnerable, working for gender equality and advocating on behalf of political prisoners – all anchored in Jewish values – efforts in which I have been engaged for over 35 years.

I believe Parliament is at its best when we put aside partisanship and incivility to work in common cause for the public good. Rancour and recrimination only serve to diminish public confidence in the institution, and we, as parliamentarians, owe it to Canadians to afford Parliament the dignity and respect it warrants.

I have been humbled by the expressions of support and words of encouragement from members of all parties, constituents, Canadians and beyond, since I made my decision public. It has truly been a privilege and an honour to serve – and I fortunately have 20 months left to go until the next election.

Irwin Cotler is the member of Parliament for Mount Royal and a professor emeritus of law at McGill University. On Feb. 5, he announced he would not seek re-election for a seventh term.

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Let a thousand SodaStreams flow

Bernie Farber
Special to The CJN

The drive from the centre of Jerusalem to Ma'aleh Adumim is about 10 or 15 minutes depending on traffic – about the same as driving from Thornhill into Toronto. The really big difference is that Jerusalem and Ma'aleh Adumim (which literally means "Red Heights") are in Israel and the West Bank respectively. For those who have never been to Israel, it's difficult to describe the miniscule borders that separate Israel from the occupied territories (some prefer the term disputed territories).

Its name alone (as with most place names in Israel) denotes a pride of scriptural place. It describes the biblical line that separated the ancient tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

It's easily seen once one leaves Israel's Ben-Gurion Airport and travels north up through the Judean Hills into the Jordan Valley. As you gaze in wonder at the Jerusalem stone cliffs and the "reddish hues" that both give the town its name and mark the way to Judaism's most holy city, signs for Ma'aleh Adumim can be seen along Route 1 and 458 just before you enter Jerusalem proper.

It was started a couple years after the Yom Kippur War, undoubtedly as a means by which to expand Israel's defensive base (part of the reason for settlement developments in the early years), and the government soon gave it official recognition as a municipality, and by 1991, it had gained city status, the first Israeli city in the occupied territories.

Today it is a prosperous, growing community with a population of more than 35,000, slightly larger than Unionville Ont. A short seven kilometres to Jerusalem, it's like driving from Bathurst and Steeles to Lawrence Avenue.

And yet it's this tiny seven-kilometre stretch that makes all the difference. The occupied territories remain the Achilles heel of both Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The short boundaries between Israel and the PA, bordered on all sides by security fences and walls (indeed, in 2003 a road connecting Ma'aleh Adumim to Jerusalem was opened that included large tunnels running under the Hebrew University making it safer for Israelis to avoid terrorists' Molotov cocktails and rifle shots), remains a tragic problem in need of a creative solution

And it is Ma'aleh Adumim that today finds itself in the middle of yet another occupied territories controversy, one that includes a large Israeli company, Hollywood starlet Scarlett Johansson and the international relief agency OXFAM.

By now we all know the story. SodaStream, one of Israel's most successful international companies, is represented by Johansson as part of its marketing plan. Makers of the largest home carbonation system in the world, it sells its product worldwide in more than 65 countries. It's environmentally friendly, it's healthy and great value for the buck. I have one in my own home and love it.

The problem: SodaStream's largest factory is situated in Ma'aleh Adumim. It has become the poster child for those involved in the ill-conceived boycott, sanctions and divestment (BDS) movement against anything Israeli. This all came to a head with a clever SodaStream advertisement that ran during last week's Super Bowl game with Johansson fronting the product. OXFAM, choosing to see the trees as opposed to the whole forest, cut its ties with Johansson, because it saw her role with the company as "incompatible" with its own role as "honest brokers" for humanitarian issues.

Yet the SodaStream controversy in many ways shines some needed light on and even helps us understand both the futility of BDS and the tragedy of the occupation.

SodaStream machine

True, Ma'aleh Adumim is in occupied territory, and true, SodaStream's location there violates accepted norms. But it's also true that SodaStream is a decent employer, providing jobs for hundreds of Israelis and Palestinians at fair and equal wages. Many in the BDS movement have demanded that, along with employers like SodaStream, Israeli academics, artists and politicians must be banned and boycotted. I suspect I will hear from many when I write that boycotts dealing with Israel and the PA further exacerbate and fog a necessary solution.

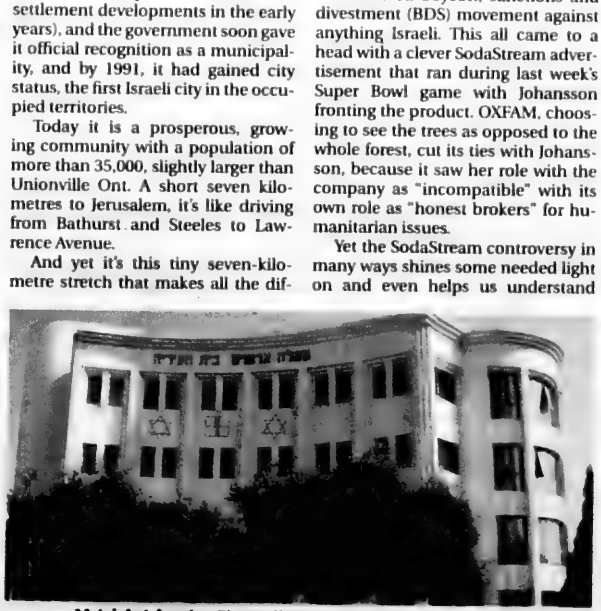
Throwing Palestinian workers out of needed jobs is not the answer. And continuing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policy of building Israeli housing on occupied land is certainly a road fraught with disaster.

In my view, SodaStream is exactly the model that both Israel and the PA should embrace: Israelis and Palestinians working side by side as equals, seeing each other as co-workers, neighbours and friends. Such an endeavour bodes well for future growth in a neighbourhood that can use positive outcomes.

With the world's attention on Ma'aleh Adumim, real questions can be asked, complexities analyzed. We can examine the tragedy of being an occupying power and the need to negotiate a dignified solution to end an occupation that very few want to see continue.

In the end, understandings could be brought to bear that Ma'aleh Adumim and other Jewish settlements close to Jerusalem are integral to the Israeli and Palestinian economies. Focus can be placed on the absolute need to creatively design a land swap that helps fashion a contiguous Palestinian state that can thrive side by side with Israel, where many SodaStreams can flourish and change hard-held paradigms.

Bernie Farber is senior vice-president for government and external relations with Gemini Power Corp. and a former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress.


Ma'aleh Adumim City Hall [*Wikimedia Commons photo*]

Close encounters and being kind

A Canadian triumph over terror

Stockwell Day
JNS.org

Israeli security units are legendary for their formidable defense capabilities. As a former minister of public safety (including anti-terrorism) for Canada, I encouraged joint training and intelligence sharing between our nations' intelligence and protection services. As such, I am well acquainted with the Israeli expertise in this area.

It was with that acute level of respectful awareness that I considered the following question: Would I be able to breach the security perimeter around Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper at a state dinner in Jerusalem in order to introduce him to two uninvited guests?

Who were these two erstwhile individuals? For security reasons, I can't divulge their names. But I can tell you that they were preteen Israeli boys who had each lost their fathers in a ruthless terrorist attack in an Israeli civilian neighborhood.

My wife and I met these young men just three days earlier at a Shabbat meal hosted by our friends, Marc and Chantal Belzberg. As Christians, we were honored to be invited by the Belzbergs to join their family and friends for a few wonderful hours. It was an evening that we shall always cherish.

I will resist the urge to go into great detail describing the sumptuous meal; the warmth of hospitality that makes the phrase "please feel at home" more than a mantra; and the moving readings, prayers, and singing that embraced us. Instead, I will focus on the boys.

They were at the meal with more than a dozen of their friends and counselors. You see, Marc and Chantal run an organization known as OneFamily (www.onefamilytogether.org). Its mandate, briefly put, is to provide love, encouragement, and extensive supportive programming to victims of terror and their families, with a focus on children who have lost parents or other family members at the hands of terrorists.

On the surface, this rambunctious "band of brothers" at our meal looked and sounded like any other group of preteens and adolescents. Laughing, cajoling, arm-twisting, and teasing were constants throughout the meal. But as they respectfully gathered around the table to pray and sing under Marc's leadership, the playful surface melted away.

Reflecting on the two boys specifically, as sad stories unfolded, I was deeply moved as I remembered countless special moments with my own father which these boys would never savour with theirs.

I remember wrestling matches on the floor of our home, trying hilariously to pin down my father's giant arms. Or slapping my sister's arm when she had pulled my hair and feeling my father's strong hand pull me away and his serious tone when he warned me to "never hit a girl." Or racing around the final turn of the 1,500-meter event at the school track meet, my legs and lungs fading and on fire, with my rival in close pursuit and suddenly my father's shout of "You can do it!" amidst the crowd pushing me towards the finish line.

They would never experience the feeling of phoning "Dad" from the maternity ward and proudly informing him that he was now a grandfather. Or seeking sage advice about the risks of a possible career move. These boys will never know such moments with their natural fathers.

But the dedication exhibited by the Belzbergs and their many volunteers will help to bridge the emotional and spiritual divide. Children like these will move into an adulthood that will be far more comforting, stable, and fulfilling than it would have been without OneFamily.

So, when the boys asked me breathlessly if there was any chance they could shake hands with this prime minister, a man whom they had heard proclaim on the news that he would always stand "shoulder to shoulder" with Israel, I had to at least try.

Not wanting to raise issues of national security, an amateurish plan began to unfold.

On the night of the state dinner, Marc showed up with the two hopeful boys in tow. As all guests have to be cleared many days in advance, it was no small feat for Marc to convince security on the ground at the hotel that these two wide-eyed interlopers posed no existential threat.

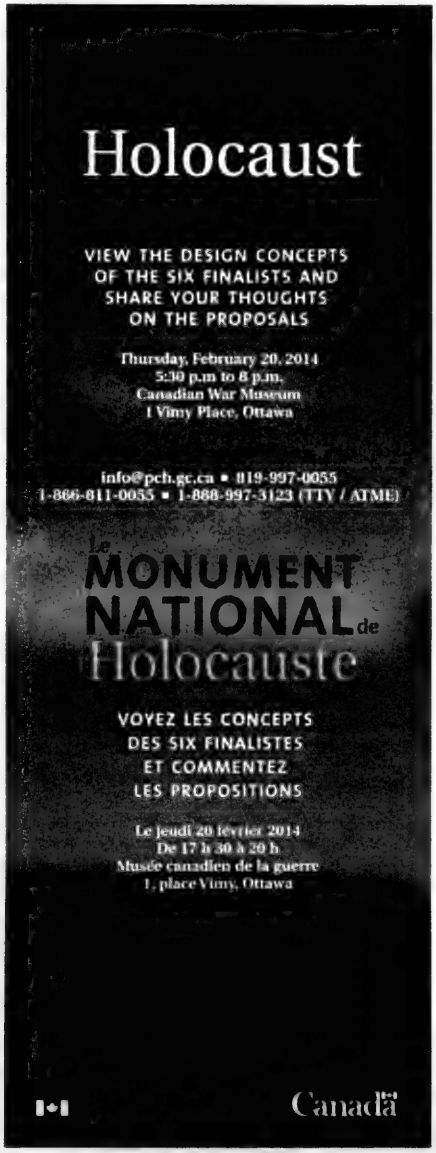
Next, we were met by the amazing coincidence that a high-ranking minister standing in the reception line had served in the military with one of the deceased dads. The boys were ushered to the final perimeter and then handed off to me.

Suddenly, the phalanx of iron-armed, square-jawed secret service agents surrounded Prime Minister Harper and began quickly steering him towards the exit. But two of the lead officers recognized me, saw the boys, and gave me a quick nod and a gap that allowed me to lean to the prime minister's ear and give him a 10-second briefing. He stopped the entourage, reached past the guards, grasped the boys' hands, and thanked them heartily for being there with him. And then he was gone.

The encounter left the boys breathless and ecstatic. It left Marc beaming like a solar flare. And it left me with an unspeakable sense of gratitude that there are people like Marc, Chantal, and their family, who are dedicated to shining precious light into otherwise darkened situations.

Stockwell Day is the former leader of Canada's Official Opposition and a former cabinet minister serving in the government of Stephen Harper. He also served as minister of public safety, minister of international trade, minister for the Asia-Pacific, and president of the treasury board. Day now runs the Stockwell Day Connex consulting agency and is a political commentator and an international speaker.

Former federal cabinet minister Stockwell Day and his wife Valorie pictured with Israeli boys who each lost their fathers in a terrorist attack, at a state dinner during Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's recent trip to Israel.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Transit, school funding, hydro on agenda

Thornhill voters head to polls

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

The riding of Thornhill, geographically the same federally and provincially, has the highest percentage of Jews of any electoral district in Canada, at 36.6 per cent of the population (just eclipsing Mount Royal, at 36.3 per cent).

Thus, Prime Minister's Stephen Harper's coattails are evident here.

Thornhill elected Conservative Peter Kent as its MP in the past two federal elections, while Peter Shurman, also a Tory, was elected as its MPP in the last two provincial votes. (In 2011, Shurman defeated Liberal hopeful Bernie Farber, a past CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, by nearly seven percentage points.)

Shurman's resignation late last year over an expenses flap paved the way for Gila Martow, a 52-year-old optometrist and community activist, to be the Conservative standard bearer in the Feb. 13 byelection.

She will face Liberal contender Sandra Yeung Racco, 53, the City of Vaughan's councillor in Ward 4. Yeung Racco's husband, Mario Racco, was Thornhill's MPP until Shurman defeated him in 2007.

Making her second run for office in the riding is the NDP candidate, Cindy Hackelberg, a 35-year-old high-tech software project manager who polled about nine per cent of votes in 2011.

The Green Party is running Teresa Pun, a doctor. In the last election, the Greens received about 1.7 per cent of the vote in the riding.

Over the last five years, the riding's population has increased by 10,000 to about 140,000. It has a sizeable Russian and Israeli presence, and is home to many synagogues, Jewish schools and community facilities.

The CJN presented each candidate with a list of the following questions:

THE CANDIDATES / THE QUESTIONS	**Cindy Hackelberg NDP**	**Gila Martow PC**	**Teresa Pun Green**	**Sandra Yeung Racco Liberal**
TRANSIT: *What is your plan to improve transit in the riding? The VivaNext plan calls for two subway extensions, two light rail transit (LRT) lines, and a bus rapid transit (BRT) network featuring dedicated lanes for Viva vehicles. Do you favour all, parts or none of this plan? And should municipalities that benefit shoulder some of the funding?*	Families shouldn't be hit with new taxes and tolls they can't afford, while the government moves ahead with more corporate tax loopholes and sky-high CEO salaries. New Democrats support effective transit for Thornhill, including the subway extensions, but we don't believe that families should be asked to pay more, at the same time as the government opens new loopholes.	We are committed to building the subway north to Richmond Hill. That's a promise, and we keep our promises... We need more north-south express rapid transit, not east-west bus lanes. That creates traffic chaos and damages business activities in neighbourhoods.	Improving transit in the riding and region is critical to getting our economy moving again. I support the VivaNext plan, and regionally the Big Move plan, including the extension of the subway to Richmond Hill. The Green Party of Ontario will dedicate at least 2 per cent of the transportation budget to active transportation.	People are tired of wasting precious hours trapped in traffic when they could be spending time with their families or be productive at work... The Liberal government understands the importance of funding transit infrastructure in York Region... Thornhill needs continued transit funding, not cutting projects like the PCs propose.
TUITION: *Tuition at private, faith-based schools is an issue in the riding, particularly among Jewish voters. What can you promise to ease the plight of parents of children in these schools?*	A faith-based system will not solve the problem of inadequate funding. New Democrats are committed to fair provincial funding for the existing school systems so they can serve students' needs first.	Obviously I understand and I sympathize with the parents who are struggling, but we are focused on the economy and job growth and ending traffic gridlock. [She said she has no plan to bring back the equity in education tax credit, introduced by the Tories under Mike Harris in 2001 and repealed by the Liberals under Dalton McGuinty in 2003.]	It's unfair to members of all religious communities that we are currently publicly funding a separate Catholic school system and not others in addition to a public system. The Green party supports a single public education system with French and English school boards.	Ontario Liberals are committed to strengthening our public education system... We're also giving our youngest learners the best start possible: full-day kindergarten– the first program of its kind in North America.
HYDRO: *Hydro rates are reportedly set to increase by about 40 per cent. How will you work to keep increases to a minimum, and what role do you think the gas plant scandal has played in higher rates?*	It's clear that the Liberals and Conservatives are more interested in well-connected private power interests than in bringing down rates for the people and businesses who pay the bills.	The Liberal government has made a mess of our energy sector, and that's what's causing the increases.	We believe that Ontario consumers and taxpayers shouldn't have to pay the bill for energy mismanagement. We would implement programs and legislation to help people save money by saving energy, such as building retrofits and conservation measures. We have long advocated for Ontario to import existing low-cost, clean water power from Quebec.	Over the past 10 years, the government has invested heavily in our electricity system, which was in desperate need of being fixed after years of PC neglect, and we now have cleaner, more modern and more reliable sources of power generation... The premier has been open and transparent about the gas plant relocations and has put in place new rules to ensure it doesn't happen again.
JOB CREATION: *Where do you stand on job creation in the riding - and how to retain existing jobs?*	New Democrats have proposed a Job Creator Tax Credit that will reward companies creating jobs and investing in Ontario... We know that small businesses form the backbone of our economy, and that's why it's time to cut the small business tax rate.	Job creation and economic growth are about having programs in place so that small businesses are not strangled by red tape... It's about mentoring, helping the next generation get the jobs they're passionate about.	Thornhill is establishing itself as a strong R & D corridor. I believe that governments can – and should – support smart growth and social progress with economic policy.	I want to focus on three areas in particular: continuing to invest in opportunities for young people through programs like the Youth Jobs Strategy; ensuring that small businesses have the support they need to thrive; and continuing to invest in smart infrastructure projects.

BYELECTION

Two Liberals back Tory candidate in race

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

Two high-profile Jewish Liberals have thrown their support behind the Conservative candidate in the Feb. 13 byelection in Thornhill.

Susan Kadis, who represented the riding as a Liberal MP from 2004 to 2008, and Joel Hertz, vice-chair of the York Region District School Board, have endorsed Tory hopeful Gila Martow in the provincial vote.

"I believe in Gila," Kadis told *The CJN*. "I believe in her capacity to bring the issues Thornhill cares about to the forefront. She has that strong desire and dedication to our community."

Asked about a Liberal endorsing a Conservative, Kadis said, "I think it really speaks to her character, integrity and commitment she's shown to our community."

Kadis herself sought the provincial Liberal nomination in Thornhill in 2003, but was defeated by Mario Racco, who won and served as an MPP until 2007. Racco is the husband of the current Liberal candidate in the byelection, Vaughan city councillor Sandra Yeung Racco.

Susan Kadis

In 2006, Kadis withdrew her support for then-federal Liberal leadership hopeful Michael Ignatieff after he accused Israel of committing war crimes in Lebanon. Kadis later endorsed Bob Rae.

In an email to *The CJN*, Hertz said: "I believe Gila is the best person for the position of Thornhill MPP. She is extremely hard-working, very aware of the riding's needs and excellent in communicating. That she is Jewish cannot but help her in a riding that is 40 per cent Jewish.

"I am normally a strong Liberal, federally and provincially," Hertz continued. "However, in this byelection, I am making a selection not based on party, but based on the candidates."

Yeung Racco downplayed the issue, telling *The CJN* she has been endorsed by other Liberals, including former MP Elinor Caplan and former Canadian Jewish Congress CEO Bernie Farber, who ran unsuccessfully for the Ontario Liberals in the last election.

Also supporting Martow are Aaron Blumenfeld and Ira Walfish, advocates for public funding of Jewish day schools.

While government help for faith-based private schools is not a front-burner issue in this election, "it will be far better served down the road with the election of Gila Martow, who will not be shy about advocating for the issue," Blumenfeld and Walfish said in a Jan. 27 statement.

Meanwhile, Martow's Facebook page was scrubbed of an anti-Islamic group of which she had been a member.

The CJN noticed her membership in "Stop the creation of an Islamic State within Israel" hours after its Jan. 28 interview with her. The group was created in late December by Meir Weinstein, head of the militant Jewish Defence League in Canada.

After *The CJN* asked Kadis about the link, it was purged from Martow's Facebook page.

In a subsequent email, Ari Laskin, Martow's spokesperson, explained that Martow "is added to Facebook groups frequently. Due to the nature of groups on Facebook, one must opt out of the group and can be added by anyone at any time."

Martow "is committed to representing all residents in this diverse riding," Laskin added.

Hertz later wrote to say that while he supports Martow, he is "not in favour" of the JDL. "There is a limit to 'just because it is Jewish, it is OK.'"

JEWISH LIFE

Yiddish Book Center launches new website

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

The National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass., recently launched Taytsh.org, a new website to help Yiddish translators improve their skills, build an online dictionary of unusual words and phrases, and discuss lexical fine points with their peers around the globe.

For Aaron Lansky, president and founder of the Yiddish Book Center, the new website for translators is one of several exciting "tectonic shifts" that he foresees in the next few years.

He announced at last summer's Jewish genealogy conference in Boston that Yiddish, in the next four years, "will take its place as the first completely digitalized and accessible literature in human history."

The Yiddish Book Center is reportedly in the final stages of perfecting an optical character recognition (OCR) software system for Yiddish that will make all of its 40,000 unique rescued Yiddish titles and 3,000 Yiddish periodicals fully searchable by keyword.

"You can type in any search term – the name of your family, a place name, anything you want – and it will instantly search five million pages of Yiddish literature," Lansky said. "Research that would have taken 10 years can be done in 10 seconds. This is coming very very soon."

Aided by generous grants from Steven Spielberg, the centre began scanning books around 1997. Teams of workers scanned books in three shifts a day for four years to complete the task. Special machines were used that could scan both sides of the page at once, and sometimes "we had to clean the glass after each scan because the books were crumbling," Lansky said.

They also had to cut the spines off some books in order to feed the pages through. Lansky called the process "the General Westmoreland school of digitalization – we had to destroy the book in order to save it."

Although not searchable, more than 11,000 Yiddish works are now accessible free of charge via the "internet archive" website, internetarchive.org. The online works have been downloaded about 500,000 times, according to Lansky: not bad for a language supposedly in its death throes.

The Yiddish Book Center has been training large numbers of students to undertake translations of the 98 per cent of the titles on its shelves that have not yet been translated. "The good news is that an ever-growing number of younger and non-native Yiddish speakers, both inside and outside the academy, are seeking out training and opportunities to translate Yiddish texts," he said.

Tevye, the central character in Sholem Aleichem's Tevye stories, "sometimes quotes the biblical saying, *'Ain chadash tachas hashemesh'* there is nothing new under the sun," Lansky observed. "I think the Bible's got it wrong. The truth is there are all sorts of things that are new under the sun."

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Israel, Jews and the Wiki wars

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

It's the sixth most popular website on the planet. It has become the go-to repository for information, replacing venerable – and dusty – encyclopedias. And it's where controversy over Israel and Judaism are a daily affair.

Welcome to the Wikipedia edit wars.

If you are like most people, you visit Wikipedia to read up on practically any topic under the sun. While the text may seem pretty sedate and respectful, each page has tabs labelled "Talk" and "View history," where you are likely to discover cauldrons boiling with arguments, sarcasm and worse. That's where Wikipedia editors hash out controversial content and attempt to reach some type of consensus.

A typical debate raging behind the scenes is whether the Wikipedia "Israel" page should carry an infobox describing Tel Aviv as the country's "second capital." **[bit.ly/wikiwars6]** Or whether Jerusalem should be described as "the third-holiest city in Islam" or "*generally considered* the third-holiest city in Islam." **[bit.ly/wikiwars7]**

Jimmy Wales, co-founder of Wikipedia, has noticed these debates, but he's not worried that accuracy is being warped. "Topics relating to Israel and Palestine are… in the group of articles that are always heavily edited, heavily discussed, heavily debated… and of course it will happen every day that someone will come in with an agenda, in any direction, trying to push that agenda, but the community is quite vigilant about trying to be neutral, trying to follow reliable sources, and I think in general we succeed." **[bit.ly/wikiwars1]**

Wales is referring to some of the ground rules designed to keep Wikipedia content as accurate – and the discussion as civil – as possible. If you follow them, you too are welcome to join in. But break a rule, and your contribution will probably disappear in minutes. Here's a tutorial to get you going editing Wikipedia. **[bit.ly/wikiwars2]**

You don't have to be passionate about Israel to find debate. Researchers recently sized up the 10 most controversial topics in each of the most popular language versions of Wikipedia. Here's a sampling of topics causing waves: Circumcision (English), Muhammad (Arabic), Adolf Hitler (German), Criticism of the Qur'an (Persian), Telepathy (Czech), Islamophobia (French). The full research is available online and is a fascinating read. **[bit.ly/wikiwars3]**

What do Israelis (or at least Hebrew-speakers) like to argue about in Wikipedia? Just about everything from religion to politics, with some sports thrown in for good measure. Here are the Top 10 controversial entries in the Hebrew Wikipedia:

10. Ariel Sharon
9. Beitar Jerusalem F.C. (football club)
8. Gaza War
7. Daphni Leef (Israeli social activist and organizer of a Tel Aviv tent camp, sparking the 2011 housing protests in Israel.)
6. Jewish settlement in Hebron
5. Benjamin Netanyahu
4. B'Tselem (Israeli non-governmental organization)
3. 2006 Lebanon War
2. Chabad messianism
1. Chabad

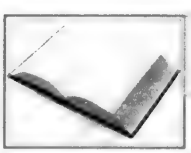
[bit.ly/wikiwars4]

Sometimes, arguments are best kept in the family. Over at the "Judaism" entry, some people feel there are too many photos depicting Ashkenazi-oriented Jewish objects. How's this rebuttal: "Like which photo? The shofar, the chanukiyah, the mezuzah, the Jerusalem sukkah? If these objects are Ashkenazi-oriented, you seem to imply that Sephardi people don't do mitzvot!… Take your inferiority complex somewhere else, please." **[bit.ly/wikiwars5]**

highway@rogers.com

To love is divine

Rabbi David Cadoch



Rabbinic Reflections

I often wonder how it's possible to love what you cannot see. This a demand made to us by the Almighty. Our Torah speaks of loving the Almighty, and we base this love on the testimony of our forbearers and receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai. Our faith is based on our great liberation from slavery, culminating by what we *heard* standing around the mountain of God.

Human nature is such that we become attached to the things our senses can detect and imbue with value.

The fact is that the real meaning of love is a matter of giving. The focus of our giving becomes the love that is nurtured. Whether it's the work we invest in, the family we raise, or friendships we build, all these are based on the power of giving.

So, having said this, how are we to understand the love of God? If love follows the direction of giving, do we give to God? Or is He the one that gives to us and, therefore, shows His love for us by gracing us with the beauty of the full spectrum of life? Is love then an appreciation of what we take or receive? It may be, however, that taking can become so selfish that it loses all sense of appreciation, and, therefore, we must conclude that receiving is not the essence of love.

We return to the original question: how can we love what we do not see? Even a memory lives on from a past existence. In order to understand this enigma, we must understand that love is a spiritual quality that is expressed in the physical world in many different ways.

We were created in the image of God and, therefore, possess divine powers. One divine power is the capacity to love. When we decide to live moral lives and make integrity and honesty our model, we in fact are giving back love to its source – the spiritual realm. This form of giving awakens our spiritual sensitivity, and we find that a subtle bond of attachment is formed with what is holy and divine, and this awakens the love of God.

All this refined connection is infinitely intricate and so delicately balanced as to reciprocate this give and take, and this is what we call love. We try to bring this kind of balance to our marriage, our family and our circle of friends. It involves so much care and selflessness.

So if love is a spiritual quality, then loving is a divine act of giving!

Rabbi David Cadoch is spiritual leader of Beth HaRambam Synagogue at Donald Berman Maimonides Hospital in Montreal.

3D printing and civil society

From the Reut Institute
Jude Jacob

In the past few years, 3D printing has filled the headlines and changed the way we think about objects and production. In recent months, we've witnessed the production of shoes, houses, chocolates, jewelry and even human ears. Not long ago, this all seemed like science fiction, but today, all of this is real and forever expanding. Who knows what will be next? Already NASA has adopted 3D printing to make tools, and even spacecraft.

There's no question that this new printing technology is remarkable, and many see it as an alternative to mass production. It's essentially environmentally friendly, since each object is created individually, layer by layer, which means there's no need for wasteful moulds or long production lines.

Moreover, objects can be specially designed by users to meet their needs. For example, if you see a piece of jewelry you like, but desperately want your name on it, or a vase that's perfect for a friend but just needs a few changes, you can simply modify the design and print your own. And more than that, if you have a disability that makes it difficult to use certain objects, you can simply use a 3D printer to print your own special, customized objects.

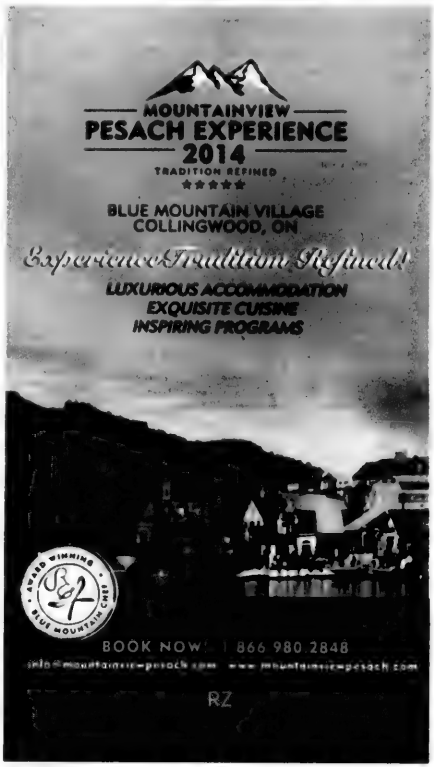
But the really remarkable thing is that in Israel and across the world, communal technological spaces are opening up. These are new places that bring together 3D printing and other technologies in a bottom-up, increasingly accessible and also open-source way. The fact that these new spaces espouse open source means that if I solve a pressing need today in one location – say I develop a new type of cutlery with a special grip for people with a specific disability – someone in a different communal space can open up my design, change it as they see fit and print their own. New designs can be easily built and easily modified. This is a powerful tool for sharing knowledge and solving global problems.

In Israel, this is a revolution. While the top-down high-tech community, in which a small number of people benefit from the fruits of growth, have of course picked up the technology and continually use it for prototyping and making professional products, the creation of communal technological spaces means that 3D printing is now accessible to the general public. These spaces provide the tools and education for a wide range of people to learn about these new technologies. And most importantly, civil society is taking the lead on this issue.

Israel's "maker" culture and community of "learning through doing" has been around for a while and was once very niche, a community limited to the tech-savvy and to not-always-accessible, do-it-yourself pursuits. Today, however, 3D technologies are increasingly available, easy to use and relatively cheap, and Israel's "maker" community is rapidly expanding.

Community-oriented 3D printing is, therefore, a perfect vehicle to bring together different communities around problem solving and learning by doing. These new communal spaces stand to greatly benefit Israel's socio-economic and geographic periphery by providing access to new tools and technologies. Ultimately, these new spaces harness 3D technologies to benefit the community, and the technological revolution offers a unique opportunity for Israel's civil society to take hold of new technologies and use them as tools for education, leadership and coexistence.

Jude Jacob is development and external relations team leader at the Reut Institute.



How we relate to God

From the Bimah
Rabbi Joe Kanofsky

A minor controversy has erupted in the Anglo-Jewish press in recent weeks over women in two New York Jewish day schools expressing a desire to wear tfillin at the school's morning prayers. Truth is, most Jews don't put on tfillin at all, ever. Some have therefore said that we ought to applaud these young women's "search for spirituality."

And yet, there is an angle to this story that has not been addressed in any opinion pieces or blogs that I've seen. It's really one of the big questions of modern Jewish life, and in a nutshell it is: is spiritual seeking on my terms or on God's terms?

I learned long ago that "the devil can cite Scripture for his purpose," as Shakespeare wrote in *The Merchant of Venice*. I recall reading the words of a Jewish journalist writing about his stay in a resort hotel in the South Pacific. He explained to the manager that he would be observing a special day of rest (a Shabbat, of sorts) that Friday night and Saturday, so the thoughtful hotel hostess brought him a sumptuous meal of a steaming bowl of rice covered with shrimp. The writer was very moved by her *hachnassat orchim* (welcoming guests)! Feeling a sense of *kavod haberiyot* (honour for humankind), how could he refuse her hospitality? He ate the whole thing. Not only can we do whatever we like, the cleverer among us can even fool ourselves into thinking that it's a mitzvah.

The question remains: on whose terms is the spiritual pursuit undertaken? The modern view is: whatever makes you feel good and doesn't hurt others. If I find comfort and meaning in eastern spirituality, Hindu texts, Sufi meditation, why not? It's all good. That salad bar of spiritual tidbits is the meagre meal of the contemporary spiritual seeker.

But if I seek a relation on God's terms, then it must be not merely what makes me happy (although Jews are supposed to be happy). It should be what God wants. How do I know what God wants? The Jewish understanding of this over the past 3,000 years is called Torah.

Even though I believe that I'd feel more "spiritual" on a mountaintop in the Himalayas, Torah tells me, "What's wrong with a minyan right here in Toronto?" If I feel that tfillin should be green, made of 100 per cent post-consumer product, inscribed with Wordsworth's poetry, and wrapped around my leg, Torah tells me: sorry – black, leather, *Shema*, and the arm and head.

I'm fond of using the example: if you want to call or email me, I can give you my phone number or my email address. If you call a number that is "more meaningful" to you, even if it's off by one digit, you won't reach me. You may reach someone else and have a wonderful conversation, but if your hope was to contact me, only one cellphone number will get you through. And if you forget the dot in my email address, the message won't go anywhere. Only if you write the address or dial the phone number exactly as I tell you, will you be able to connect. So it is with Torah and mitzvot.

If the quest for "spirituality" is about connecting with something beyond ourselves, larger than ourselves, it's only effective when we reach out to the Divine on Divine terms, not human terms. That's the issue missing from most of contemporary discussion about modern Jewish practice and how we relate to God.

Israel, Turkey close to normalizing relations

JTA

JERUSALEM — Turkey and Israel are close to normalizing bilateral relations for the first time since the 2010 Mavi Marmara incident, Turkey's foreign minister said.

"There has recently been a momentum and new approach in compensation talks. We could say that most of the differences have been removed recently in these discussions," Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said in a TV interview on Sunday, the *Hurriyet Daily News* reported.

Ahmet Davutoglu *(Wikimedia Commons)*

Davutoglu said "serious progress had been achieved."

He did not say when the talks would be finalized and did not announce the amount of compensation to the victims of the incident or their families that was being discussed. That amount has been the source of a great deal of tension in the negotiations.

The foreign minister also noted that there has been an easing of the Israeli blockage on goods entering and leaving Gaza, which had been a condition for normalizing relations with the Jewish state.

Turkey downgraded diplomatic ties with Israel and then expelled Israel's ambassador after the 2010 flotilla incident, in which Israeli troops killed nine Turkish nationals when it moved to stop the Mavi Marmara from breaking Israel's blockade of Gaza.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu apologized to Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in March 2013, after which representatives of the countries met for reconciliation talks.

Haredim protest funding freeze

JTA

JERUSALEM — Haredi demonstrators protesting cuts in funding over draft deferrals clashed with police in Jerusalem late last week.

The haredim also were protesting the arrest of a haredi Orthodox yeshiva student for draft dodging.

Major protests were held as well in Bnei Brak and Ashdod.

In Jerusalem, there were about a dozen arrests after protesters hurled bottles and stones at officers, according to reports.

The demonstrations came after Israel's Supreme Court earlier in the week froze nearly $3 million in funding to haredi yeshivas until the government stops military deferments for their students and passes a new law on drafting yeshiva students.

The funding was to be withheld from yeshivas with students aged 18 to 20 who have received draft notices since last summer, but did not appear for their induction. But on Feb. 6, Israeli Finance Minister Yair Lapid halted all funding to the yeshivas, including freezing payments already transferred earlier in the week for the February disbursement, after discovering that the money was still being used for those students.

The Yesh Atid party, headed by Lapid, made universal draft legislation, which it also calls the "Sharing the Burden" law, one of its major campaign issues.

The Tal Law, which allowed haredi men to defer army service indefinitely, was invalidated by the Supreme Court in February 2012 and expired in August that year. Haredi yeshiva students since then have had their drafts deferred.

A government committee headed by MK Ayelet Shaked of the Jewish Home party is working to finish revising a universal draft law, which already has passed its first reading in the Knesset.

Hundreds of haredim clashed with Israeli police during a protest in Jerusalem Feb. 6 following the arrest of a haredi draft-dodger and against a bill intended to enforce haredi enlistment into the IDF. *(Yonatan Sindel/Flash90 photo)*

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Iranian TV airs simulated bombings of Israel

Ilan Ben Zion
The Times of Israel

Iranian state TV ran a documentary Feb. 7 featuring a computerized video of Iran's drones and missiles bombing Tel Aviv, Haifa, Ben-Gurion Airport and the Dimona nuclear reactor in a hypothetical retaliation for an Israeli or American strike on the Islamic Republic.

Iranian drones and missiles are also shown carrying out simulated strikes on the American aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, downing U.S. aircraft and striking American military targets in the Persian Gulf.

The clip was broadcast amid a clear escalation of anti-American rhetoric and action by Iran. On Feb. 8, an Iranian admiral announced that Iran had dispatched warships to the North Atlantic, while Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, denounced the Americans as liars who, while professing to be friends of Iran, would bring down his regime if they could. He also said it was "amusing" that the United States thought Iran would reduce its "defensive capabilities."

The film, titled *The Nightmare of Vultures*, opens with Khamenei addressing military academy graduates in 2011, warning: "Anybody who thinks of attacking the Islamic Republic of Iran should be prepared to receive strong slaps and iron fists from the armed forces."

Simulated attack by Iran on Ben-Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv [*YouTube screenshot*]

"And America, its regional puppets and its guard dog – the Zionist regime – should know that the response of the Iranian nation to any kind of aggression, attacks or even threats will be a response that will make them collapse from within," the film shows him saying.

Set to dramatic music, the video shows Iranian drones and missiles carrying out strikes against Tel Aviv's Kikar Hamedina square, the Azrieli Towers skyscrapers, and the IDF's Kirya central command complex, as well as Ben-Gurion International Airport, Haifa's Technion, several army and air force bases, and the nuclear reactor in Dimona.

The strike on Israel's central command building is shown taking place while former prime minister Ehud Olmert and former defence minister Amir Peretz – who served in that capacity during the 2006 Second Lebanon War – are inside convening a meeting.

The clips of drone strikes on Israel are interspersed with shots of Israeli emergency personnel evacuating injured Israeli civilians and soldiers while air raid sirens wail.

A barrage of missiles brings down Tel Aviv's skyscrapers in a final blow.

Afterward, Iranian drones and missiles are show attacking the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln on its way through the Strait of Hormuz into the Persian Gulf. Iranian drones are shown downing several American aircraft before sinking the U.S. capital ship. Zooming out to a map of the Middle East marked with U.S. military bases, Iranian missiles are then shown striking American military targets across the Persian Gulf.

In November, Iranian state television aired a shorter animated clip showing Iranian missiles targeting Israeli cities.

Iranian leaders have made repeated threats to wipe Israel off the map and have threatened to annihilate Tel Aviv if Iran's nuclear facilities are attacked by the West.

Timesofisrael.com

To view video, go to cjnews.com.

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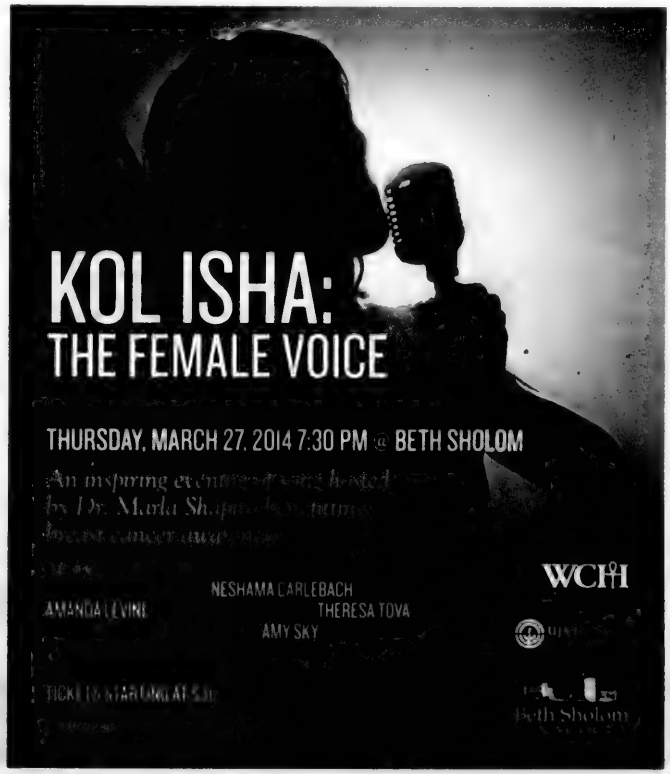

West Bank businesses flourish despite boycott

Ben Sales
JTA

TEL AVIV — Of the 200,000 wine bottles Yakov Burg produced last year, 16,000 went to Europe.

The possibility of a boycott and repeated rumblings that Europe is planning to label goods produced in the settlements could decrease that number, but Burg isn't worried.

The CEO of Psagot Winery, which is located in a settlement of the same name in the hills of the central West Bank, Burg prides himself on running a Jewish-owned business in the West Bank, even welcoming groups of Christian Zionists who want to volunteer during the harvest.

The winery's location, though, also makes it a prime target for boycotts aimed at goods produced in the settlements.

"There are a lot of places that won't buy the wine, so of course there's damage," Burg told *JTA*. "It doesn't scare me. We need to fight the boycott, not just do what they want."

The effort to boycott goods produced in the West Bank, long an objective of anti-Israel activists and some Jewish critics of the Israeli occupation, has achieved some notable victories in recent weeks.

Last month, PGGM, the largest Dutch pension fund, announced it was divesting from five Israeli banks because of their involvement in financing Israeli settlements. That was followed by an announcement that Denmark's Danske Bank was blacklisting Israel's Bank Hapoalim over its settlement activity. Sweden's Nordea Bank has asked two other Israeli banks for more information about their activities in the settlements.

In the United States, settlement goods were in the news recently after actress Scarlett Johansson came under fire for representing SodaStream, an Israeli company that produces home soda machines at a factory in the West Bank.

And in Europe, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands already label goods made in the settlements, and the European Union (EU) has threatened repeatedly to take the labelling continent-wide. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry warned last week that Israel could face even greater boycott pressure if peace talks with the Palestinians collapse.

But several CEOs of companies that operate factories in the settlements acknowledged that while boycotts could hurt sales, they don't yet represent a serious threat to business.

An award-winning wine from Psagot Winery

Yehuda Cohen, CEO of the plastics company Lipski, which has a factory in the northern West Bank Barkan industrial park, said sales dropped 17 per cent in 2010 when local Palestinians started boycotting his products. His company has since recovered, growing by 18 per cent last year.

Though only a fraction of Lipski's products are shipped abroad – 16 per cent of total sales are for export, of which a majority goes to Europe – Cohen acknowledges that the EU move to label settlement products is a real threat. Labelling settlement products, Cohen said, could hamper relations with retailers.

"I don't think we've come to the level of a boycott, but labelling is half a boycott," Cohen said. "The retailer will say, 'I don't want problems. Israel is not acting well.'"

A European boycott could have a much larger impact on SodaStream, which according to a 2012 Bloomberg News report, looks to Europe for most of its sales. The company's CEO, Daniel Birnbaum, told the *Forward* recently that having a factory in a settlement was a "pain in the ass."

The impact of a boycott, though hardly irrelevant, would be more limited for Psagot and Lipski, neither of which is as reliant on European business.

But neither Burg nor Cohen shares Birnbaum's sentiments about the virtues of operating a business in the West Bank. Nor does Rami Levy, the head of the budget supermarket chain Rami Levy Hashikma Market, which operates three locations in the West Bank.

For Burg, his vineyard's location is in part an ideological statement of opposition to a Palestinian state. Cohen said he supports Israeli-Palestinian peace talks and the goal of a two-state solution. Like other CEOs of companies with West Bank operations, he believes his company furthers the cause of peace by giving jobs to Palestinians.

"Not only does it not do damage, it provides an example of how to live together, how we can do business together," Levy said. "When you open businesses, you create more jobs. Just don't discriminate based on religion, race and nationality."

Levy, whose chain employs about 2,000 Palestinians, was part of a delegation of 100 Israeli businessmen to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last month aimed at encouraging a peace agreement. More than half the 90 employees of Lipski's West Bank factory are Palestinians. Burg employs four Palestinians out of 20 total employees.

Hilik Bar, who chairs the Knesset caucus for furthering relations between Israel and Europe, said Levy's argument won't convince Europeans in the absence of a peace agreement. Bar strongly opposes boycotts, but the Labor party lawmaker believes the government needs to pursue peace more aggressively.

"It's not just the two [Scandinavian] banks, it is spreading everywhere," said Bar, who also chairs the caucus for the promotion of a solution for the Israeli-Arab conflict. "Israel has an image as a state worthy to isolate. It's a whole world we're giving up on economically as long as we don't come to a two-state solution."

But Levy claims not to be worried. Europeans, he said, talk a good game when it comes to settlements, but ultimately they're focused on the bottom line.

"If we let them profit, in the end they'll invest," he said. "The Europeans know one thing: Israel treats them well."

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Reform movement gets apology

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli lawmaker David Rotem offered a full apology for reportedly saying the Reform movement "is not Jewish."

At the start of a Knesset constitution, law and justice committee meeting on Sunday, Rotem again addressed the remarks, which raised the hackles of religious and other Jewish groups in Israel and the United States.

"I had no intention of hurting anyone or the Reform movement," Rotem said, reading from a prepared statement, according to *Ha'aretz*. "There were those who tried to twist my words into meaning that I did not believe that Reform Jews are Jewish. For me, any Reform Jew born to a Jewish mother is a Jew like any other.

"My intention was that I have deep differences with the Reform movement about practical matters related to Judaism. At the same time, considering that we are all Jews and members of the same religion, we need to solve these differences in discussions and conversations around the table. I apologize to anyone who may have been hurt."

On Feb. 6, Rotem said his remarks made the previous day had been "misinterpreted" by the media.

The director of the Reform movement in Israel, Rabbi Gilad Kariv, thanked Rotem for his Sunday apology, according to the *Jerusalem Post*.

"The only way to conduct the significant arguments between Jewish denominations and the different sectors of Israeli society is through mutual respect and by seeking the common ground," Rabbi Kariv said.

Following Rotem's apology, MK Uri Maklev of the United Torah Judaism party said Rotem was forced to apologize and accused the Reform movement of bribing Israeli lawmakers, according to *Ha'aretz*.

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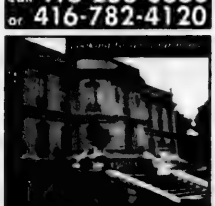

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RUSSIAN BUSINESS: J.Projects, in partnership with *Russian Express*, recently held Switch On – Business Event of the Year, at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre in Vaughan. The Jan. 30 event featured keynote speakers Gary Lipovetzky, co-founder of Dealfind.com and Bestie.com, and Igor Sorokin, owner of ICM Consulting Corp. J.Projects brings together Russian-speaking Jews for community events, celebrations, a summer camp, and various leadership and networking programs. Pictured are Jeanette Hyde, human resources manager of the Swartz-Reisman Centre, left, and Kate Abazov, federation's education emissary for Russian-speaking initiatives.

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OBITUARIES and Related Notices

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Barmherzig, Milia	Jan. 19/14	Private
Gembom, Yakov	Jan. 19/14	541 Finch Ave. W
Weiner, Florence	Jan. 20/14	3705 Bathurst St
Deutsch, Zalmen	Jan. 20/14	205 Cummer Ave
Dutnoff-Wetstein, Selma	Jan. 21/14	7300 Yonge St
Lazarof, Samuel	Jan. 21/14	120 Promenade Circle
Roff, Sandra	Jan. 22/14	260 Heath St
Heller Frohlinger, Joseph	Jan. 22/14	38 Alexis Rd
Verman, Toby	Jan. 23/14	92 Wenderly Dr
Nathanson, Julius Larry	Jan. 23/14	10 Prue Ave
Silverberg, Brenda C.	Jan. 24/14	1407 Gord Vinson Ave
Naftolin, Lydia	Jan. 24/14	36 Kitsilano Crs
Bader, Jonathan	Jan. 25/14	10 Yonge St
Nussbaum, Meyer	Jan. 27/14	96 Sultana Ave
Cohen, Gloria Anne	Jan. 28/14	49 Bevshire Circle
Skolnik, Mania	Jan. 27/14	
Lee, Libby	Jan. 27/14	
Benmergui, Miriam	Jan. 30/14	48 Mullen Dr

HEBREW BASIC

Penny Szirtes	Jan 8/14	790 Cummer Avenue
Zelda Bernstein	Jan 10/14	625 Glencairn Avenue

Watch this space for weekly updates on
Obituaries
Unveilings
Cards of Thanks
Memorials/Yahrzeit
Shiva Catering

Deadline to be included in this space is 10 days prior to issue date.

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Ronald Black	Jan 10/14	1 Benvenuto Place
Meri Saguy	Jan 7/14	241 Walmer Road
Marcu Faur	Jan 10/14	25 Brunswick Avenue
Sydney Lewis Robins	Jan 10/14	33 Jackes Avenue
Mildred Dinsberg Bluestein	Jan 11/14	85 Skymark Drive
Bertha Dawang	Jan 12/14	
Walter (Woolfie) Miller	Jan 12/14	546 Steeles Ave. West
Esther Goldstein	Jan 12/14	55 Ameer Avenue
Claire Taub	Jan 10/14	18-A Hazelton Avenue
Zelda Rebick	Jan 12/14	351 Christie Street
Avra Groesman	Jan 13/14	49 Maple Valley Road
Erving Ross	Jan 13/14	2075 Bayview Avenue
Philip Viessing	Jan 14/14	7 Townsgate Drive
Bella Stier	Jan 15/14	20 Coreydale Court
Eleanor May	Jan 15/14	28 Lower Village Gate
Zissa (Lica) Landesberg	Jan 15/14	10 Torresdale Avenue
Ruth Kerbel	Jan 16/14	33 Jackes Avenue
Renia Wolnerman	Jan 16/14	546 Steeles Ave. West
Allan Griesdorf	Jan 15/14	300 Brighton Avenue
Marvin Grill	Jan 16/14	81 Point O'Woods Dr.
Israil Kodner	Jan 16/14	541 Finch Ave. West
Lillian Kagan	Jan 19/14	541 Finch Ave. West
Alvin Zeisman	Jan 17/14	333 Clark Avenue
Paul Michael Cantor	Jan 17/14	310 Charlton Avenue
Helen Sherman	Jan 18/14	262 St. Clair Ave. West
Barbara Goldberger	Jan 17/14	10 Torresdale Avenue
Gordon Schwartz	Jan 19/14	345 Sherbourne Street
Robert (Bob) Harwood	Jan 18/14	18 Concorde Place
Seymour (Cy) Janikun	Jan 19/14	3560 Bathurst Street
Thomas Kellner	Jan 20/14	30 Greenfield Avenue
Norman Snider	Jan 19/14	133 Torresdale Avenue
Charles Kahn	Jan 22/14	175 Willowdale Ave.
Froim Merkur	Jan 23/14	131 Beecroft Road
Edna Brown	Jan 21/14	22 Shallmar Blvd.
Clara Landesberg	Jan 23/14	10 Torresdale Avenue
Rosie Roebuck	Jan 22/14	356 Bons Avenue
David Mortimer	Jan 24/14	65 Skymark Drive
Marjorie Traves	Jan 24/14	25 Brunswick Avenue
Joszef Burger	Jan 26/14	80 Antibes Drive
Anne Levine	Jan 26/14	7001 Bathurst Street
Norma Cohen	Jan 25/14	242 Strathallan Wood
Irving Milchberg	Jan 26/14	1 Clark Avenue West
Peggy Swartz	Jan 27/14	80 Roberta Drive
Henry Zlot	Jan 26/14	7001 Bathurst Street
Jerry Maizel	Jan 28/14	51 Dundurn Crescent
Annette White	Jan 27/14	1035 Eglinton Ave. West
Moshe Karvat	Jan 28/14	131 Torresdale Avenue

There's an app for visiting the Holocaust museum

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL - History is converging with modern technology to raise awareness of the Holocaust, especially among younger people.

The Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC) has launched a mobile application for the iPad and Android tablets that's designed to enhance visitors' experience of the museum.

The app can also be used as preparation for a visit or as a virtual tour.

Three different options are available to download at no cost.

A general tour is numerically co-ordinated to each display in the exhibition, which commemorates and educates about the Holocaust largely through the personal stories of survivors, most of whom live or lived in Montreal.

Visitors can follow sequentially or zero in on areas that interest them. A map of the museum's two levels is provided, and the user can keep a record of what he or she has seen already by typing in the numerical code.

They can consult the app to get more information on each item displayed, more background and photos on an individual, including video of them speaking. Audio commentary is provided throughout.

Many of the items are personal belongings donated by survivors or their families, about which there is much more to tell than can be included in the texts accompanying them, said MHMC museum and collection co-ordinator Julie Guinard.

"The supplemental information makes these people more three-dimensional," she said. "Objects alone may not mean much, but when a connection is made to a real person they do."

The app is also a practical tool. The pages of a book on view can be flipped through, for instance, by swiping the tablet screen.

Similarly, the secrets contained in "The Heart from Auschwitz," which has proven to be one of the most effective teaching tools especially among younger children, are revealed through the app.

Donated by survivor Fania Fainer, this little cloth-covered folded cardboard heart was a birthday gift to her by fellow female inmates at the death camp. Made from scraps, the heart's folds conceal the wishes the young women wrote.

With the app, the heart can be unfolded and the inscriptions within translated from the Polish, Russian and other languages with a touch to the tablet screen.

The museum can only display a fraction of the MHMC's holdings, which has now reached more than 10,000 items, including documents. Most of that is conserved in off-site, climate-controlled storage, Guinard said.

The other tour options offered are more specialized, focusing on the experience of children and teens, Jewish as well as Roma, Polish and German, and the theme of "Deconstructing Genocide."

The latter is a guide to understanding how the Holocaust and other mass atrocities can take place.

"They do not happen overnight," said Guinard. "It is a process that begins with propaganda, with the use of prejudice and the polarizing of minorities."

The MHMC's goal is to sensitize the public to all forms of hate and racism, and the peril of remaining indifferent in the face of them.

The children and teens tour resonates with the thousands of students that pass through the museum's doors annually, Guinard said. They get a sense of what life was like for Jews their age before and during the war, as well as after immigrating to Canada.

Sometimes their only shred of normalcy was hanging on to a beloved possession, such as the doll that's on exhibit in the museum. The app tells a lot more about the toy than the text that accompanies its display.

There are full English and French versions of the app, whose development was funded by the Quebec Ministry of Culture and Communications.

For those who don't have their own device, the MHMC loans mini iPads free of charge to visitors.

"So far, it has been really well received," said Guinard of the app, which was officially launched in the fall.

"Teachers at a conference we held got really into it. Some said they would use it in the classroom for preparing students before they came here."

The MHMC thought the app would appeal mostly to 18-35-year-olds, but Guinard said all ages seem to have taken to the technology with ease.

The museum continues to expand its use of computer technology. Interactive, touch-screen maps and timelines are slated to be added over the next few weeks.

"Instead of a static map, visitors will be able to scroll through the chronology, from the time a ghetto was established to its liquidation, for example, or to follow the progress and retreat of the Allies and Nazis across Europe."

Guinard stressed that even though the museum's holdings are already vast, it continues to encourage survivors or their descendants to donate objects and record their testimonies.

Even the most mundane items may help transmit to people today the history of the Holocaust as experienced by real people living in their city, she said.

Although they may not be displayed – in reality or the virtual world – they are made available to researchers and sometimes loaned to other museums in Canada, Guinard added.

A visitor uses a mobile app during a visit to the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre.

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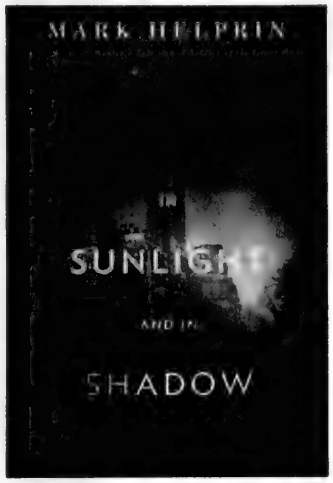
Helprin crafts a tale full of magical moments

In Sunlight and in Shadow
Mark Helprin
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Reviewed by Mordechai Ben-Dat



There are certain moments, certain rare instances in our lives – we all know – that open a portal into a vulnerable realm of a more deeply-felt human experience. If we could, we would suspend time's flow to remain in place, held invisibly by an emotional anchor, to the magic of the moment.

Many such magical moments await the reader of Mark Helprin's latest novel, just recently released in paperback. Once again, the award-winning writer has crafted a story of such compelling literary force that the heart is left tender and sore from constantly being touched, prodded, penetrated, wounded and uplifted.

In Sunlight and in Shadow is a grand narrative arc that sweeps majestically across time, place, emotion, intellect, villainy and heroism. The story is a ship that sails into the deep waters of the author's thoughts and reflections on the eternal, uncompromising values of human life that he so fiercely cherishes and so publicly champions: responsibility, self-sacrifice, courage, honesty, generosity, beauty and love. Readers familiar with Helprin's novels and short stories will know that he has dedicated his literary career to the restatement and reinforcement of these values.

In his latest novel, Helprin writes of Harry Copeland, who returns in 1946 to his home in New York City after having fought in an elite paratroop unit in Europe in World War II. He returns to run the family business founded by his father. His father died while Harry was in Europe; his mother had died before he left. But malevolent forces have injected themselves into his beloved city while Harry was overseas and are now intent on harming him and the business. Harry must devise a method of foiling them. He must do so to secure his family business, to affirm the sense of justice for which he fought in Europe and to protect the woman with whom he has fallen in love.

Catherine Hale is a singer of extraordinary, near metaphysical power. She is a remarkable individual of vast grace, independence, and strength of character. She happens also to be very beautiful. Harry is swept up like a sheet of paper in a gale wind by the overwhelming emotion he feels at the first sight of her. Few writers today can write the scene the way Helprin does. It appears very early in the story.

"She walked with her back so straight and her head held so high that it was as if she had studied for years to be a dancer… She was a flow of colour. Her hair trapped the sun and seemed to radiate light. It moved in the wind at the nape of her neck and where it had come loose, but was otherwise gloriously up in a way that suggested self-possession and formality and yet also exposed most informally the beauty of her shoulders. She wore a blouse with a low collar that even across the gap he could see was embroidered in pearl on white and the glow of the blouse came not only from its nearly transparent linen but from the woman herself…

"She carried nothing, not a newspaper or a purse, and the way she walked was so beautiful that an angry man berated Harry for stopping on the ramp where he was oblivious of everything on account of a woman who then vanished, and left him as if struck by a blow…He had long known that to see a woman like this across the floor in receptions or gatherings is as arresting as if a full moon were rising within the walls of the room, but this was more arresting yet…

"[He] remembered at last to breathe and to walk, and the breath came in two beats, one of astonishment and the other of love, although what right had he to love the brief sight of a woman in white who had crossed a crowded deck and disappeared in shadow?"

Over the course of the nearly 700 pages that follow, Helprin tells us the dramatically spellbinding story of Harry and Catherine. In doing so, he introduces a rich, colourful roster of other characters that fills out the wide, finely crafted parameters of the narrative.

There are times we almost ache with wonder at the sheer cutting truth of Helprin's writing. We read, re-read and then read yet again some of his insights and observations. His descriptive powers rise far above most writers. We are moved by Helprin's recurring, paramount aim – reiterated in all his works of fiction – to give heft and meaning to the dignity of the "ordinary" human beings who labour honestly and long for family and community, who dutifully remember those who have come before, and who courageously strive to be good and decent people.

Helprin's body of work is diverse. Fiction is not his only fare. He writes prodigiously on esthetics, military strategy, defence planning and politics, to name a few of his interests. His numerous scholarly appointments include senior fellow of the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy. He has also served in the British Merchant Navy, the Israeli infantry and the Israeli Air Force.

Helprin is uncategorizable as a writer. He describes himself as belonging "to no literary school, movement, tendency, or trend." His career is eloquent proof of that proposition.

In explaining the genesis of *In Sunlight and in Shadow*, Helprin said he wrote the book as "a love song for my family, and because I wanted to go back to what I remember first and best. To do so, it was necessary to set the scene in the hope that it would come alive." We can happily report that Helprin has fully realized this hope.

Indeed, it is we – the readers – who come alive: tingling, energized, amused, entertained, moved, informed, educated, saddened, gladdened, even exhausted by the insights and emotions that Helprin evokes. In effect, he urges us to try to live our lives intensely where soul finds purpose in the deepest chambers of our heart.

In Sunlight and in Shadow is one of the best novels I have ever read.

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A heartwarming Israeli love story

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Israeli actor Adi Bielski reprises her role in the one-woman play *An Israeli Love Story* for three nights this week at the Studio Theatre at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, presented by the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company.

Based on a true story, *An Israeli Love Story* is written and directed by Pnina Gary, the recipient of the 2006 Life Achievement Award from the Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture, for her 50-year career in the:

Bielski previously performed the play in Toronto and Ottawa three years ago.

"The story is about a young girl in the years 1942 to 1948," Bielski says. She meets a man who's a member of Palmach, the elite fighting force of the Haganah. Just before they plan on getting married, he is killed during an ambush by an Arab mob.

"The thousand people that were invited for the wedding came to a funeral, and the food that was prepared for the wedding was served at the funeral. Every word in the story is true, and the real young girl, is actually the director and writer, Pnina Gary. The guy she fell in love with was the son of Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, the second president of Israel."

Adi Bielski

Bielski says that until the end, which is heartbreaking, it is a very joyful story. It has a lot of humour and a lot of funny characters. It focuses on first love, and for older audience members, it brings back memories of the '40s, while for younger theatregoers, it's the love story that catches them.

After each of the Toronto performances, the audience will be treated to a video introducing them to Gary, the real heroine of the story.

Gary wrote the play 12 years ago and kept it hidden in a drawer until the war with Lebanon seven years ago.

She related to the stories that came out in the news and felt it was imperative to finally produce this play.

She scoured Israeli theatre schools and companies until she found Bielski. Gary saw herself in Bielski, and Bielski felt compelled to do this production. They started by working together in Gary's living room for over six months, with no budget. To date, she has performed the play more than 450 times since 2008.

Bielski, who served as an education officer in the Israeli army from 2004 to 2007, is a graduate of the Yoram Levenstein School of Dramatic Arts. She won an acting award in Israel for her role in this play.

An Israeli Love Story *is presented as part of Spotlight on Israeli Culture, a two-month showcase and celebration of contemporary music, drama, dance, art, film, video and photography. It runs in English Feb.13 at 1 p.m. and 8 p.m., Feb. 15 at 8 pm., and in Hebrew on Feb. 16 at 2 p.m. Call 1-855-985-2787 or visit www.hgjewishtheatre.com or the box office for tickets.*

Jazz choir project builds communities through music

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

On a chilly Thursday morning in January, close to 300 grade school students packed the warm cafeteria at Westview Centennial Secondary School in Toronto and cheered as a few dozen of their peers took the stage.

One by one, small groups of three or four students approached the microphone, as a small band played jazz music behind them.

"I was going outside and the temperature dropped today," one group sang into the microphone. The rest of the student congregation joined in, repeating that phrase. The lyrics were improvised, made up just moments before the kids stepped up to perform.

The We Are One Jazz Project is the brainchild of Howard Rees, a Jewish musician and educator from Toronto, founder of the oldest independent jazz school in Canada.

Launched in 2008, and now partnered with the Toronto District School Board, the program brings students from grades 3 to 5 from priority areas in the city together to sing jazz compositions written for them.

The kids learn the music of jazz pianist, composer and educator Barry Harris, plus improvisation, scatting and more. Professional musicians mentor this large-scale jazz choir leading up to a gala concert finale.

"What we're doing is a community building thing that happens to use music," Rees says. "It's about giving the kids a chance, giving them something to feel good about. Most of these kids don't have music in their schools anyway, so we're their music program."

Jazz has, historically, been a kind of music that brought about social change. Rees says he sees the project as a path for students who may be from low-income families and disadvantaged areas.

The program offers the kids the opportunity to express themselves through music. In December, a young boy came up on stage at a rehearsal to do some scatting (jazz singing in which improvised syllables are sung to a melody). After he performed, the entire back row started to clap. Rees says that one of the teachers told him later that the boy has been mute the whole year and nobody had heard him speak.

"If you create a safe environment where [children] feel comfortable to try things without fear of embarrassment, their creativity soars," says Adrian Goodman, a music teacher at Pauline Johnson Junior Public School, which was involved with We Are One last year.

Although the students are young, Rees and choir conductor Brian Katz do not treat them like kids. At a rehearsal, when Katz leads the students in Harris's songs, he abruptly stops the melody if he notices that the kids are off-key, off-melody or even off-volume.

Katz sometimes tests the kids, asking how many bars are in the intro. Most of the time, the students respond correctly.

"It's amazing how kids from Grade 3 can learn [jazz and] all those syncopated rhythms," Katz said "But, in fact, kids have such fast nervous systems. Kids totally get that. They live in that universe of really fast rhythms."

Rees says there is an "angel" who provides most of We Are One's operating budget and remains anonymous. Private and corporate sponsors fund the rest of the project.

The best part of the jazz project is that it offers these young minds something outside of their everyday experience that can have a positive influence on their lives, Rees says.

"The kids love it because it's fun, it's different and it opens their minds. You have to be disciplined, you have to concentrate. There is a lot of work involved. It helps you think about being a more creative person."

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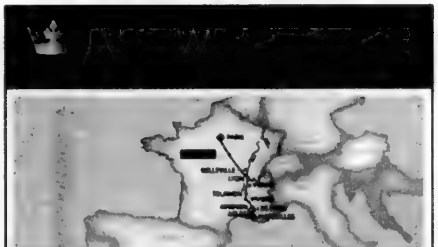

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

TEATRON JEWISH THEATRE PRESENTS ROM-COM "HANDLE WITH CARE"

It's been said to closely resemble one of those commercial comedies by playwrights like **Neil Simon** and **Woody Allen** that were so popular with the Jewish audiences that dominated Broadway during the 1960s.

Jason Odell Williams's romantic comedy *Handle With Care* opens in a nondescript motel room somewhere in Virginia with an Israeli woman screaming in Hebrew at a flustered courier who speaks only English. The woman is in a panic because her dead grandmother's body has apparently been lost in transit to the airport. But when the courier summons his Jewish buddy to help translate, the stage is soon set for romance.

Currently running off-Broadway, *Handle With Care* opens Feb. 20 in Toronto in a production by Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre, directed by **Ari Weisberg** and starring **Zack Amzallag**, **Tal Shulman**, **Gloria Valentine** and **Tal Rosenzweig**. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St., Feb. 20 to March 2. www.teatrontheatre.com

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Names in the News: Debbie Werner, who joined the Toronto Jewish Film Festival as director of operations in 2009 and became managing director in 2012, was recently appointed TJFF's executive director, festival co-founder and artistic director **Helen Zukerman** announced last week. TJFF describes itself as the largest Jewish film festival in the world. Its 22nd season runs May 1 to 11, 2014.

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Names in the News II: Howard Rotberg, who heads the publishing company Mantua Books, is also a writer and property developer, and now an artist. Recently he announced he created several digital works of art on political and cultural themes. He is selling limited numbers of prints of these works for $250 to $500 each, "with sale proceeds going to my publishing company that publishes pro-Israel and anti-cultural relativism authors around the world who are being shunned by mainstream left-liberal publishing houses." Details at www.mantuabooks.com

• • •

New & Recent CDs: One hundred years after the births of songwriters **Sammy Cahn** and **Jimmy Van Heusen** (both in 1913), Toronto jazz vocalist **Sam Broverman** pays tribute to both titans in a new CD, *Leftover Dreams*. Cahn wrote, with **Saul Chaplin**, the 1936 classic *Until the Real Thing Comes Along*; with **Van Heusen**, *All the Way* and *Call Me Irresponsible*; and, with **Jules Styne**, *Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out to Dry*. These are among the 15 tracks on *Leftover Dreams*, which is available at www.broverman-music.com

Jordana Talsky's debut album, *Standard Deviation*, features the Toronto vocalist-songwriter in eight jazzy selections including *Old Devil Moon* (**Lane/Harburg**) and *When the Sun Comes Out* (**Arlen/Koehler**). www.jordanatalsky.com

Jordana Talsky's CD *Standard Deviation* features her in eight jazzy selections.

Toronto-based jazz singer **Ilana Waldston's** new album, *I Could Laugh Out Loud*, features polished material by **Cole Porter, Rogers and Hart**, and **Irving Berlin**, as well as lesser-known numbers such as *Hanukkah in Santa Monica* which she describes as "perhaps the first ever Chanukah cha cha number." www.jazznlaughs.ca

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Jazz-Pride Partnership: This year's TD Toronto Jazz Festival is partnering with the World-Pride 2014 Toronto celebration this summer, beginning with a joint opening ceremony at Nathan Phillips Square on June 20. "What better way to kick off two of Toronto's biggest festivals than with a co-presented free performance?" says **Josh Grossman**, artistic director of Toronto Downtown Jazz. Headliners of the jazz fest, which runs June 19 to 28, include **Hiromi, Buika** and **Measha Brueggergosman**. www. torontojazz.com.

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Arts in Brief

• *Kidlit!* a Jewish literary festival for children hosted by the Koffler Centre of the Arts and the Prosserman JCC, takes place Family Day, Feb. 17, at the Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St. Registration, kofflerarts.org or 416-638-1881.

• Tarragon Theatre *presents Marry Me A Little*, a "charming and bittersweet tale about love, loneliness and commitment" filled with **Sondheim** rarities from his early career. With **Elodie Gillett** and **Adrian Marchuk**; directed by **Adam Brazier**. Previews from Feb. 26, runs March 5 to Apr. 6. $21 to $53. 416-531-1827, www.tarragontheatre.com

• *Museum Diaries*, a six-part TVO series, takes viewers behind the scenes to unmask the mysteries of the Royal Ontario Museum. Each episode mixes science, history and intrigue as it variously explores ancient societies, the discovery of new species, dinosaurs, DNA and the mummies of ancient Egypt. *Fakes & Frauds Exposed*, the first in the weekly series, airs Tuesday Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m.

• Tabletmag.com has published the late Yiddish writer **Chava Rosenfarb's** diary entries upon being liberated from Bergen-Belsen in 1945. The "stunning document of survival" was translated by Rosenfarb's daughter, **Goldie Morgentaler**, a professor of English at the University of Lethbridge. www.tabletmag.com

• *Moving to Stand Still*, the performative video work of Israeli artist **Sigalit Landau**, continues at the Koffler Gallery, 180 Shaw St., until April 6. 647-925-0643.

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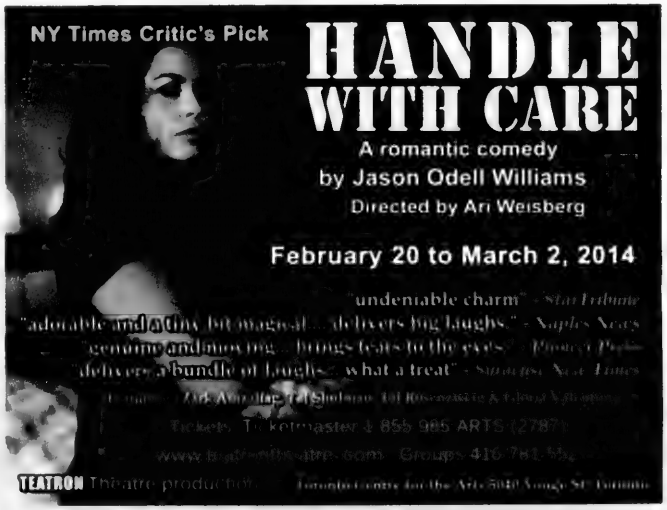


More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Former MTV host balances entertainment and social action

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

Something as simple as a game can change your life. One Canadian redhead who has made a name for herself in the entertainment world is living proof of that.

When TV host Jessi Cruickshank was fresh out of university, she taught a program for kids with special needs – something she still does to this day. She was playing a game called Shark, which involves putting newspapers on the ground and pretending they're islands.

"I remember swimming around this newspaper 'island' and it said, 'MTV wants you,'" she tells *The CJN*. "And it was this advertisement for auditions, open auditions, that MTV was having for hosts. And I remember thinking, 'Oh, that would be fun.'"

Up until that point, pop culture wasn't really on her radar. The Vancouver native never imagined she'd be paid to talk about celebrities, let alone make a career out of it. In fact, Cruickshank had aspirations to go to Yale University for a master's degree.

But after countless auditions, she scored a job with MTV Canada. Her first piece of homework was to watch *Laguna Beach*, a reality show about spoiled high school kids. "I remember watching it and thinking, 'Oh God, this is horrible,'" she admits. "'This is detrimental to society. I'm a feminist, and I don't believe in this.'"

When the head of MTV asked her what she thought of the show, she told him exactly what was on her mind.

"And he said, 'Well, too bad 'cause you're going to be doing a show where you talk about it,'" she shares. "And I remember thinking, 'Excuse me?'"

Eventually, the quick-witted host ended up loving the series and the humour she was able to find in it. Cruickshank says her chemistry with *Laguna Beach: The After Show* co-host Dan Levy was instantaneous.

"I think that's what people liked. They just felt they were hanging out with us," she says. "And honestly, they were."

But she didn't realize its success right off the bat. In fact, she only discovered its popularity during the first series finale of the show, when they invited a live studio audience to participate.

"Suddenly we're told that there are police outside of the building because there are over 6,000 people lined up and blocking Yonge Street in Toronto, trying to get into the show," she says. "And I remember thinking, I didn't even know 6,000 people were watching this on television, let alone wanting to come to a live taping."

She adds: "I threw up in a garbage can backstage before I actually went out to do the show."

The *After Show* turned into a smash hit for MTV, airing internationally and using the same format for similar reality shows, *The Hills* and its spinoff, *The City*.

That gig opened many doors for her, including the opportunity to interview celebrities like Tom Cruise, Zac Efron, Rihanna, Bill Gates and many others.

One of her most memorable moments happened when she accidentally ripped her tight leather pants in front of singer Adam Lambert.

"I had to do the rest of the interview with a full giant rip on my crotch," she says.

That's where Cruickshank's background in comedy and her ability to poke fun at herself came in handy.

As a kid, she was the only female member in an all-male improv team. This wasn't just any group. It featured actor Seth Rogen and Comedy Central's Nathan Fielder.

"At one point, we started to get hired to perform at bar and bat mitzvahs," she says with a laugh.

The witty redhead was offered a position with CTV's entertainment news show *eTalk* as soon as she left MTV in 2010, becoming its Los Angeles correspondent. Aside from CTV, she can also be seen on The CW, where she co-hosts and is a writer for the game show *O Sit!*

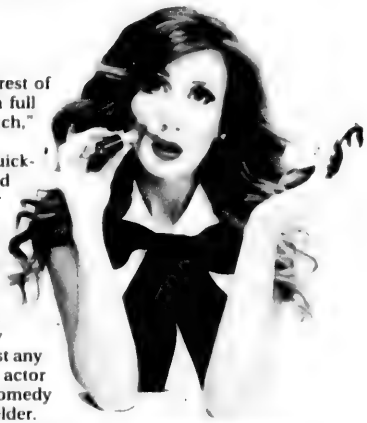
"I miss Canada so much, I really do," she says. "I miss my friends and my family, but I just miss living there. I just think it's a better place to live as a country and sort of our values – I miss it. But being here, I've been really lucky."

Cruickshank says volunteering keeps her grounded. As a Free the Children ambassador, the TV star has travelled around the world. In 2009 she lived in a Kenyan mud hut for 10 days, documenting her unique experience in an MTV special.

"I travel all across North America, speaking at high schools and colleges, talking about my experiences in a fun, light, yet I think, hopefully, inspirational way," she says.

Cruickshank, who counts her mother, CBC journalist Joyce Resin, as a mentor, says a lot of people ask her for advice.

She always tells aspiring entertainers to start wherever they can and work their butts off.



Jessi Cruickshank

"This is a whole new era," she adds. "If you want to be on TV you can film stuff on your iPhone and put it on the Internet. And I think you absolutely should."

So what's next for the MTV alum? She's looking forward to working on new projects with Free the Children.

"I'm really excited about what's next. It's kind of a cool time in my career," she pauses before adding. "I mean, I want to interview actor Leonardo DiCaprio. That's the most vain answer I can give you. I've never met him, but I think if I did, I would melt."

In typical Jessi Cruickshank fashion, she adds: "And I'm sure if I do, something terribly embarrassing will happen. It's not possible for me to have a classy, smooth interview. I'll say something stupid, that's just how I seem to roll."

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

What's New

By LILA SARICK

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of Feb. 27 is Feb. 17. The deadline for the issue of March 6 is Feb. 24. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Feb. 13

BULGARIA DURING THE WAR

Bulgarian Consul General **Ivo Mouskourov** discusses "Bulgarians Hiding Jews during the War," 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion. $3/$6.

ISRAELI LOVE STORY

National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto section, presents the play *An Israeli Love Story*, Toronto Centre for the Arts, 8 p.m. For tickets, call 416-633-5100.

RAV SOLOVEITCHIK

Rabbi Reuven Ziegler, chairman of the editorial board at Koren Publishers Jerusalem, discusses "Self-revelation in Rav Soloveitchik's Writings," Yeshivat Or Chaim, 8 p.m. www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770.

Saturday, Feb. 15

BNAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Congregation, a Conservative congregation in Peel Region, meets today. www.bnaishalom.ca, or call 905-901-9889.

Sunday, Feb. 16

'BREAK THE ICE' DANCE

James Reagan sings and plays at a "Break the Ice" dance hosted by Shaar Shalom Singles, 7:30 p.m. $10. Call 905-889-4975, ext. 72.

Monday, Feb. 17

MAZON SKATING PARTY

Mazon Canada holds a skating party, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Upper Canada College. 416-783-7554.

Tuesday, Feb. 18

HAVA NAGILA

The movie *Hava Nägila* will be shown at 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $5.

RAISING CHILDREN

Sarah Chana Radcliffe shares strategies, values and morals on how to be a successful parent, 8 p.m. at Chabad Lubavitch of Markham, 83 Green Lane. $5. RSVP 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or info@chabadmarkham.org.

Wednesday, Feb. 19

FAMILY & IMMIGRATION LAW

Lawyer **Adela Crossley** will discuss immigration and family law today. Free. For location, call Act to End Violence Against Women, 905-695-5374, or email acttoendvaw.org.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Judith Leitner, director of arts at the Toronto Heschel School, leads the Pomegranate Guild of Jewish Textiles in creating a fabric art sketch of the word "Shema," 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Isaiah 53: God's Suffering Servant," last in a counter-missionary series, 8 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. Free. To register, call 416-789-0020, or email toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Feb. 20

FAMILY CAREGIVERS

A support group for people caring for parents with cognitive or physical impairments will meet Thursdays, 7 p.m., starting today at the Day Centre for Seniors, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

Upcoming Events

FIDDLER SING-A-LONG

Makom holds a Sing Along *Fiddler on the Roof* fundraiser. Prizes for the best costumes. 8 p.m. **Feb. 22**, Al Green Theatre. Tickets $36/$45. For tickets, www.makomto.org/fiddler.

ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

An open house about summer programs for adults with special needs will be held **Feb. 23** at 7:30 p.m., DANI Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Co-sponsored by Camp Moshava and Moshava Ba'ir. For more information, email ssokol@dani-toronto.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

The Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women is seeking volunteer legal support workers to help women who have experienced abuse. Training is provided. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

Continued on page 37

A Taste of Jewish Camping

SUMMER CAMP can be a transformative experience for children. It's their first taste of independence wrapped up in a warm atmosphere filled with fun experiences, new skills, exciting activities and special friendships.

Make that camp experience at a *Jewish* Camp and it has an even deeper effect on them.

Not only do studies find that Jewish camping is significant to the development of Jewish identity in kids…they find that Jewish camp rivals any other form of Jewish identity investment!

PJ Library Toronto and the Silber Centre for Jewish camping, both initiatives of UJA Federation, are giving families the opportunity to get a 'taste of Jewish summer camp' at the **2nd Annual 'PJ Kids Go To Camp', Sunday February 16th from 3-5 pm at Prosserman JCC.**

PJ Library books, sent monthly to the homes of some 3600 families in the GTA raising Jewish children between the ages of 6 months to 5 ½ years, like "I Love Camp", "No Baths at Camp" and "Sami's Sleepaway Summer" let children read about what summer camp is like, but there's really nothing like experiencing it for yourself.

Program Coordinator Elyse Tytel says "PJ Kids Go To Camp gives both children and parents the opportunity to test drive Jewish camp in a fun, interactive way. Activities include arts & crafts, cooking, dancing and photography. And while the kids are having fun, parents will have an opportunity to talk to camp staff. To top it all off….there will be a chance to win a free trial at the camp of your choice."

With 10 Jewish camps participating, there is something for everyone. The connection between Jewish camping and PJ Library is a strong one. PJ Library founder Harold Grinspoon has been a longtime supporter of making the camp experience a Jewish one.

"The camp experience will leave a lasting impression of the smiling faces of young children as they create lifelong friendships, experience new activities, and develop emotional and social skills," Mr. Grinspoon writes. "That they also develop a love for Judaism that stays with them into adulthood is almost beside the point, an added benefit, to the fun they have playing outdoors in the summer sun."

Last Spring, the Foundation for Jewish Camp released a study on the long-term impact of Jewish overnight camp. Just as has long been suspected, they found that the lazy days of summer spent at Jewish summer camp not only cement lifelong friendships, they strengthen Jewish identity.

The impact of Jewish camp is immediate—campers return home connected to a community and friends that will last them a lifetime. And it doesn't stop there. Children with pivotal Jewish camp experiences are more likely to become adults who value their Jewish heritage, support Jewish causes, and take on leadership roles in their communities. The Jewish overnight summer camp experience has proven to serve as a portal to Jewish identity.

Recognizing these facts, UJA Federation's Jewish Camp Incentive Program helps make Jewish camping more accessible. One Happy Camper awards a $1,000 incentive grant to first-time campers to attend Jewish overnight camp. **www.ilovejewishcamp.ca.**

PJ Kids Go To Camp takes place Sunday, February 16th at the Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst Street from 3-5 pm. Registration is free at **www.pjkidsgotocamp.eventbrite.ca**

Silber Family Centre for Jewish Camping
UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

PJ Library
TORONTO . PEEL REGION . YORK REGION

Continued from page 36

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

YOUNG JUDAEA

Young Judaea holds its leadership convention **Feb. 28-March 2.** See www.youngjudaea.ca for details.

VENDORS WANTED

Vendors are wanted for a market **March 23,** benefiting B'nai Brith Canada and Uptown Chabad. Call **Sandy Gordon** 416-605-0868, or email sandygord@gmail.com.

FAMILY HISTORY NEEDED

First Narayever Congregation is looking for family photos and stories, letters and other documents about downtown Jewish Toronto as it celebrates its centennial. Call 416-927-0546, or email centennialcelebrations@narayever.ca.

PLAY MAH-JONG

Come play or learn mah-jong with Shoshana Chapter of Hadassah-WIZO, **Feb. 23,** Earl Bales Community Centre. $36. To register, call 416-630-8373.

HEBREW CLASSES

Beth Emeth Synagogue is offering a free Hebrew reading course for those who can slowly read Hebrew and want practice reading, singing and understanding prayers. Six sessions, starts **March 2.** Call 416-633-3838 to register.

SCHWARTZ DYNASTY

Beth Tikvah Synagogue shows the film *Schwartz Dynasty* (in Hebrew with subtitles), 7:30 p.m., **Feb. 22.** $5/$10. Call 416-221-3433, to register.

MAKE A TALLIT

Join Judaic textile artist **Lisa Rose** to create a tallit. **Feb. 23.** Temple Sinai. $72 for full-day workshop (includes materials and lunch). Call 416-487-3281, or email programs@templesinai.net.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, **ext.** 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Living with Teens: A 6-session group for parents of teens. Topics include: setting limits, letting go, drugs, alcohol and sexuality. Starts Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn how to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly divorced or separated individuals. Starts Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at the Lebovic Community Centre, 9600 Bathurst St.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women under 50 who have lost a spouse in the last few years, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila,** 416-665-3333, or **Marcia,** 416-932-1229.

Association of Jewish Seniors presents **Suzanne Cohen Share** discussing "Accessibility: Know Your Rights" Feb. 20, Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Breakfast at 9:30 a.m., presentation at 10 a.m. Free for members, $2 for guests. Call **Arnold Foss** 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+Culture, Education, Community, Miles Nadal JCC. Faye Kellerstein and **Jordan Klapman** perform "The Most Beautiful Yiddish Love Songs Ever Written," Feb. 13, 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.). $4. **The Yiddish Swingtet** perform Klezmer music for Purim, March 6. RSVP by Feb. 28. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. Feb. 18, archeologist **David Lipovitch** discusses "What did King David eat for Breakfast?" 10 a.m.; Feb. 19, Grief and bereavement support group, 11 a.m.; Feb. 20, **Barry Shainbaum** discusses "Inspiration through Music," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine March 26 (register in advance). Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George,** 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the 2014/2015 school year for the daycare and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

PJ Library gives kids a taste of summer camp, Feb. 16, 3-5 p.m., with representatives from 10 summer camps. Register at http://pjkidsgotocamp.eventbrite.ca.

A Jewish Literary Festival for Children will be held Feb. 17, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Featuring authors' readings, book sales, and a make-your-own-book station.

The book club discusses *The Invisible Bridge* by **Julie Orringer** Feb. 24, 1 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Celebrate family day Feb. 16 and Feb. 17. Fun activities for the whole family: jungle gym, crafts, dance party, basketball and movies, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Max Minsky and Me.* Feb. 16 at 4 and 7:30 p.m. with guest speaker **Mark Clamen.** Box office opens one hour before screening start time. Tickets $10/$15. Kids 10-18 are free.

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Mystical Meaning of the Hebrew Aleph-Bet," Feb. 23, 11 a.m.

A play reading of *Tough Jews* by **Michael Ross Albert,** will be held March 1, 7 p.m.

Purim Carnival, March 2, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register. The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Harissa, Honey and Hyssop, photos by **Nelli Sheffer,** is on display in the gallery until Feb. 24.

Health and fitness: One-day MELT Method, neck and back workshop, Feb. 16, 11 a.m.; MELT Method-full body, Feb. 11-March 18, 7 p.m. or Feb. 19-March 26, 11 a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call 416-898-1818, ext. 574

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

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A workshop on dating in midlife, for men and women over 40, will be held Feb. 18 at 7 p.m.

An osteoarthritis workshop will be held Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

The movie *The Frisco Kid* will be shown Feb. 24, 1 p.m.,

Israeli cuisine with a twist of Iraqi and French cuisine will be discussed Feb. 26 at 7 p.m.

Book club with reviewer **Bruria Cooperman** meets Feb. 28, 10:30 a.m.

To register for programs, call **Andrea,** ext. 3006, or email adaiam@srcentre.ca.

מזל טוב

Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Mazel tov Joanna Jacobson, Arnaud Salama, Victoria and Julianna who are proud that Rebecca Josie-Allie has joined the family
With love, mom and dad

Marty & Debbie Cooper, Fern & Ronnie Karpman announce the engagement of their daughter Casey to Eric Evdosin, son of Audrey & Gilbert Dery

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Love, Howard &Marla

Betty & Neil Colt will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on March 8.
Mazel tov from family & friends

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on **"Family Moments"**

Esther Bornstein
A happy 100th birthday from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

At the bus stop

Senior Side of Life
Michael Gordon

When visiting Israel and staying with my classmate from medical school who lives just north of Tel Aviv in Herzlia-Petuach, I usually take the number 90 bus, which stops in front of one of the local small hotels. As I sat down on the bench to wait, I asked the older man already sitting there if he had been waiting long and when the bus was expected to come. It comes every half hour.

"I'm not waiting for the bus. I just stopped here to give my back and legs a rest," he told me.

His accent was clearly eastern European, a common phenomenon in people of his generation. He continued without my prompting: "If I walk for more than 100 to 200 metres, my left leg goes weak and I have pain in my back. If I stop for five minutes, it improves, and I can walk some more. I am waiting to have surgery next week on my back to relieve it."

This was all told to me spontaneously in Hebrew. Mine is limited, but adequate for day to day conversation.

He asked me where I was from, as I speak Hebrew with a strong English accent. He acknowledged that he knew of Canada because he had a cousin in Thornhill – a common connection when people hear that I am from Toronto.

I enquired where he was going to have the surgery, and he said at Tel Hashomer, one of the larger centres in Tel Aviv, one that I knew from my years living in the country. When I revealed that I was a physician, he asked if I knew his doctor, and I told him I didn't.

He continued spontaneously to tell me much about his life and medical history, which characteristically included his survival as a child in eastern Europe, even though his father and other family members perished. Then he spoke about his arrival in Israel, the story of his schooling, his military service including the Six Day War, and the loss of his wife.

At the time of our conversation, he was living in a local retirement home, which he said suited him, as he had his needs met, his meals made, he could walk in the lovely neighbourhood, and there were lots of nice people he could speak to.

He indicated that the reason he had agreed to the surgery even though he knew it might not work and had some risks was that one of his great enjoyments was walking, and now that activity was terribly curtailed.

After a few more minutes, he wished me well, including wishes for my good health, and went on his way. I watched him walk about 300 metres, and then he sat down on another bench. Then my bus came and I lost his image.

Here was a 10-minute encounter with a stranger who revealed his history to me with the ease and comfort that someone else might feel in talking about the weather. In each of those minutes, I learned about the tragedies of his life and about his positive life philosophy. He complimented all the doctors who have looked after him for so many years and spoke of how we physicians had successfully extended life expectancy so that he could still enjoy his. He had an engaging smile and managed small moments of humour even as he spoke about his illnesses and his life losses.

When people ask me if I find geriatrics "depressing," I tell them it's quite the opposite – so many of the people I care for have wonderful stories. Whether as a physician or in any walk of life, it's our shared stories that connect us at the most human level. My encounter was a very human and typically Israeli prelude to my bus ride into Tel Aviv.

FOOD DRIVE: December's ice storm and power outage left many local food shelves and Out of the Cold programs in need of restocking, so the Tikkun Olam Committee at Leo Baeck Day School's south campus initiated a food drive to help. Pictured, from left, are students Sam Shepherd, Ally Reiner and Spencer Robins as they gather and box non-perishable items for delivery to the North York Harvest Food Bank.

Making your own cheese

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

David Rotsztain didn't set out to become an artisan cheese-maker. His career took a circuitous route, beginning in civil engineering and veering into community farming and cheese-making when he was a graduate student at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

The Toronto native gave a cheese-making demonstration at the third annual Shoresh Food Conference, held recently at the Miles Nadal JCC and attended by 120 people.

Shoresh, a Jewish food movement rooted in Halachah, focuses on ecological, ethical, health and other issues related to contemporary food production.

About 30 people crammed into the JCC's third-floor kitchen for Rotsztain's demonstration. It was the most delicious workshop of the conference, which also included sessions on Jewish farming, microbiology and fermentation, raising animals for consumption and issues pertaining to genetically modified foods (please see related article in this issue on page 10).

Rotsztain, 33, said he was eager to participate in the Shoresh conference, because he supports Shoresh's mission of promoting natural and ecologically sound food production. "The workshops I teach mesh with their mandate and values."

He said he has been interested in food production since he was five years old. "I have tended a garden most of my life."

When he was an engineering student at McGill University in Montreal, he had a plot in a community garden. He also volunteered in the gardens of a local youth-run intergenerational meals-on-wheels program.

Rotsztain maintained this connection to food production while doing his master's in environmental engineering in 2005, working on a community farm on the UBC campus.

His academic work in sewage treatment systems led him to research bacterial cultures and fermentation. He started by acquiring what he called "fermentation pets" such as sourdough starter, and later, kefir grains for milk fermentation.

"While I was playing around with the kefir, I stumbled across the idea of making cheese, and I started making all sorts of cheese. My roommates thought I was nuts, but they loved the cheese."

He said he felt conflicted, because there was a "philosophical rift" between his academic research, which supported industrial agriculture, and his growing connection to "sustainable food initiatives."

He ended up dropping out of school and completing two organic farming apprenticeships while continuing to hone his cheese-making skills.

During his first apprenticeship, he made his first batch of raw milk goat cheese or chevre, which he continues to produce today. He's a member of a co-operative farm on Mayne Island, B.C., and for the last seven years, he's been lecturing and giving workshops on cheese-making.

Rotsztain stressed that he can't sell his cheese commercially, because it's made from raw goat's milk. "I make the cheese for friends. I bring it to potlucks. As a result, I get invited to a lot of dinner parties."

He likes working with raw milk, because it's healthier than pasteurized milk and closer to traditional cheese-making practices, he said.

In fact, he pointed out that this method of fermenting raw milk is very much akin to the traditional way kosher cheese was made in the shtetls of eastern Europe.

"In the movie *Fiddler on the Roof*, you see Tevye in his dairy and you can see the cheese hanging in cheese cloths. There was no rennet used, because the cheese would not have been kosher. They just let the milk sour on its own.

David Rotsztain demonstrates how to make cheese.

"You can do that with raw milk, but pasteurized milk would go rancid. The raw milk thickens up to become clabber, or curdled milk. The clabber was hung in a cheese shmatte and it turned into a soft, fresh cheese."

Rotsztain's career may have had an unusual trajectory, but his artisan cheese-making has brought him to his roots.

"I am making cheese the same way as my great-grandmother, Miriam Finkelstein. She made cheese out of raw milk and sold it at her store in the village of Skawina, Poland."

For more information on cheese-making, visit Rotsztain's website at: www.thewayofcheese.com

DREAM CHEESE

32 oz. (908 g container) plain 3% yogurt
1 tsp. kosher salt (non iodized)
Cheese cloth: a piece of muslin or a clean rag, freshly washed or wet. (A grocery store-bought cheese cloth does not work well, because the weave is too loose.)

Drape the wet cloth over a large bowl and pour the yogurt into the centre of the cloth. It's important for the cloth to be wet so that the cheese does not stick to it. The yogurt should have only 2 ingredients– milk and bacterial culture. (Yogurts with pectin, cornstarch, fruit and/or sugar cannot be turned into cheese.) Full-fat yogurt is better than skim, because low fat cheese tends to sticks to the roof of the mouth like peanut butter.

Pull together the four corners of the cloth around the yogurt. Give the cloth a twist and secure it with a knot. Hold the cloth with yogurt over the bowl as the liquid drips. The liquid or whey has nutrients and can be consumed or used for cooking.

Stick a wooden spoon through the knot and suspend it over a large pot to catch the whey, which will continue to drip. Do not squeeze out the liquid. Keep the yogurt and pot at room temperature for 24 hours. By that time, the cheese will have dripped dry. In this state, the cheese is called lebneh.

To salt, open the cloth and mix the salt roughly into the cheese. Adding salt increases the cheese's longevity and enhances the flavour.

After salting, close the cloth and hang the cheese over the pot for another 4 hours. The salt will draw out additional moisture from the cheese. Refrigerate cheese. It can last up to 3 weeks. The finished cheese has 12 per cent butterfat.

Variations:

Chevre

Use goat's milk yogurt instead of cow's milk yogurt to make a chevre cheese

Peaceful Dream Cheese

Follow instructions for Dream Cheese, but after salting, allow the cheese to drip for an additional 24 hours. The cheese should be firm and cleave like chocolate.

Make sure the cheese is very dry before rolling it into 1 inch balls.

Dredge balls in dry spices or herbs like za'atar, a spice mixture used by Sephardi Jews.

Fill a jar halfway with olive oil. Gently drop cheese balls into the jar. Make sure the balls are covered with oil. Refrigerate for 1 month before eating so the cheese can absorb the flavour of the spices. It can last for up to 8 months. A 32 oz. (900 g) container of yogurt yields 8 cheese balls.

NB: If the cheese balls float in the oil, they are too moist and may be fermenting. Do not eat them.

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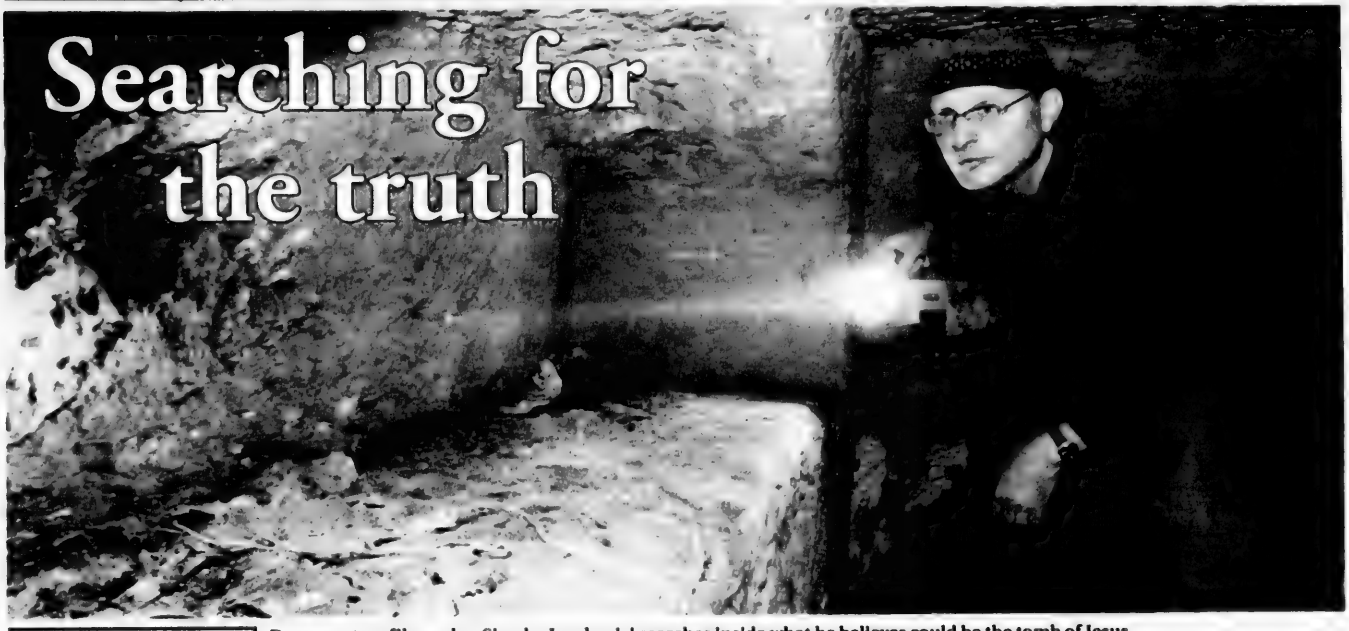

Documentary filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici searches inside what he believes could be the tomb of Jesus.

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Jacobovici defends his reputation in court

Michael Posner
Special to The CJN

Canadian Israeli filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici is no stranger to controversy.

Best known as the host of the TV series *The Naked Archaeologist*, Jacobovici has directed more than a dozen provocative feature documentaries, including *Deadly Currents*, *Hollywoodism* and *The Exodus Decoded*. Almost all of them have broken new ground or challenged conventional wisdom.

The resulting backlash has inured the three-time Emmy Award-winner to criticism. But he wasn't prepared for the campaign of vilification mounted by retired Israeli curator Joe Zias after the release of Jacobovici's most recent docs – *The Lost Tomb of Jesus* (2007) and *The Jesus Discovery/The Resurrection Tomb Mystery* (2012).

A Michigan-born anthropologist who made aliyah in the 1960s, Zias, 72, says Jacobovici is exploiting archeology for financial gain or, in his words, "pimping the Bible." Specifically, in a series of web postings and emails to Jacobovici's employers, bloggers and journalists, he accused the filmmaker of "planting archeology," forgery and inventing a Holocaust story. Although many scholars have derided the films as manipulative and sensationalized, only Zias has actually accused him of fraud.

"I don't mind being criticized," Jacobovici, 60, said in a recent interview. "People should be free to say what they want. But there's a difference between free speech and libel. And when you make these kinds of allegations, you cross the line."

Last year, the filmmaker formally filed a libel suit against Zias in an Israeli court, seeking $1 million in damages. However, given the glacial pace of Israel's judicial system, it will likely be months before there is a verdict.

Jacobovici is not the first to feel Zias's wrath. In the past decade or so, he has charged half a dozen senior archeologists, scientists and religious scholars with deceiving the public. For instance, he accused the late Bar-Ilan University historian Hanan Eshel of forging a Dead Sea Scroll fragment, and lobbied for his dismissal. Aren Maeir, former chair of the university's department of archeology, confirms that Zias urged him to fire Eshel, the author of more than 200 published papers.

Zias declined to be interviewed about Jacobovici's libel case, but in various online postings, he has attempted to portray himself as the potential victim of censorship.

Continued on page 19

Vayakhel
Candlelighting: 5:38
Havdalah: 6:43
Greater Toronto Area

Celebrating that special time in your life
Section B - Bridal Supplement

Kerry's efforts said to imperil Israel — please see page 23

CANADA

PCs Retain Thornhill

TORONTO — Tory Gila Martow was elected the MPP for Thornhill in a byelection last week. Tory Peter Shurman, won the riding in the last two provincial votes. In 2011, he defeated Liberal hopeful Bernie Farber, a former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress. Shurman's resignation last year over an expenses flap paved the way for Martow, a 52-year-old optometrist, to be the Conservative candidate in the Feb. 13 vote. She won with 49 per cent of the vote over Liberal Sandra Yeung Racco, the City of Vaughan's councillor for Ward 4, who had about 40 per cent.

Porter, El Al Sign Deal

TORONTO — El Al and Toronto's Porter Airlines have signed an inter-airline deal giving travellers more options for trips between Canada and Israel. Both airlines have operations at Newark International Airport, which will serve as a connecting point between Ben-Gurion Airport in Israel and Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport. The deal will let travellers connect from Billy Bishop to other Canadian destinations, as well as to check bags through to their final destination in Canada, the airlines said last week. Porter offers up to 13 round-trip daily flights to Newark from Toronto. El Al also offers weekly flights between Toronto and Tel Aviv.

WORLD

ADL Head To Retire

NEW YORK — Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League and one of the longest-serving and highest-profile American Jewish leaders, will be retiring from his post on July 20, 2015, the ADL said Feb. 10. A lawyer by training, Foxman, 73, a child survivor of the Holocaust, started at the ADL in 1965 and became its national director in 1987.

Comedy Pioneer Hosted Iconic '50s Show

Sid Caesar in 1961

NEW YORK — Sid Caesar, regarded as the founding father of American Jewish comedy and live original sketch comedy, died Feb. 12 at his home in Beverly Hills, Calif., at 91 after reportedly being in failing health for a year.

He is best known for his Saturday night television variety show *Your Show of Shows*, which he hosted in the 1950s, and he launched the careers of Jewish comics such as Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner, Larry Gelbart, Neil Simon and Woody Allen.

Known for his comic timing, improvisational skills and ability to mimic foreign languages, Caesar received the Alan King Award in American Jewish Humor in 2000 from the National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

When *JTA* asked him at the time if being Jewish had something to do with his comedic talent, he bristled, saying, "You can be Jewish and be bad" at comedy.

Born in Yonkers, N.Y., the third child of Jewish immigrants from Poland and Russia, Caesar launched his comedy career in 1942 while performing as a saxophonist.

He suffered a two-decade addiction to alcohol and pills that ended in the late 1970s, according to *Reuters*.

WWII Pension Change

BERLIN — Germany plans to give thousands of Jews who worked in ghettos during World War II better pensions, the newsweekly *Der Spiegel* reported. The deputy labour minister presented the plan to amend the pensions law to an Israeli delegation last month. Germany started paying the pensions from 1997, and those who applied later could only claim four years of back payments. An amendment will change that and be worth more than $20,000 each to some 13,000 former ghetto workers living in Israel. An announcement is expected when Chancellor Angela Merkel visits Israel later this month.

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Montreal town hall on charter draws a crowd

CJN Staff

MONTREAL — More than 500 people attended a "town hall" meeting on Bill 60, Quebec's proposed charter of values, organized by Federation CJA and its advocacy agency, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

The organizations have taken a clear stance against Bill 60, arguing that the bill violates fundamental rights and freedoms by excluding minority communities from fully participating in public life.

They submitted a joint brief to the National Assembly in December and are awaiting an opportunity to present it at the public hearings being held by a parliamentary commission.

CIJA board member Jason Caron emphasized the Jewish community's long history in and contribution to Quebec for over 250 years.

"We have a legitimate expectation that the continuity of our institutions, the value of our historic and religious heritage, and our acquired rights will be recognized and respected," he said.

Caron suggested that the minority Parti Québécois government is tampering with fundamental rights for political expediency, and that the charter is solely about "wedge politics" and the government's "short-sighted attempt to win a parliamentary majority."

The Feb. 10 meeting at the Gelber Conference Centre featured a panel discussion among journalists David Johnston, a *Gazette* senior editor responsible for the editorial and opinion pages; Lise Ravary, a columnist and blogger for the *Journal de Montréal*; and CJAD radio host Tommy Schnurmacher.

The discussion was moderated by lawyer Marc Gold, a past president of Federation CJA.

During the question period, the audience asked about specific concerns they had about the bill

Continued on page 16

Journalists David Johnston, left, Lise Ravary and Tommy Schnurmacher participate in a panel on Quebec's proposed values charter.

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Recognizing Israel as Jewish is part of ending conflict

"We are not going to recognize Israel as a Jewish state."
– Saeb Erekat, *Voice of Palestine Radio*, Feb. 10

Erekat, head of the Palestinian Authority's negotiations with Israel, was reportedly responding indirectly to Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, the head of Israel's peace negotiations team, who, according to *Ynetnews*, had hinted the previous day to a Knesset ministerial committee that they could be "in for a surprise" from the Palestinians on the recognition issue.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Erekat's blunt statement was no surprise at all. He was merely reiterating long-standing Palestinian policy.

Indeed, during a Feb. 2 interview with Jodi Rudoren of the *New York Times*, PA President Mahmoud Abbas stated it was "out of the question" that the Palestinians would recognize Israel as a Jewish state, adding that Jordan and Egypt were not asked to do so when they signed peace treaties with Israel.

Many Israeli Jews believe that genuine peace can only be achieved through mutual recognition or acceptance: a Palestinian state for the Palestinian people and a Jewish state for the Jewish People, with full democratic rights for the Israeli Arab minority. The Palestinians adamantly maintain, however, that acceptance of a Jewish state would require renunciation of their claim of a "right of return" of Palestinian refugees to Israel – something no Palestinian leader is willing to do.

When Abbas told Rudoren that something (unreasonable) is being asked of the Palestinians that was not asked of the Egyptians or Jordanians, he ignores the fact that neither Egypt nor Jordan (which had renounced its claim to the West Bank in 1988) was demanding that Israel absorb potentially millions of refugees. Indeed, the issue of a "right of return," which is relevant only in the case of the Palestinians, impinges uniquely on Israel's Jewish character and threatens it.

This impingement might help explain the results of the latest "Peace Index" released Feb. 4 by the Israel Democracy Institute and Tel Aviv University: "As part of a framework agreement with the Palestinians, 77 per cent of Israeli Jews believe it is important that the Palestinians recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish People, while 21 per cent believe it is not important. By political affiliation, 77 per cent of [those on] the right believe recognition is important, [compared to] 84 per cent of the centre and 63 per cent of the left."

A dissenting voice from the centre-left is the esteemed Shlomo Avineri, professor of political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In a Feb. 3 *Ha'aretz* article ("Mahmoud Abbas holds the key to peace"), Avineri argued that, mainly for technical reasons of "political or diplomatic recognition," he does not support "Jewish" statehood being part of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement.

Nonetheless, he writes: "The Palestinian leadership must be aware of the deep skepticism in Israel over its genuine readiness to end the conflict, especially in light of the fact that in the Palestinian discourse, the Jews are not considered a nation but a religious community only. When Abbas says, at a conference in Ramallah, that the Palestinian leadership cannot relinquish the right of return for Palestinian refugees because it is 'an individual decision,' it only intensifies Israeli skepticism."

Still, Avineri believes that this skepticism can be addressed by Abbas speaking directly to "the people of Israel" persuading them that the Palestinians "are now willing to accept us" (without using the "J" term).

Avineri further believes that such "simple, unambiguous words" would "change the discourse in Israel," which is overcome with what we might call "the acceptance gap."

Others argue that Avineri's formulation would fail to address what he termed in his essay for *The CJN* in September 2011 as "the perception held by most Israelis that at the end of the day, the Palestinians are not yet reconciled to peace with Israel as the Jewish nation-state" – the sort of full acceptance required to counter the claim of a "right of return" to Israel.

As this column went to press, a *Daily Telegraph* story, drawing on a reported leak, appeared in the Feb. 12 *National Post* entitled "U.S. plan to recognize Israel as Jewish state; blow to Abbas."

We may soon find out.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

OLYMPIC DREAMS

Skaters Dylan Moscovitch and Kirsten Moore-Towers placed sixth in pairs free skating, fifth in the short program, and took home a silver in the team competition at the Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. The Toronto-born, Waterloo, Ont.-based Moscovitch, believed to be the only Jewish athlete on Team Canada, told the *Waterloo Record* his first Olympic experience was everything he dreamed it would be. The pairs team said they hope to compete in the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

[CBC-TV Screenshot]

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Don't silence Neil Young

It's shaping up to be the best summer ever for concerts in Israel, despite the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement's strident efforts to establish a cultural boycott of the country.

The lineup of musical acts offers something for every taste. The Rolling Stones are poised to give their inaugural concert in Israel in June, 51 years to the month after the release of their first single. Pop mega-stars Katy Perry, Lady Gaga, Beyoncé, Miley Cyrus and Justin Timberlake have shows scheduled or are expected to announce dates in the near future.

Grunge and alternative fans will welcome Soundgarden and the Pixies (who cancelled a 2010 appearance in Tel Aviv in the wake of the Gaza flotilla incident, but now appear to have had a change of mind). A host of up-and-coming indie acts, including Passenger and Cults, are also on the schedule.

Canadian artists will be well represented, too. Justin Bieber has a Tel Aviv date slated for May (though given his recent antics, who knows whether he'll be in any condition to perform by then). And the legendary Neil Young comes to town July 17.

Of all these artists, Young is getting the most flak for his decision to perform in Israel. The group Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East has called on Young to show his support for "the human rights of the Palestinian people" by cancelling his concert. Meanwhile, Independent Jewish Voices released a video online that juxtaposes graphic images from the Vietnam War with scenes from the Palestinian territories, all set to the Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young's 1970 protest anthem *Ohio*.

An open letter that accompanies the video asks: "Will Neil Young listen to the Palestinians, or will he play to the tune of Israel's Apache helicopters and Hellfire missiles?"

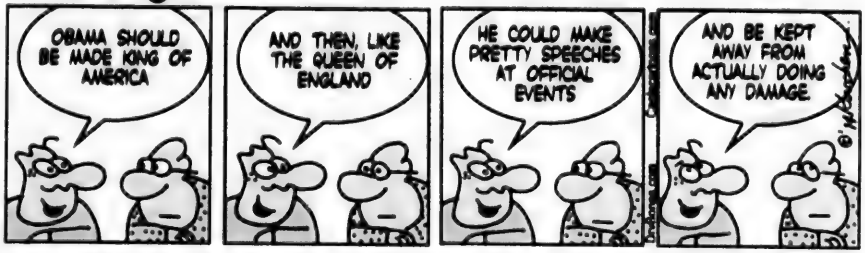
Given Young's long history of activism, and his recent cross-Canada "Honour the Treaties" tour in support of aboriginal land claims against oilsands operators, it's easy to see why these groups are so aggravated by his trip to Israel – they thought he was on their side. Indeed, former Pink Floyd frontman Roger Waters summed up the BDS movement's collective shock in a Feb. 1 open letter posted on Facebook: "Neil? I shall ponder all of this long and hard… you were always one of my heroes, I am confused," Waters wrote.

Pop stars like Cyrus and the Biebs tend to avoid political issues (unless you consider "twerking" a political issue), but Young has never been shy about voicing his opinion. More than likely, Young gave serious thought to the ramifications of playing in Tel Aviv and concluded that doing so fits in with – or at least doesn't contradict – his personal and political values. Whether or not he comes right out and says so, by performing in Israel, he is implicitly standing up for the Jewish state and against the likes of Waters and Independent Jewish Voices.

In *When God Made Me* (from his underappreciated 2005 album *Prairie Wind*), Young wonders: "Did he [God] give me the gift of voice so some could silence me?" The answer is an emphatic "no," even if that is precisely what Israel's enemies would prefer.

yoni

Dry Bones


OBAMA SHOULD BE MADE KING OF AMERICA
AND THEN, LIKE THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND
HE COULD MAKE PRETTY SPEECHES AT OFFICIAL EVENTS
AND BE KEPT AWAY FROM ACTUALLY DOING ANY DAMAGE

Hillel must draw the line on BDS

It is extremely disappointing to read that chapters of Hillel have been hijacked into "hearing Palestinian voices" and that other so-called "Jewish" organizations have the gall to expect that Hillel should discuss anti-Israel narratives ("Where's the line in campus debates about Israel?" *The CJN*, Feb. 6). If anyone wants to hear Palestinian voices, they are welcome to listen to any one of thousands of NGOs and media that blindly support Palestinians and quickly shut down all pro-Israel discourse.

At least boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) is a red line for Hillel, as it should be for many reasons, but the real answer to BDS and the European Union law boycotting businesses beyond the Green Line is that they are racist. If any pro-BDS organization will boycott all of the numerous occupiers around the world, such as Turkey for the occupation of Cyprus, China for Tibet, Iran for Baluchestan, then there is something to discuss. Until then, boycotting the Jewish state while ignoring the others is simply anti-Semitic.

Mike Freedland
Thornhill

• • •

The answer is simple: the line is drawn when "discussion and dialogue" are really code for activism aimed at first infiltrating and then undermining Hillel as a staunch supporter of Israel, part of a course of action that would ultimately destroy them both.

It doesn't require Tyler Levitan's master's degree in political economy to understand that the aim of boycotting Israel, divesting from it and sanctioning it, is to destroy its economy as well as break its spirit, bringing an end to the country.

Why should Hillel permit such traitorous people to penetrate and destroy it? Levitan already has two organizations – Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) and now his Young Jews for Social Justice. If he doesn't like Hillel, he doesn't have to join, but he won't be content unless he destroys it. Should Levitan feel the need for the acceptance he's not getting from Hillel, the United Church will likely welcome him with open arms.

It is odd that people such as Irshad Manjii, Hirsi Ali and Nonie Darwish support Israel's existence alongside Arabs and Palestinians, while people of Levitan's ilk and his organizations aid and abet those seeking its destruction.

Advice to Hillel – Levitan's spurious argument for an "open Hillel" is a Trojan horse. Shut your gates to Levitan and IJV and feel no need for apology.

Anthony Dayton
Thornhill

SodaStream flows in Israel

Bernie Farber's article ("Let a thousand SodaStreams flow," *The CJN*, Feb. 13) provides an example of why Jewish people are in such a difficult situation. How is it that so many Jews, including the former CEO of the Canadian Jewish Congress, have bought into anti-Israel and anti-Jewish propaganda? The Jewish people have rights, and we have the land deed to prove it. The rights given to the Jewish people in recognition of our history in the Land of Israel have not expired (see Article 80 of the UN charter).

It is time for us to broadcast, loud and clear, that according to international law, Jews are allowed to settle anywhere west of the Jordan River. Jews lived continuously in Judea and Samaria for more than 3,000 years. Renaming this land "the West Bank" in order to disguise this history, and making it Judenfrei for 19 years (1948-1967) as a result of Arab slaughter and ethnic cleansing, did not turn this land into Arab land. Ma'aleh Adumim and the other Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria are not on "occupied land."

Yehudit Shler Weisberg
The Legal Forum for Israel
Toronto

Gas stoves weather the storm

Richard Rabkin ("Halachic challenges of the ice storm," *The CJN*, Jan. 30) is obviously unfamiliar with gas stoves. There is no need for the mashgiach to relight the pilot light in the gas stove oven. It is a gas stove and the gas supply was not affected by power outage. Gas heat did not work because there was no electricity for the fans or water pumps. Gas stoves rely on neither!

Jack Miller
Special Advisor on Buildings & Space
Emeritus Professor of Chemistry
Brock University

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A figure skating champion and a civic leader

Allan Levine

The past is rarely neat or ordered, despite the tendency of historians to present it that way. Doing so makes history more understandable and places issues in context, but it often also distorts what really took place. Generalizing is especially dangerous and no more so than when it comes to the subject of anti-Semitism in Canada or elsewhere –for, there are always exceptions.

There is no denying that from the earliest days of Jewish settlement in Canada to about the 1960s, the country was not always welcoming. Anti-Semitism in all of its various forms existed, particularly after 1880 with the large scale immigration of Jews from the Russian Empire and Eastern Europe.

Across the country, Jews could not find jobs as teachers, salesclerks or hospital interns. Gentile mothers invoked the figure of the Jewish peddler, the *Canadian Jewish Times* noted in 1913, as a "bogeyman" to hush their children. Regarded as unwanted outsiders, Jews confronted restrictions at social clubs and summer resorts and were routinely the victims of street violence.

Intellectuals and journalists such as Goldwin Smith in Toronto and Henri Bourassa, the founder of *Le Devoir* in Montreal, castigated Jews as slackers who only took, but never gave back to the societies they lived in.

The situation worsened in the '20s and '30s typified at one end of the political spectrum by the popularity of Adrian Arcand's fascist party in Quebec and at the other, by the more genteel anti-Semitism of Canadian prime minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, who allowed political expediency to trump his own humanitarianism and refused to allow German-Jewish refugees escaping Nazi Germany into the country.

Amidst all of this was Louis Rubenstein, a late 19th century pioneer figure skating champion from Montreal and an avid sports enthusiast. He was president of the Montreal YMHA, curled at the decidedly non-Jewish St. Andrews Curling Club and was a superb bowler and cyclist. He was also a key member of his family's thriving metal plating shop, and a Montreal city alderman from 1914 until his death in 1931.

Louis Rubenstein was also a superb bowler and cyclist

Rubenstein was born in Montreal in 1861. He was the ninth of 12 children of Max and Leah Rubenstein, who had immigrated to Quebec in the 1850s from Russian-controlled Poland. Three years after Louis's birth, the family established Rubenstein Brothers, a metal plating business, which Louis later joined. In 1929, according to the company's website, Louis, a bachelor and the last surviving partner, sold the business to Jack and Dave Becker. Their brother Lavy later joined them. They transformed it into a supplier of equipment and machinery to the garment industry and it endures to this day under the ownership of Lavy's son Hillel and his three partners.

By the time Rubenstein was in his 20s, the family was clearly assimilated, unlike the thousands of the seemingly backward Jews from the Russian Empire who descended on the city. Being Jewish does not appear to have been much of an obstacle, if at all, in Louis's pursuit of sports. At a time, when Jews could not join athletic or golf clubs in Canada, Louis, with his distinguished moustache and bowler hat, became the country's best male figure skater, winning Canadian and U.S. championships from 1878 to 1891.

In 1890, he travelled to St. Petersburg to compete in an (unofficial) international skating championship which he won despite the poor ice conditions. He might not have experienced anti-Semitism in Montreal, yet he certainly did in Czarist Russia. Having discovered that he was Jewish, the St. Petersburg police wanted to expel him from the competition and send him home. Only the intervention of the British ambassador permitted him to stay and participate. When the police, who had taken Rubenstein's one-page passport, returned it, they had substituted the words "British subject" with "L. Rubenstein, Jew."

In later years, as is noted in the entry on him in the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, Rubenstein served as the president of the International Skating Union of America from 1907 to 1909, president of the Canadian Wheelmen's Association for almost two decades, and president of the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association from 1913 to 1915.

In 1914, at the age of 43, he ran for Montreal City Council in the downtown St. Lawrence ward and won by acclamation and continued to win election after election easily for the next 16 years. An enlightened businessman, he had a reputation for being a friend of labour.

When he died in January 1931, politicians from all three levels of government attended his funeral – certainly a rarity for a Jewish community leader in those days – and Montreal mayor Camillien Houde, among others, eulogized him. The *Montreal Star* wrote an editorial extolling his virtues and mourning the fact that the city's working class had lost a true champion.

Louis Rubenstein in 1893 *[Wikipedia Commons photo]*

A water fountain memorial was erected in his honour six years later near the old YMHA, which according to filmmaker Iris Wagner in a 2004 interview in *The CJN* "is the only public monument in Montreal, and perhaps in Quebec, honouring a Jew." A decade ago, Wagner produced a short documentary about Rubenstein.

Across Canada, there were other Jews like Rubenstein, whose lives were not necessarily exclusively defined by being Jewish. This is not to suggest that in the years before and after the Second World War, Canadian Jews did not experience prejudice and discrimination—since they surely did—only that history is rarely black and white, but more often a shade of gray.

Allan Levine is the author of King: William Lyon Mackenzie King: A Life Guided by the Hand of Destiny. *His next book,* Toronto: A Life and Times, *will be published in the fall.*

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We must master history, not serve it

Jean M. Gerber
in Vancouver

Recently two friends of mine passed away – well, one friend, whom I will call V, and one Ariel Sharon, whom I met only once, but what an encounter! When I came across the following quotation, I thought of them.

"History is useless. There's too much of it." So said Rex Stout's portly detective, Nero Wolfe.

History, Part 1: In 1974 my husband and I were spending a year's sabbatical in Israel. In the aftermath of the Yom Kippur debacle, Israel went all out to show the few professors who were actually on sabbatical there a really interesting time. We went from the Suez Canal to the Golan Heights on tours that were meant to showcase the country and its resilience (as well as its acquired territories).

One day, we met with Israeli military brass and the main speaker was Ariel Sharon. A more persuasive and personable man we had yet to meet. He was delighted to share with the crowd his hope for our future, based on his understanding of the past.

"Come live in Israel," he urged. In fact, come live in the Palestinian territories, which we are opening up. "What about the people there?" the skeptics asked. They can move across the Jordan River. His vision? A whole new Israel up to the Jordan filled with North American olim and empty of Palestinians. This would fulfil the historical dream of a restored Israel and assure its security.

To say we were not ready to take him up is to understate the case. We shook our heads – it wasn't for us, any of it.

Fast forward, and there was the same man who had envisioned a Greater Israel now sending the army to clear out the Sinai of settlers and hand Gaza back to the Palestinians, with all the dangers that entailed. Was this the same guy? A saintly twin? Indeed, in his last years he wasn't the same guy. Maybe he began to realize that there is history – yes, yes, a Greater Israel restoration, blah, blah, blah – but maybe he had decided that was too much history. Time to move on? We'll never know how he would have continued had fate not intervened.

History, Part 2: Last week an old friend died, a survivor of the camps and of the loss of most of her family. She had married and come to Canada as a young bride. V (let's call her that) threw herself into community volunteering. Her personal history, and that of the six million, would not deter her from creating a new life and family.

V knew what to do with all that history. Once in Vancouver, she became part of the first Holocaust Education Symposium. Supported by Canadian Jewish Congress, Pacific region, a volunteer committee of survivors and other educators began the annual symposium for public high schools in the Vancouver area (and today, under the aegis of the Holocaust Education Centre, reaching far beyond).

She would begin her talk by telling students "When I was your age, I went to Auschwitz." If teenagers came to the event without a knowledge of the Holocaust, or if they had been swayed by deniers beginning to show their ugly faces, they left with a vivid picture of what had happened not just to millions, but to the person standing in front of them.

Over the years, more survivors came forward to speak. Now as their numbers dwindle, we have their filmed stories. They're less powerful, perhaps, than one woman or man speaking face to face, but they're still authentic and true – a way to make this terrible history a path to a different future.

So is history useless because we have too much of it?

Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai hoped not: in *Seven Laments for the Fallen in the War*, he wrote as refrain, "Behind all this perhaps some great happiness is hiding." Behind each war a step forward? Maybe inescapable history, maybe a future.

Author Amos Oz thought so in his conversations with Sari Nusseibeh, president of Al-Quds University. Oz: "The past cannot be brought back alive." Nusseibeh: "The future is more important than the past." Each one lamented that their histories were weighing down any possibility of an end to conflict, as each side became entangled in a historical litany of wrongs and rights.

In sum, we need to be master of history, not the servant.

Why I'm optimistic about our future

Norma Baumel Joseph
in Montreal

I've been writing this column since 2003. I never imagined that I'd last this long or like the process so much. Intriguingly, I didn't know I was so confident about our community and our future. I also could not imagine people's reaction to the columns themselves.

People often ask me how I choose my topics or find the time. Typically, I have no idea how my words or thoughts are received. People don't necessarily comment or contact me. And that's fine. However, every now and then, a column seems to resonate with people, and I get feedback.

Personal columns often reverberate with readers. Early on, I wrote a column about women saying *Kaddish*. That struck a deep chord, and different women commented. They were interested in the struggle for women's ritual practice. In general, you're interested in my struggles when you hear your own experiences validated or exposed.

Then there are columns that come out of questions people ask or insights friends offer. One such column was my discussion of the kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit and our poor powers of remembrance. After it appeared, *The CJN* dedicated serious time and space to the campaign for Gilad's release. I'm proud to have been part of that. I was, and still am, concerned about Israeli MIAs. How can we keep them present in our minds and in Israeli political discourse? Your interest sparks my consideration.

Aside from commenting on things political, I like to dialogue about our community and our religious practices. Last month's column about who is religious quickly received many reactions. Many thought it was worth sharing with others. I'm especially proud that a teacher I respect greatly used it in her Grade 5 class. I felt strongly about what I wrote – about our heritage and the religiosity of Jews in all walks of life. I often feel we lose sight of our great strength and disavow our own diversity. There is a self-confidence that we as a community are entitled to, a sense of robust survival that we should not yield or hide from.

Significantly, I'm not afraid to criticize our community, its leaders and its members. There are issues we have not addressed or about which our record is poor. As you know, I practically rant about the deplorable state of *agunot*, women who can't receive a Jewish divorce. I blame all of us: rabbis, lay leaders, professionals, marrying couples, husbands and the Jewish legal system itself.

Clearly, I write about things I'm passionate about. These topics emanate from my concerns for our existence as a Jewish community. Thus, I'm writing today to tell you that I'm proud of our communal presence and vibrancy. I see a strong and successful Jewish world today. Many write that we're in a time of crisis. I don't agree. Despite the recent Pew study of U.S. Jewry, or perhaps despite its distortion, I'm heartened by our vitality. Reading the study carefully supports my optimism and confidence.

Never before in history have we had such a strong Jewish community or domain. Clearly, it's different than in the past, but change doesn't necessarily mean decline! Today we live in a world where there is a free and democratic Jewish State of Israel. Yes there are problems, but the state has significantly restructured our purview. One grand transformation of our community is signalled by the fact that American Jews are the most educated community ever in history. While some will fear this development as a sign of our secularization and the supposed attendant distancing from our ethnic or religious identity, that is not evident.

Significantly, there are more Jews getting a Jewish education today than ever before. Astonishingly, women are included in that demographic! Moreover, people are talking about their distinctiveness as Jews and acting in ways that endorse and promote their identity. There are more Hebrew speakers than ever, Yiddish hasn't died, and there are Jewish studies departments in countless universities. Jewish social networks have increased. Likewise, our social institutions have multiplied and diversified.

We're not unified or uniform, but don't be afraid. Diversity establishes a richness and vigorous presence. New ways of being Jewish in this world are developing, and that's a sign of dynamism, not death.

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Careful to stay away from education trends

Longtime Heschel educator new head of school

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

As of next September, Greg Beiles, the curriculum consultant at the Toronto Heschel School will take over as head of school, replacing Gail Baker, who is retiring after 13 years in the post.

The announcement, made late last month in a letter emailed to parents, detailed Beiles' experience with Heschel, having been employed there for the past 17 of its 18 years.

In an interview with *The CJN*, Baker said Beiles has "seen [Heschel] grow from the beginning days until now to maturation. He is a passionate Jewish educator and he is completely committed to the philosophy and the vision and mission of this school."

Greg Beiles

Equipped with an undergraduate degree in Jewish studies, a bachelor of education from the University of Toronto, as well as a master's of education from U of T's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Beiles has evolved from a third grade teacher in 1997 to elementary division head in 2000, to the middle school director a year later, and finally in 2004, to the role of curriculum consultant.

Beiles is also a PhD candidate in U of T's department for the study of religion, and last year, he received an Emerging Scholar Award from the Network for Research in Jewish Education in New York.

Following the announcement last month, Beiles spoke about being chosen to take over for Baker, one of Heschel's co-founders, and what the future holds for the arts-based, non-denominational school, which boasts an integrated curriculum that combines Judaic and secular subjects with a strong focus on social justice.

"Having worked at Heschel for 17 of its 18 years, I have had the privilege of working with all of the founders. I've been a student of the school as much as I have been a teacher here. It only makes sense that someone who has grown up with the school, who knows its philosophy and institutional history intimately, would be able to lead it into its next stage of growth," Beiles said.

"The school has a very unique educational philosophy… The feeling, I think, is that it would be difficult for someone from the outside to get the school… I think they felt I had the most experience, teaching across all the disciplines, and I really know the curriculum really well. I know the teaching methodologies really well. I have a good sense of the philosophy and the vision of the school."

Beiles said he sees Heschel as a "renaissance Jewish school" that combines art, science and religion, but added that he's careful to stay away from education trends.

"This whole craze now about having computers everywhere in the classroom –that's a trend. Computers are a tool, like a pencil or an inkwell. Of course our students have access to computers. They're the tools of the day. But basing an educational philosophy on computers is like basing it on a pencil," he said.

"We have always been a research-based school. We draw much of our pedagogical direction from research done… at the Harvard [Graduate] School of Education. And of course, we're inspired by the teachings of Rabbi [Abraham Joshhua] Heschel, who emphasizes awe, wonder and the importance of self-discipline in his vision of education."

Rather than get caught up in trends, Beiles believes it's more worthwhile to focus on refining the school's fundamental principles.

"You know the expression, 'God is in the details?' We want to keep working on making the practices that we've adopted work as well as they possibly can."

Baker, who said that she loves the school "deeply" and expects to stay connected with it despite her retirement, said tuition and enrolment will likely remain the biggest challenges facing Beiles, and Jewish day schools in general.

"To help families work around that has been a big challenge for the school and for day schools in general. People are selecting to not even come through the doors and when you ask them, it's, 'No, I'd love to, but it's just too expensive.' They won't even start to entertain that possibility. So we're always looking for ways to accommodate families, and I think that will remain something that he's going to have to focus on," Baker said.

Apart from the affordability issue, Beiles said another challenge is attracting a diverse student body.

"You want to make sure your school is reasonably diverse and you're able to attract Jewish kids from different backgrounds. I mean, for Heschel, our whole philosophy is rooted in pluralism, which means we want kids from different Jewish backgrounds, streams of observance and that sort of thing, but also we'd like to have some socio-economic diversity," he said.

Although Heschel experienced a significant drop in enrolment a few years ago – Beiles guesses that it may have dropped to as low as 185 students, from a high of around 300 – the school has been enjoying a steady increase since then, with a current student body of about 235 and growing.

"Our retention levels are extremely high. I don't have the number at my fingertips, but they're in the high 90s, I think. In the last few years, we've had very few kids leave and enrolment is strong. Not just enrolment into the early years, but we're also picking up kids in the lower elementary as well. We might even gain next year, despite the loss of a big graduating class," he said.

Baker said she's also encouraged by the school's growing population and high retention rate. "He'll need to be actively involved in keeping that going as we go forward," she said.

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LONGTIME BLOOD DONOR: Eric Lakien, 63, was recently honoured with cake and balloons by Canadian Blood Services for donating blood for the 200th time. The husband and father of three sons, Lakien has been donating blood since he was a 17-year-old student at McGill University. Lakien is seen here with his son Josh, who gave blood for the first time.

Conservative, Reform leaders meet

Rabbis hold dialogue on community's future

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

When Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich, spiritual leader of Beth Sholom Synagogue, and Holy Blossom Temple's Rabbi John Moscowitz came together last week to have a public conversation about the future of Jewish communities, Rabbi Flanzraich said this is a topic that should literally make us sweat.

Referring to the recent Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project, which stated that only 22 per cent of Jews described themselves as having religion, Rabbi Flanzraich asked how we can create a religious community where people find meaning in synagogue and understand its values.

"[At Beth Sholom, we're working hard] to recharge people. The liturgy is in a different and complex language, yet, despite this barrier, there is a paradox. It contains certain human truths, and we need to explain what they mean and make them meaningful."

While Orthodox Jews feel they have no choice about attending synagogue, Conservative and Reform Jews have choices, he said. "We have to work harder and better. I deeply believe that [television and movies] are not meaningful and do not resonate in the same way [as our liturgy]. We have to find the right ingredient to make it happen."

Rabbi Moscowitz responded, however, that he is doubtful this can happen. "We may have to radically change the landscape. It is very telling that all synagogues are organized the same way. The largest space is where the fewest people spend the least amount of time.

"I suggest building around that space, and promoting study as a meaningful activity. There is something about learning and studying that can touch any mind at any age. It might move people from studying to davening."

Rabbi Flanzraich said he feared, though, that if people turned from prayer to study, they might give up entirely.

"It is a great challenge to try and use the moments when people are gathered, and use their heads to find their hearts. We are wired to think things and not feel, but prayer helps us feel."

Rabbi John Moscowitz, left, and Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich
[Carolyn Blackman photo]

Rabbi Moscowitz said people definitely want to belong to a synagogue. "They feel yearning, curiosity and alienation, and they want to belong [to something]. Most Jews want the smell of tradition in their shul, and to be left alone outside. When they enter a synagogue, though, they want it to seem like synagogue."

Asked by Rabbi Flanzraich if membership would change if prayer services were cut down, Rabbi Moscowitz said that "people would be outraged. The synagogue to which they belong must [be their representative] to the outside world."

In the question period, a member of the audience asked about the challenge of intermarriage, and Rabbi Flanzraich said his synagogue is undergoing a change of attitude.

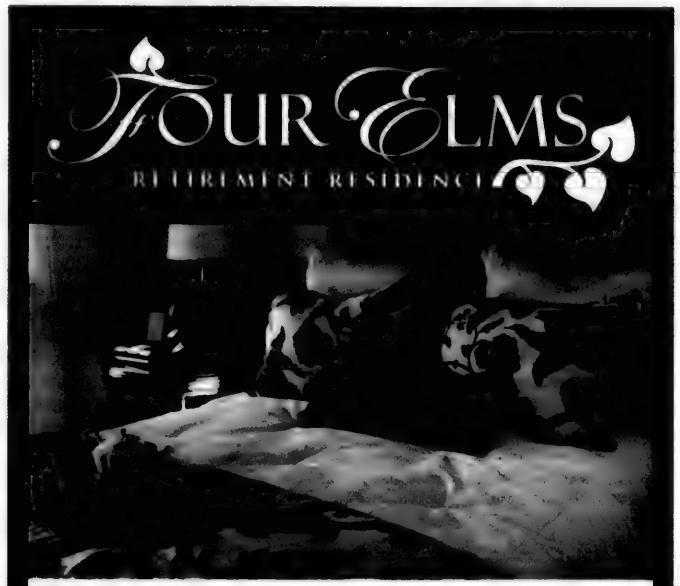
He said this coming spring, the synagogue is having an off-site open house for interfaith couples. "We want to create an environment for those who are uncomfortable speaking to a rabbi. We have to reach out to them and be more proactive. If we engage interfaith couples in conversation, we stand to gain more. In an open market of ideas, we can win."

On a positive note, Rabbi Flanzraich said that the Pew report stated that 92 per cent of Jews are proud of being Jewish. "[Those numbers] are significantly important."

A second evening is planned for March 12, to discuss "Can non-Orthodox Jews be religious?"

Correction

In the article "Longtime NCSY volunteer 'changed the community'" (*The CJN* Feb. 13), Rabbi Nosson Westreich, a current NCSY board member, was mistakenly referred to as "the late." *The CJN* apologizes for the error.



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Jews urged to become organ donors

Saving a life is paramount, says prominent rabbi

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

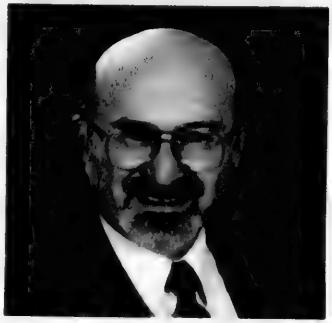
It is absurd to think that Jews should not become organ donors, said Rabbi Reuven Bulka, spiritual leader of Congregation Machzikei Hadas in Ottawa.

Board chair of the Trillium Gift of Life Network and board member of Canadian Blood Services, Rabbi Bulka spoke last week at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation at an event sponsored by the synagogue and Beth Haminyan, with the assistance of Trillium Gift of Life.

Also speaking was Dr. Gary Levy, founder and former director of the multi-organ transplant program of the University Health Network. An organ donor and recipient also spoke.

The evening commemorated the first yahrtzeit of Allan Gould, a writer and former *CJN* columnist, whose family donated his organs after his sudden death from a brain aneurysm.

Rabbi Bulka said there are some excuses as to why people think they should not donate their organs. "The burial will not be instant, but not all burials are. Sometimes people wait for their families to come [to have the funeral]. Delaying a funeral because they are saving someone's life is a valid reason."



Rabbi Reuven Bulka

He said people also think that their loved one must be buried whole. "In an ideal world, they should be buried whole, but if the [part missing] is giving life to another, it is not an issue."

Saving a life is paramount, he said. "Knowing that, pushes away every other consideration, except taking a life. Saving other people's lives is a mitzvah, and nothing should stand in the way."

Organ and tissue donation does have challenges, he said, "but we will get over it. Hopefully rabbis will announce [from the pulpit that they've become donors]."

Levy said organ donation is recognized as one of the greatest medical achievements in this and the previous century. "Survival rates at one year are 95 per cent, and in five to 10 years, the survival rate is high."

In Toronto, he said, 650 organ and tissue transplants are done every year. "Despite our success, though, many people will die because of the shortage of organs. In our hospital there are too many patients waiting for the phone call [that tells them] there is an [organ] available. Last year, more than 150 people who were accepted for a transplant died, because there was no organ."

Levy said that organ donation rates in this region are extremely low. "We are obviously not getting the message out."

To help bridge the gap, he said, "we have established a cutting-edge, living donor program, the largest in [the country.]"

In Canada, he said, 40 to 50 per cent of transplants are based on living donors, [but] live donations carry risks. "It is a manifestation of our societal failure to come to grips with becoming organ donors."

He just returned from Israel, he said, where a law has been passed that says people who sign up to donate their organs, are given first priority if they need an organ themselves.

"We have to question why there is such a malaise to do what is so obviously right."

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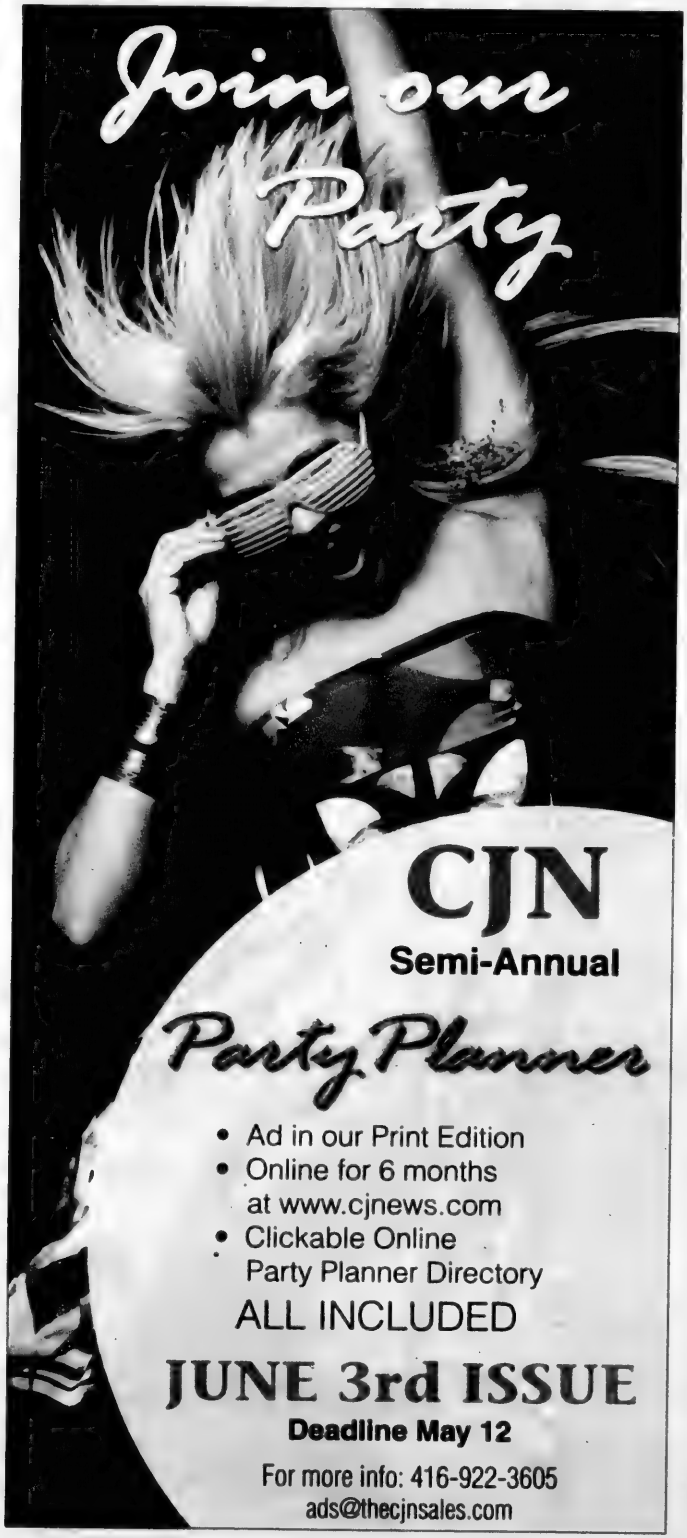


Bayley and Nara Abrams (*Michele Crockett photo*)

Gets kids involved with philanthopy

Leukemia fundraiser set for March 2

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

A fundraising committee of 25 kids from grades 3 to 8 are organizing the second annual Camp Imagine fundraiser for Imagine A Cure For Leukemia.

"This event was the brainchild of my daughter, Bayley, when she was 10 years old," Nara Abrams, president and founder of Imagine A Cure For Leukemia, said of Camp Imagine. It will be held March 2 this year at the Castlefield Event Theatre.

"For several years, Bayley has asked her friends to donate to the charity in lieu of birthday gifts. Last year, however, she said she wanted to do more and the Camp Imagine project was born."

"My Gigi [grandma] was diagnosed with leukemia before I was born," Bayley said. "We spent almost every day together until I was five years old. Then she got really sick and passed away. I miss her so much. I know she would be proud of me."

But Camp Imagine, an event for families, is more than just about raising money.

"We also want to encourage kids to get involved with philanthropy and to continue raising awareness of this illness. Most people are not aware that leukemia is the number 1 disease killer of children under 19," Abrams said.

Committee members are enthusiastic about working for the charity.

"It means a lot to me because it's a good cause. You need to be committed, because it takes a lot of effort," said Zev Friedman, 11.

Sabrina Sefton, also 11, said, "Helping organize this charity event is a great way to use what's in your heart and give back to kids who need help."

Benjamin Duke, 12, said, "I want other kids to know that anybody can make a difference and give back to their community. As we raise more money, we get closer to finding a cure for leukemia."

Benjamin's twin sister Jordana said, "Camp Imagine has taught me to never give up. When the world is a better place, anything is possible."

Participating camps include Bayview Glen, B'nai Brith of Ottawa, Northland B'nai Brith, Crestwood Valley, Manitou, Muskoka Woods, Robin Hood, Tamakwa, Tamarack, Timberlane, Wahanowin, Walden, White Pine, Winnebago, Elite Basketball, Richmond Hill Country Club, Stinger Ball, Westcoast Connection and Zodiac.

Each camp will have its own booth featuring a fun activity, and there will be snacks and food donated by several companies.

The event will feature a raffle, a silent auction, a dance that will be hosted by Sole Power Productions and the launch of the Camp Imagine theme song written and performed by Marlowe and The Mix and the Camp Imagine committee.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada says that this year 5,000 Canadians will be diagnosed with leukemia and 2,500 will die. Pediatric leukemia remains the most common pediatric cancer (in those age 19 and under). Leukemia accounts for 26 per cent of all childhood cancers and causes 28 per cent of deaths due to childhood cancer.

Imagine A Cure for Leukemia was founded on the premise that it's important to create awareness and raise money to benefit research.

"I feel fortunate that my mom was at our first two fundraising events. She knew she was our inspiration," Abrams said.

Tickets are available online at www.imagineacureforleukemia.com.

Rally planned in support of Lev Tahor

'They are people just like anyone else,' Chatham man says

CJN Staff

A man in Chatham, Ont. will be organizing a rally later this month in support of the controversial ultra-Orthodox Lev Tahor sect.

According to the *Chatham Daily News*, Chatham resident Dave Formosa, the founder of a local human rights Facebook group, is planning a Feb. 25 "community peace rally" near the Chatham-Kent Courthouse in support of Lev Tahor, which he feels is being unfairly maligned.

Formosa, who is not Jewish and is using Facebook to publicize the event, said the Feb. 25 date was chosen because that's the date Lev Tahor members will be at the courthouse to file their appeal of an Ontario court ruling earlier this month that upheld an earlier Quebec court order to send 13 children from the group back to Quebec to be placed in foster care.

He said he met with members of the sect to ask about how they would feel about a rally and said they approved.

"Basically, all we're trying to do right now is get people to understand that they [Lev Tahor] are people just like anyone else," Formosa told the paper.

The group's original lawyer had said the appeal of the Ontario court ruling would come last week, but as of last Friday at *The CJN*'s deadline, the appeal had not been filed, Lev Tahor spokesperson Uriel Goldman said.

He also said the group has been instructed by its new attorney, St. Thomas, Ont., family lawyer Julie Lee, who will be handling the appeal, not to speak to the media any more about the group's case.

Goldman added that Lee will also be handling the group's dealings with Chatham-Kent Children's Services, including setting up meetings.

Child welfare authorities in Chatham-Kent had been closely monitoring Lev Tahor with near-daily visits since the group's arrival in the area. The last visit was late last month, and the group told *The CJN* it's no longer co-operating with them, because its contends the visits were intrusive, repetitive, and didn't turn up evidence of abuse or neglect.

Meanwhile, details of a Sureté du Québec investigation of the controversial Lev Tahor sect were expected to be released Feb. 14, much of it purportedly containing testimony by Adam Brudzewsky, who spent two years living with them.

Some of the children in Lev Tahor
[Paul Lungen photo]

Brudzewsky is being described by supporters as a whistleblower and by detractors as mentally unstable, the *Toronto Star* reported.

The Danish-born Brudzewsky, who is in his late 20s, reportedly testified at a Quebec youth protection hearing last November in Ste-Jerome that he had undergone an arranged marriage with a 15-year-old girl and personally witnessed mistreatment of Lev Tahor children, who were living in Ste-Agathe until last Nov. 17, when some 200 members of the group moved en masse to Chatham, Ont.

The court documents reportedly contain Brudzewsky's allegations of physical abuse, underage marriages and limited education of the children.

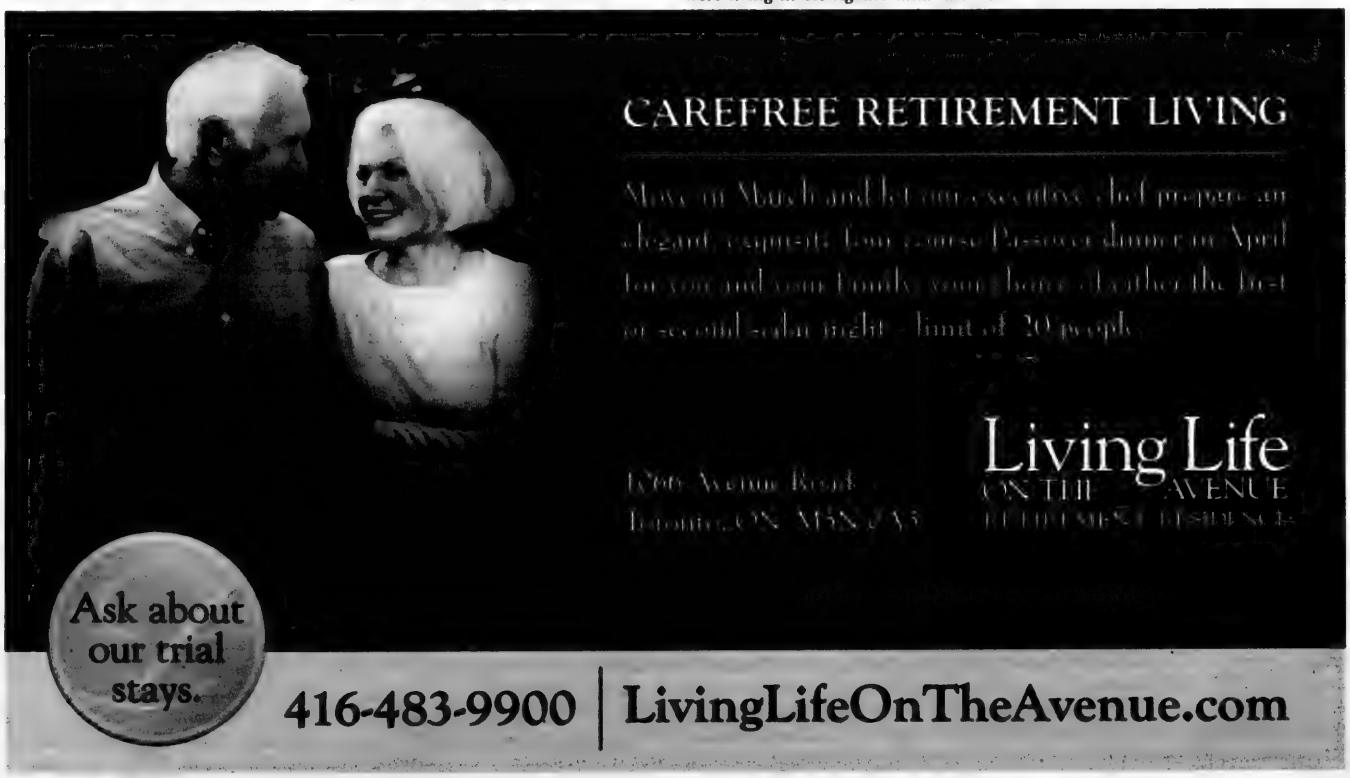
However, according to the *Star* story, Harold Boss, grandfather of Brudzewsky's wife, Leah, said Brudzewsky has shown signs of psychological problems – including a past suicide attempt – and that his testimony should be fully investigated before being accepted as true.

Brudzewsky and his wife left Lev Tahor in 2011 and went to his native Denmark. They later settled in Monroe, N.Y., to live with her family.

According to the *Star*, 10 prominent haredi rabbis met Jan. 7 in Montreal to discuss how the children would be housed with religiously observant, Yiddish-speaking foster families, but they also issued an edict forbidding their followers from helping Lev Tahor financially.

Montreal Satmar Grand Rabbi Dovid Meisels is quoted as describing Brudzewsky as "a real liar."

Brudzewsky told the *Star* he stands by his allegations against Lev Tahor, saying, "I challenge anyone to catch me in any lie whatsoever."



Mammography study questioned by doctor

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A controversial 25-year follow-up study that concluded mammography is ineffective in lowering deaths for women at average risk of developing breast cancer is essentially useless for the general public, as well as for women at higher risk for the disease, such as Ashkenazi Jews who are more likely to have a genetic mutation that causes it, a leading expert says.

The Canadian National Breast Screening Study involved 89,835 women aged 40 to 59 who had physical breast exams every year for five years beginning in 1980. Half of those women also underwent an annual mammogram.

The study found that by 2005, almost equal numbers of women in each group were diagnosed with breast cancer – 3,250 of the group who used mammography and 3,133 who did not. Of those women, 1,005 had died of breast cancer – 500 from the mammogram arm and 505 from the control group.

Although breast cancer headlines tend to draw attention, there's nothing new in this study, said Dr. Ellen Warner, a medical oncologist at Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre, and the fact the results were derived from tests done on "antiquated mammography equipment" poses a big problem.

Dr. Ellen Warner

"This equipment, even the best equipment [they used] is 30 to 35 years old," she said. "There is absolutely nothing to take away."

Around five to 10 per cent of breast cancer is due to an inherited genetic mutation. Some ethnic groups, including Ashkenazi Jews, are at higher risk of having that gene, making them more susceptible to breast cancer.

Since the study only looked at women with average risk, the conclusions cannot apply to anyone with a higher risk, such as people who carry that gene.

Warner said that only one in 40 Ashkenazi Jews have that mutation, so the majority are at average risk. The best way to figure out if you have that gene is to look at your family history, she said.

The study also said that too many mammograms have led to an over-diagnosis of cancer, since mammograms pick up small tumours that may never become harmful to the woman. That means women often undergo unnecessary surgery and therapy.

Indeed, the study said that between 20 and 25 per cent of breast cancers found using mammograms would never require treatment.

Although Warner agreed that this was the case, she said this doesn't mean healthy women of average risk shouldn't get mammograms.

"We have no idea which cancers… will invade and have the potential to kill a woman," she said.

She said that average-risk women should disregard this study and still get mammograms every two years after the age of 50.

And all women, especially those who know they are at higher risk of developing breast cancer, should make sure to exercise, limit alcohol intake and maintain a healthy weight to try to prevent breast cancer, she said, adding that it's especially important to know your family's history.

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Limiting JGH cancer patients a rights issue: critics

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Quebec government directive to the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) to limit the number of off-island patients it treats has been criticized by a cancer advocacy organization, as well as by Jews living outside Montreal.

The Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada (CCAC) says the Montreal Health and Social Services Agency is wrong to order the JGH to turn away patients, especially those who seek care at its comprehensive cancer centre, the first of its kind in the province and renowned for its innovative treatment.

The agency has reiterated that people living off-island should seek care at hospitals in their areas. While the policy applies to all Montreal hospitals, the agency is especially pressuring the JGH, because it's concerned that it will exceed its budget by taking on too many patients.

"If patient numbers increase, the reasonable approach is for the funding to follow suit rather than jeopardize the standard of care offered to the patients," said CCAC president Barry Stein.

"By sending patients back to centres that may not be able to offer the same level of care as provided in a specialized cancer centre, such as the JGH Segal Cancer Centre, we may very well be affecting not only their quality of life, but their ability to either prolong their lives or find a cure."

Stein, a lawyer and colorectal cancer survivor, believes people have a fundamental right to receive health care from the physician of their choice. "This is a matter of government touching on individual freedoms and, in this case, for cancer patients, it is their fundamental right to life."

The JGH has become "a centre of choice" for colorectal cancer patients, he said, because certain treatments it provides are not available elsewhere in the province.

To read full story, go to cjnews,.com

Debate on charter

Continued from page 3

In introducing the panel, federation president Susan Laxer said: "It is important to note that we are not alone in this fight. On the contrary, thought leaders from across Quebec civil society, including many from sovereigntist circles, have expressed strong opposition to some or all aspects of the charter…

"These include the Quebec Bar Association, the Quebec Human Rights Commission, teachers' trade unions, the Quebec Association of Health and Social Services Institutions and all major universities."

Rémi Bourget, president of Quebec Inclusif, a coalition of charter opponents from diverse religious, racial, and political backgrounds, made remarks as well.

The audience was encouraged to sign the group's "Manifesto for an Inclusive Quebec" and to visit its website for further information on their efforts (www.quebecinclusif.org).

The Federation-CIJA brief on the bill is available on CIJA's French site www.cerji.ca

Raising our kids to be knowledgeable Jews

Raquel Kaplan Goldberg

The conversation about Jewish day school and its affordability is becoming deafening these days, and I'm glad.

I am glad because parents are struggling to pay, and school boards and administrators need to take that struggle seriously. I am glad because the demand for new models is producing innovative ideas that can enhance Jewish education in general. But most of all, I am glad because the conversation is prompting us, especially those of us with day school-age children, to seriously examine the question of what we consider essential to Judaism and whether we think it's important to play a role in the development of Judaism.

In his Feb. 6 editorial about the costs and benefits of a day school education, *CJN* editor Yoni Goldstein wrote that he is "fairly confident [he] can, with a little help from family and friends, bring up a good Jewish daughter without day school."

Assuming "a good Jewish daughter" is a woman with a rich spiritual consciousness, a connection to Jewish rituals and an ethical sensitivity consistent with Jewish values like tzedakah (justice), kavod habriyot (respect for human dignity) and tikkun olam (repairing the world), I can only agree. I have always believed that one's ethical values are more strongly absorbed from family role models and home life than anyone or anywhere else, and most Jewish rituals occur in the home or synagogue in any case.

But is that the extent of the goal when we speak of raising Jewish children? Or is success measured in part by the degree to which our children are knowledgeable Jews?

It is hard to imagine children homeschooled in Judaism having even a passing familiarity with the Book of Kings, let alone tractates of the Talmud. I like to think Theodor Herzl would be mentioned, but Joseph Trumpeldor might be pushing it. Most parents simply do not have the time or pedagogical training to effectively transmit the extent of the material covered in a day school.

And knowledge of this material is important in Judaism.

For those who believe in the Divine nature of the Torah and Jewish law, there is religious value in studying the primary sources and understanding how Jewish law is developed. It is a means of knowing God and enhancing one's ritual observance.

For those who don't, there is still the strong notion that we are the People of the Book – that part of being Jewish is valuing the foundational Jewish texts for their own sake.

But beyond the intrinsic value of knowing and being able to study Jewish texts is the fact that doing this creates a platform from which to speak about Jewish matters. Simply put, this knowledge and skill set, along with an ability to contextualize one's views against the backdrop of Jewish history, are critical if one wishes to have a voice in the contemporary Jewish conversation.

Looking at the debates following New York's SAR High School's decision to let two female students wear their tfillin during female prayer services in the school, it is immediately clear that each side constructed its position out of textual building blocks in historical context. Whether pro or con, every argument I read referred to one or more of the Talmud, the Sefer Hachinuch, the Rambam and so on, and considered how the respective sources would apply in light of changed societal norms.

To the extent that this episode raised possibilities "in shaping the future of Judaism," as Goldstein put it, only those equipped with textual knowledge, textual skills and knowledge of Jewish history as it relates to the texts and practices in question, were able to meaningfully participate.

And this is by no means only true in Orthodox circles. While different denominations of Judaism take varied approaches to what can be done in the face of traditional sources, the sources are still the shared starting point.

So Goldstein's conclusion is right: day schools play a critical role in empowering our children to participate in the development of Judaism, but not only by exposing them to Jewish issues that arise in a school environment, or even by providing them with a training ground in the form of a mini-Jewish community of their own. Just as importantly, day schools provide our children with the textual and informational tools that will enable them to articulate and advocate coherent Jewish positions on whatever issues matter to them. They give our children the chance to have a say in what Judaism should look like.

Raquel Kaplan Goldberg is a day school graduate and the mother of two young children. She lives in Toronto.

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Rabbi Jeffrey Saks

Exploring the midrashic style of S.Y. Agnon

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Jeffrey Saks is the founding director of the Academy for Torah Initiatives and Directions (ATID) and its WebYeshiva.org program, which he describes as "a fully-interactive online Jewish studies portal using a very sophisticated video conferencing system," that boasts about 7,500 registered students.

Rabbi Saks, who made aliyah from New Jersey 20 years ago after receiving his rabbinic ordination from Yeshiva University in New York, is also the series editor of the Toby Press' S.Y. Agnon Library and lectures regularly at the Agnon House in Jerusalem, a museum dedicated to the life and work of Agnon. A prolific writer, Agnon was the first and only Hebrew author to win the Nobel Prize in literature, in 1966.

S.Y. Agnon
[Wikimedia Commons]

Rabbi Saks, 45, was invited by Shaarei Shomayim Congregation's Rabbi Chaim Strauchler to be a scholar in residence on Feb. 21-22, and he spoke with *The CJN* by phone from Israel about his fascination with the literary legend and what makes Agnon relevant 44 years after his death.

How long have you been studying Agnon?

I grew up in a very Americanized home. All of my grandparents, most of my great-grandparents were born in America, but in high school, when I became interested in deepening my Jewish connection, one of my grandmothers bought me a copy of a collection of Agnon stories and translations. She was the most culturally engaged Jewish person in my family, and it wouldn't have been lost on her that a Hebrew writer had been awarded the Nobel Prize.

Part of what [Agnon] is doing is weaving together the whole world of traditional Jewish literature, Jewish learning from the Bible, through rabbinic writings, midrash, etc., and he's kind of weaving it together and distilling it down into modern literature. I thought that was really interesting, and it engaged me.

What was it specifically about his writing that fascinated you?

It was the attempt in the distilling the entire corpus of thousands of years of Jewish literature into a new modern storytelling, at a time when the modern Hebrew language was first finding itself. He had that added challenge of being a pioneer of writing in a language that was being created – modern Hebrew, that is – as it was coming out of his pen.

The question of the viability of tradition in the modern world and the tension between the world that was and the world that is, and also the tension between the Jewish world in Europe, specifically in eastern Europe and what was trying to be built here in the Land of Israel, these were things that were very interesting to me.

How does his work resonate with you?

I wrote a new preface to the book [*A Simple Story*]. I kind of described there what it was like reading this particular novel in my 20s, and then again in my 30s and then again in my 40s… I think part of what's so engaging about his writing, particularly to those of us who are used to reading midrashic text or rabbinic text, is that it does require that kind of intensive, repeated, interpretive inquiry.

In a certain sense, Agnon's writing almost reads in that same kind of midrashic style that requires a reading and re-reading, and re-analysis and re-interpretation…

[*A Simple Story*] is about a young man who falls in love… It's a star-crossed love. He's married off, as was the fashion in the beginning of the 20th century, to a girl who his parents think is a more suitable match. I read the book in my 20s, after a terrible adolescent heartbreak and I read it one way, and then you come back to it 10 years later and you see it differently, and then you come back to it 10 years later and you see it differently still. So that's part of the richness of this particular author.

Is there a newfound interest in the works of Agnon?

I think there is… In his lifetime he was the most important author in Israel, and he was even the most famous man of letters in Israel, and he certainly cast a giant shadow over all the authors that came afterwards and all of them talk about trying to write under the influence of Agnon – consciously or subconsciously – trying to resist it, or trying to walk in his footsteps. Authors like Amos Oz and A. B. Yehoshua and [Aharon] Appelfeld.

In the 1970s and even '80s, there was a kind of turn-away from the writing about the old world, and Israeli authors were trying to find a new voice and document the sabra experience, the Israeli experience of life here after the establishment of the state.

Agnon's stories… they're written in the '40s and '50s and '60s, but they're set much earlier on. There was a kind of lack of interest [in Agnon in the 1970s and '80s], and you can chart the interest in Agnon based upon what role he plays in the high school curriculum. There has been a kind of resurgence, partially because there has been a resurgence amongst the general Israeli population in Jewish learning, not just amongst the Orthodox.

It's been nearly 45 years since he passed away in 1970 – how does his work apply to modern-day Orthodoxy, and is it still relevant?

The question of how we relate to Israel, whether we live here or abroad, and our relationship to Hebrew, was something that was obviously very close to his heart. He was not a native Hebrew speaker. He grew up speaking Yiddish in his home in Europe. He made aliyah around the age of 20. He was born in Galicia in what is today Ukraine.

Obviously his connection to Hebrew and the interaction between Jewish learning and Jewish culture, these three things were central to his work, in addition to the larger theme I mentioned earlier about the viability of tradition in the modern world, the viability of faith in the modern world, the tensions between modernity and faith.

> ***'Agnon's connection to Hebrew and the interaction between Jewish learning and Jewish culture were central to his work'***

Those issues were very central to his work, and those are the things that the Jewish world needs to be engaged in, particularly the Jewish world that lives in Canada, America and Europe. The connection to Israel, our relationship to the Hebrew language, was once a defining mark of an engaged Jew, whether he was Orthodox or secular. An engaged Jew, certainly a Jew who identified as a Zionist living abroad had some kind of connection to the Hebrew language. That is no longer the case, unfortunately, for very many people. These are all things that I think still have relevance.

Rabbi Jeffrey Saks

He was also something of a paradox himself. He spent a period of time in his life where he abandoned traditional observance. He grew up in a completely traditional Orthodox home… When he came on aliyah in 1908, he took off his yarmulke, which was not uncommon during what was called the Second Aliyah… he lived in Jaffa and he lived the life of a secular Jew.

He continued to write some of his most profoundly, deeply, religiously charged work in that period.

He spent a few years in Germany… and when he returned 12 years later [to Israel], the big, black yarmulke, which had come off in his youth, now mysteriously returned. He never gave an explicit explanation, but there are a few hints in his writings, and he lived the rest of his life as a fully observant Orthodox Jew…

He's someone who straddled different worlds. That is something that we don't encounter so much any more. We all tend to live in our own little box, and it's important to know that there were people like that and to whatever degree that comes through in the writings, it's important for us to encounter.

Rabbi Saks will be delivering a lecture about Agnon at York University on Feb. 24. For more information, email LWiseman@edu.yorku.ca.

For recorded lectures on Agnon, visit www.WebYeshiva.org/AgnonArchives.

Filmmaker accused of 'planting archeology'

Continued from page 1

"In the search for fame and fortune," he wrote in one posting, "powerful media and personal interests… have encroached upon what once was a honest profession… In an attempt to silence academic critics, a small but financially powerful group… has chosen to react via libel ligation [sic]…an attempt to silence public criticism and freedom of expression, in order to advance their own parochial interests."

Zias has been most exercised by Jacobovici's recent documentaries, which focus on two ancient tombs in Talpiot, just south of Jerusalem, both originally discovered in the early 1980s. These, the films boldly suggest, are the likely resting place of Jesus, his extended family and his earliest followers. The first tomb contained ossuaries (bone boxes) inscribed with a constellation of suggestive names. These included Yeshua bar Yehosef (Jesus, son of Joseph); Maria (Latin form of the Hebrew name Miriam); Yose (a diminutive of Joseph, the name of one of Jesus' brothers found in Mark 6:3); Yehuda bar Yeshua (Judah son of Jesus); and Mariamene e Mara (possibly Mary of Magdelene).

For orthodox Christians, the very idea of a Jesus family tomb is anathema. Jesus could not have had his bones bundled into a box because, according to church doctrine, he was resurrected and ascended to Heaven. Nor do most mainstream Christians accept what the films imply – that Jesus was ever married, to Mary Magdalene or anyone else, or that he fathered children.

Jacobovici believes the second tomb, so far examined only by a camera attached to a tubular probe – Orthodox activists refused the filmmakers permission to enter the cave physically – contains the first hard evidence of contemporaneous belief in Jesus by his original Jewish followers. The cave, he posits, may have been on the estate of Joseph of Arimathea who, according to the Gospels, was the affluent member of the Sanhedrin who claimed Jesus' body after the crucifixion.

By pure coincidence, the same family name – Aramati – appears on a mailbox in the building constructed over the ancient tomb in the early 1980s. Before the trial started, Zias claimed – in letters sent to Jacobovici's broadcaster National Geographic, his publisher Simon & Schuster, and others – that the filmmaker had pasted the Aramati name on the mailbox to draw the parallel with the biblical disciple of Jesus.

This act, apparently, is what he meant by "planting archeology." Jacobovici denied the allegation, noting that the Jerusalem phone book showed a family named Arimathea (in Hebrew Aramati) living at the address long before the documentary was shot. Since then, in court depositions, Zias has admitted that there is such a family living in the building.

In court on Feb. 9, Zias brought what he had billed as a star witness to testify – an American matron named Joanna Garrett. A friend of Jacobovici's longtime collaborator, Prof. James Tabor, tenured chair of the department of religion at the University of North Carolina (UNC), Garrett spent one day with the crew during the shoot.

Documentary filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici shows a life-size replica of one of the ossuaries found in a first-century burial cave located beneath an apartment building in 2012 in Jerusalem. The artifacts, believed to date from the first century, are the subject of his documentary *The Resurrection Tomb*. *[Lior Mizrahi/Flash 90 photo]*

Later, she swore an affidavit claiming that the filmmaker had doctored the mailbox nameplate so that the Hebrew name "Aramati" would read "Arimathea" in English. This claim became the remaining basis for Zias's allegation that Jacobovici had "planted archeology."

On the witness stand, however, Garrett quickly disavowed her affidavit. Admitting that she never saw a doctored nameplate, she claimed that Jacobovici had said he "intended" to doctor the nameplate. She then conceded she had no knowledge of filmmaking.

In his own depositions, Jacobovici said he used CGI without altering the original nameplate to help viewers understand that the modern Hebrew name Aramati is essentially the same as the ancient Biblical name Arimathea. The two men are next due in the Lod courtroom in early April, under the jurisdiction of Judge Jacob Sheinman.

Zias's depositions have also backed away from his forgery allegation. By forgery, it turns out, he means that the documentaries used CGI to enhance images carved on the ossuaries. If that constitutes forgery, then half the documentary world will have to plead guilty.

Not long after the first Jesus documentary aired, a leading group of 70 scholars assembled in Jerusalem to discuss the issue. As part of the proceedings, they gave a lifetime achievement award to honour the late archeologist Joseph Gat, who was a member of the team that excavated the first tomb in 1981. Accepting on his behalf, his widow disclosed that, while her husband had never publicly discussed the find, he was convinced they had found Jesus of Nazareth's family tomb. He never talked about it, she claimed, because he thought the news would unleash a wave of anti-Semitism. Gat was a child survivor of the Holocaust and feared a recurrence.

Zias, who worked for the Israel Antiquities Authority for 25 years, until retiring in 1999, had previously claimed that no serious archeologist supported Jacobovici's thesis. When the widow's remarks suggested otherwise, Zias contended that Jacobovici had orchestrated the entire scene to promote his cause – arranged for the award to be given and for her to appear, and had written the script she delivered, including the Holocaust reference.

Jacobovici categorically denies the charge. He is himself the son of Holocaust survivors. Born in Israel, he was raised there and in Montreal, and made his home in Toronto from 1980 to 2006, before making aliyah. He now lives with his wife and five children in Ra'anana.

"It's one thing to claim this and that. It's another to accuse a child of Holocaust survivors of inventing Holocaust stories and then argue that a sentence from a woman I met once in my life justifies this language," Jacobovici said.

As it turns out, support for Jacobovici's tomb thesis did not come only from Gat's posthumous musings. Although initial academic and religious response was overwhelmingly dismissive, the ground of opinion may be starting to shift.

Late last year, the official proceedings of the Jerusalem conference were published, edited by Princeton's James Charlesworth, one of the world's top New Testament thinkers. The results are surprising because, while the naysayers have dominated headlines and blog postings, 12 of the 28 contributors now concede at least the possibility that the tomb is indeed that of Jesus' family.

In addition to his charges against Jacobovici and Eshel, Zias has also accused Prof. Richard Freund, head of Judaic studies at the University of Hartford, and Canadian geologist Paul Bauman of planting archeology – specifically, of burying a metal casket in a graveyard at Qumran, the ancient Essene encampment on the West Bank.

"We had a film crew there, which tracked [the dig] from the moment we started our work," Freund said. "I cannot understand why these allegations were ever levelled." Freund has authored six books on archeology, two on Jewish ethics, more than 100 scholarly articles and appeared in 15 television documentaries.

Bauman, technical director of geophysics in the Calgary office of WorleyParsons, a multinational project management and consulting firm for the resource and energy sectors, said his company works on "gargantuan industrial projects… and top-secret defence sites of multiple nations. Why would I risk all my professional credibility by putting a metal box in a remote cemetery in the desert? I have never received financial compensation for any of the archeology work I've participated in outside of North America – [it is] done entirely out of philanthropic intent. I've worked with Dr. Freund on at least 15 projects over the last 15 years. The very idea of 'planting' a find is inconceivable."

Then there is Prof. James Tabor, one of the world's foremost scholars of early Christianity. Zias's campaign, Tabor says, included "scurrilous letters to my editors at Simon & Schuster, to my agent, to my provost, chancellor and dean, as well as the chair of anthropology, in which he charged that I was guilty of 'conduct bordering on the criminal'… and that I was interested in only in fame and fortune and was a shame to the profession…Nothing of substance in Joe's charges was upheld, and he was told so by the [university's] attorney. He became very strident and threatened to expose our university as not taking responsibility for corruption. He subsequently wrote to UNC officials over the entire state system, making the same charges. "

Others who have stood in Zias's line of fire include Rami Arav, professor of archeology at the University of Nebraska, and Magen Broshi, former curator of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Asked for comment, Zias – in an email exchange – said only that "none of the above have [sic] any respect among colleagues. They are mocked by all." Later, he added, "Change no respect to little respect."

Zias also played a central role in spurring the Israel Antiquity Authority to charge collector Oded Golan with forgery in connection with the so-called James ossuary. The IAA spent almost a decade trying to prove that Golan forged the latter part of the box's inscription, "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." Among the key witnesses for the prosecution, Zias claimed to have remembered seeing only the first part of the inscription in an Arab-owned Jerusalem antiquities shop.

But as *Time* magazine later reported, Zias's testimony fell apart on the witness stand when he confessed that "he could not actually read the Aramaic inscription and that his Hebrew wasn't good enough to read his own name 'Joseph' on the box." Golan was declared innocent last year, although the IAA continues to insist the inscription has been forged.

North Carolina's Tabor says he, too, considered suing Zias for libel. "There's a trail of evidence that is irrefutable, but I've chosen to try to counter him in other ways. But Joe has vowed to try to destroy Simcha and boasted that he has done him great damage. I am a tenured professor, whereas Simcha has his own company and its reputation, plus the livelihood of his associates, to consider."

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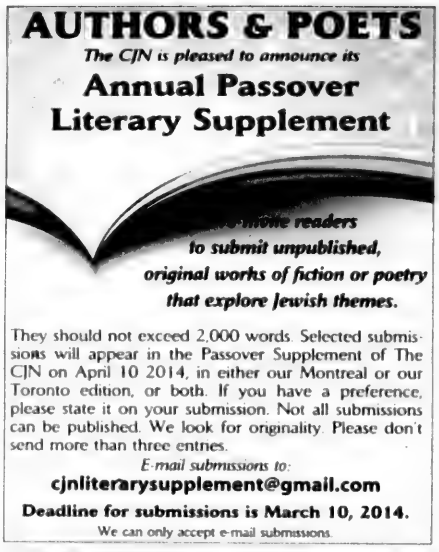
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Going for gold

Money Matters
Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

Fifty billion dollars is a lot of money. It represents close to half the budget of the State of Israel for the current fiscal year. It also represents the amount the Russian government is spending to host the Winter Olympics.

In the case of Israel, the money is used for education, health care, research and development, arts and culture, welfare, defence and a host of other activities. In the case of the Olympics, the money is being spent on unfinished hotels, shared washrooms, banning political protest, dangerous ski slopes, killing dogs, displacing locals, enriching corrupt officials and President Vladimir Putin's legacy.

The pawns in all this are the athletes, most of whom are far removed from the politics of the Olympics and are focused on competing in the sports they love best.

These games will be the most expensive yet, a full $7 billion or so more than China spent to host the 2008 Olympics. Is anyone surprised that these countries – defenders of the governments of Iran and Syria and with millions of people living in primitive conditions – have so much spare money for sports extravaganzas?

While the Olympics may be at the top of the wasted money heap, many others are trying hard to compete. For what purpose is the City of Toronto spending $2.5 billon to host the Pan Am Games? Surely not to provide Torontonians with the services they need most.

Our society deserves a gold medal for its ability to separate the moral from the legal. Hundreds of millions celebrated what I can only describe as a secular yom tov on Super Bowl Sunday (what a lousy game!), observing the many "rituals" that accompany the game. This in a league that agreed to pay close to $1 billion to former players suffering from the effects of legalized assault. I lost interest in hockey years ago when enforcers became crucial to teams' success – ironically it's only Olympic hockey, with its ban on fighting and focus on skill, that piques my interest.

Of course "legalized corruption" is all around us. It takes great talent and effort to spend $45,000 to attend a funeral. But somehow the premier of Alberta managed to find such a fare – all so she could get home a few hours early. Too many business "leaders" collect huge bonuses for their ability to stay within the law, even as they prey on the naive.

These are not new problems, and I would even argue that society today, at least in the west, is much less corrupt than in pre-democratic times. There is, at least in theory, equality before the law, and no one is above the law. The economic success of the west, to a large degree, is a result of the ability to trust others to be honest.

Other than continuing to stress the importance of living a life where proper ethics is our highest value, I'm not sure what the proper response should be. But there is a lot that can be done with $50 billion. Just ask Warren Buffet, who has pledged to give away more than $50 billion to charity. His gold medal shines the brightest.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

Beyond the H-word: other Purim foods

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Name a traditional food associated with Purim. Good. Now name another. If you have trouble getting beyond the H-word, then you're in for a treat. There's nothing wrong with that prune, poppy or chocolate-filled delight. But isn't it time to give aranygaluska, fazuelos and ojos de Haman a chance?

Okay, let's start with something a bit more familiar: kreplach.

What's the connection between Purim and a Jewish dumpling? According to Chabad, "Hamantashen and kreplach, both with their fillings hidden inside, allude to the hidden nature of the Purim miracle." **[http://bit.ly/pfood2]** MyJewishLearning.com continues: "Kreplach are customarily eaten whenever a 'beating' takes place: before Yom Kippur when men have flogged themselves [rarely done in modern times], on Hoshanah Rabah when willow branches are beaten, and on Purim when Haman is beaten." **[bit.ly/pfood3]**

What is it with Jews' preoccupation with Haman's anatomy? We eat hamantashen better known in Israel as oznei Haman – or Haman's ears. Sephardi fazuelos share the same meaning as their Ashkenazi counterpart, but the similarity ends there. These are light strips of dough fried and sprinkled with confectioners' sugar. **[bit.ly/pfood4]** Done with his ears? Then dig into his eyes. Ojos de Haman (Haman's eyes) have pastry dough wrapped around hard-boiled eggs to create grotesque facsimiles of Purim's villain. The eyes/eggs are then gouged out at the festive meal. **[bit.ly/pfood6]**

Purim is unique among all the holidays in the Jewish calendar in that we enjoy that festive meal as the holiday is winding down. **[bit.ly/pfood7]** Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov explains that "the Purim feast is especially significant in that it elevates the soul as it provides pleasure to the body. It is thus stated in the Zohar that on Purim, one may accomplish through bodily pleasure, what he can accomplish on Yom Kippur through bodily affliction." **[bit.ly/pfood8]**

You may have your own traditional menu, but if you want to try something a bit different this Purim, go back to the source: The Jewish-food Purim Archives has recipes for Persian Lamb and Apricot Pilaf, Persian Meat Patties (Shami), Persian Poached Pears and Persian Poppy Seed Puffs. **[bit.ly/pfood9]** The large Iranian/Persian Recipes page looks appealing, but you will have to make appropriate substitutions since this isn't a kosher site. **[bit.ly/pfood10]**

No worries about that at Chabad.org with this gourmet menu: Pesce al Cartoccio with Spinach, Egg and Onion Salad, Cream of Chicken Soup, Pickled Tongue in Apricot Sauce, and Two-Tone Potato Roll. If that feels too onerous, there's a helpful link to "The Easy Menu." **[bit.ly/pfood12]**

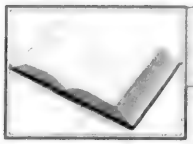
How to top off the meal? Aranygaluska is a traditional Hungarian Dumpling Coffee Cake for Purim with "balls of a rich yeast dough dipped in oil and rolled in ground walnuts. It is then layered and baked in a tube pan." **[bit.ly/pfood13]**

On Purim, Eli Birnbaum likes to enjoy his homemade Israeli Orange Brandy, and he is good enough to share the recipe with us. Birnbaum offers a rationale for imbibing on Purim, in moderation of course. "There are no absolutes in this world other than God. Everything can be used for good and evil. So, too, we celebrate our salvation from Haman by showing that even intoxication can be used to elevate one's soul." **[bit.ly/pfood16]**

highway@rogers.com

When does parenting end?

Rabbi Daniel Green



Rabbinic Reflections

As my oldest child attended her final high school open house, I found myself reflecting on how the years of impactful parenting are so fleeting.

As a rabbi, I often meet with newlyweds and young couples. I stress the irony of how we are challenged to raise our children precisely during our busiest years and how, if we pause to blink, we can miss the opportunity entirely.

Nearly all the parents I encounter recognize the importance of transmitting Jewish values. Notwithstanding, a predictable pattern emerges. We fail to properly gage the speed of time. Toddler and preschool years are readily dismissed as premature for lifestyle changes. At this young age, we often feel no pressing need to bring our children to synagogue or to enhance the Jewish character of our homes. Time seems endless.

As the primary years arrive, the sense of urgency is still not acute and life quickly takes over. We soon shift to a bar and bat mitzvah mindset and are unexpectedly confronted with teenage adolescence. Without warning, the opportunity for meaningful interaction quickly diminishes or dissipates entirely. Suddenly, we realize that the core years of active parenting can almost be counted on one hand.

While much of the blame for the increased trends in Jewish disengagement focus on the education we provide our children during their formative years, this is only half the battle. In order to turn the tide, we need to recognize that the responsibility of parenting never ends. It's a lifetime endeavour, and the only thing that changes are the tactics.

As our children become adults, we often resign ourselves to being bystanders who constantly swallow opinions. While this approach may be prudent and wise, in actuality, the primary mode of influencing others requires no words.

A paradigm for the transmission of our values is evident in the first Divine directive given to the Jewish nation. While still in Egypt, Moses and Aaron summon the people and impart the laws of the Pascal Lamb. Their instructions conclude with the words "*vechen asu*" – and they (Moses and Aaron) also engaged. Why the need to stress their compliance? Would anyone doubt the sincerity of Moses and Aaron?

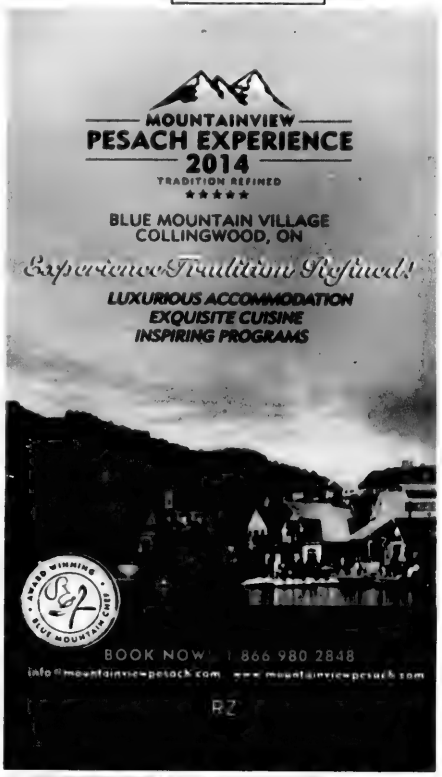
Our tradition is imparting an essential lesson. Moses and Aaron recognized that words alone ring hollow. Only by modelling behaviour could they hope to inspire others. They understood that actions speak louder than words.

Responsible parenting requires the constant demonstration of our values, no matter what the age of our children. Wherever we are on the religious spectrum, this message is pivotal. We need to become the embodiment of our belief system in the most self-evident of ways.

If we want our grandchildren to be affiliated Jews, we need to attend shul consistently ourselves, even if this means altering behaviour patterns of a lifetime. If we want our children to become lifelong learners of Torah, we ourselves need to crack open the spine of a book and exhibit an excitement and passion for Jewish knowledge.

Whether you're the prime minister of Israel or a parent in Canada, we need to be aware that the eyes of our children still gaze in our direction. No matter what the age, we can never underestimate our power of influence. Parents are perpetual role models, and parenting is a lifelong responsibility.

Rabbi Daniel Green is spiritual leader of Adas Israel Congregation in Hamilton, Ont.



Engaged? Get tested for genetic diseases

From the Bimah
Rabbi Catharine Clark

Did you get engaged over New Year's, or maybe on that Hallmark holiday in mid-February? If so, mazal tov! The next few months will be exciting as you select invitations, make a guest list, and register for gifts to fill the home you will make with your bashert.

I want to add one more item to your to-do list: if you're of Ashkenazi Jewish descent, get screened for Ashkenazi Jewish genetic diseases.

Tay-Sachs, a neurological disorder that is usually fatal by age four, is the most infamous of these disorders; but there are many more potentially devastating Jewish genetic diseases. Canavan disease, another neurological disorder characterized by seizures before death in childhood, and familial dysautonomia, symptoms of which may include poor growth, insensitivity to pain and a shortened lifespan, are just two examples.

These and other Ashkenazi Jewish genetic diseases appear in 25 per cent of cases where both parents are carriers for the gene. Carriers themselves are usually healthy individuals, which is why screening is so important. You'd never know of this risk to your children otherwise.

If screening reveals that both you and your partner are carriers for the same genetic disease, you have options for having the family the two of you have always dreamed of. You can adopt, or use donor egg or sperm screened for Jewish genetic diseases. You can become pregnant and test the fetus early in pregnancy to either abort or plan for a child with likely severe health complications. You can use IVF and implant only unaffected embryos.

Get screened even if your bashert is Sephardi or was not born Jewish. If your results show that you are a carrier for one or more of the diseases, your partner should be screened also. While it's more common for Ashkenazi Jews to be carriers of these genetic diseases, these genetic mutations do occur in the general population. Moreover, sometimes an individual whose family has identified otherwise for two or three generations in fact includes an Ashkenazi Jewish grandparent in the family tree, thereby increasing the risk of carrying one of these genetic mutations.

Get started now on the process of being screened. JScreen, the Victor Center for the Prevention of Jewish Genetic Diseases in Philadelphia, and the Jewish Genetic Disease Consortium in New York all recommend being screened for the full panel of 19 Ashkenazi Jewish genetic diseases for which a test is available. However, the current recommendation in Canada is to screen for at most 10 of these disorders.

Make an appointment with your doctor for a referral to a genetics counsellor to see what your options are. Or, to be screened for all 19 diseases, get in touch with Counsyl labs in the United States. They will work with you on the cost, and with your doctor to get a test order. More information on Ashkenazi Jewish genetic diseases and on why it's important to be screened for all 19 is available on the websites of JScreen, the Victor Center and the JGDC.

Again, mazal tov! Please take this step toward a life with your bashert filled with many more simchahs.

Rabbi Catharine Clark is spiritual leader of Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ont.

Jewish leaders laud Kerry peace bid

JTA

A letter to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu signed by 152 Jewish Americans, including top centrist leaders, praised the peace efforts of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.

"As American advocates for a strong, Jewish and democratic Israel, we have been heartened by Secretary of State John Kerry's extraordinary resolve to advance this process consistent with America's unwavering commitment to Israel's security," said the letter sent Feb.12 and initiated by the Israel Policy Forum.

"We believe Secretary Kerry's determined diplomatic effort offers an unprecedented opportunity to ensure Israel's security, to enhance its prosperity, and to avoid the existential threat to the Jewish state posed by bi-nationalism."

The letter comes in the wake of attacks on Kerry and his plan by top cabinet members in Netanyahu's government.

Netanyahu and his foreign minister, Avigdor Liberman, have praised Kerry and said personal attacks are inappropriate, but there remain gaps between what appear to be the outlines of a Kerry-drafted framework for a peace accord and Netanyahu's red lines, particularly regarding security measures in the West Bank.

Among the letter's signatories are Jewish leaders who are noted for their outspoken defence of Israel and at times of Netanyahu's government, among them Alan Dershowitz, the legal expert and author; Deborah Lipstadt, the Holocaust scholar; Mel Levine, a former Democratic congressman; Michael and Susie Gelman, major philanthropists and leaders in the Washington community; Rabbi Steve Gutow, the president of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs; Rabbi Rick Jacobs, the president of the Union for Reform Judaism; and major fundraisers for Democratic political campaigns, including Marvin Lender, Alan Solow and Alan Solomont.

ISRAELIS PROTEST: Israeli settlers and right-wing activists from Ma'aleh Adumim in the West Bank attend a march in the rural area known as E1 on Feb. 13 to protest Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to block construction there. *(Yonatan Sindel/Flash90 photo)*

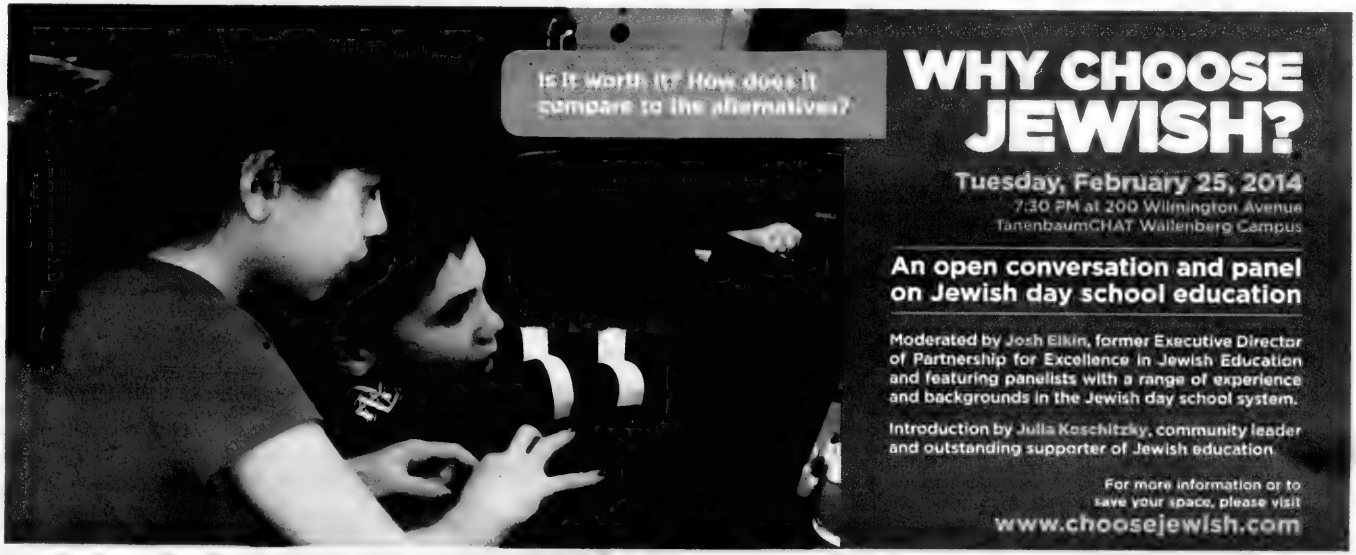
Choosing a new president

JNS.org

With Israel's upcoming presidential vote poised to have the highest-ever number of candidates, a survey conducted for *Israel Hayom* by the New Wave Research Institute found that 72 per cent of Jewish Israelis favour holding a direct public vote for president over the current election system.

Just 20 per cent of respondents said they would prefer to retain the current system, in which members of Knesset elect the president.

Asked whether Israel should abolish the office of the president – a mostly ceremonial role – 63.8 per cent said no and 26.5 per cent said yes. Asked if they would like to see President Shimon Peres' term in office extended, 54 per cent said yes and 36 per cent said no.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Opinion

John Kerry's perilous path to failure

Jonathan S. Tobin
JTA

In the past few weeks, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has come under attack from prominent Israelis, as well as from American friends of the Jewish state, for some of the methods he has adopted in his determination to find a solution to the Middle East conflict.

Such criticism strikes the Obama administration, and many friends of Israel, as absurd. After all, what better favour could the United States do for Israel than to help it find the peace for which its people have hungered since the birth of their state?

But while Kerry's defenders are right to scorn those who seek to question his motives, the way the secretary has tried to strong-arm Israel has neither enhanced the chances for peace nor strengthened Israel's security. Though the quest for peace is, in principle, a noble endeavour, Kerry has set in motion a chain of events that is, in fact, strengthening those who seek to delegitimize and boycott Israel and may even increase the chances of a new round of Palestinian violence.

Kerry came into office last year determined to take up a challenge that his predecessor, Hillary Clinton, did her best to avoid. Clinton assessed the chances of peace between Israel and the Palestinians in the foreseeable future in the same manner as most foreign policy people: slim to none.

With the Palestinians hopelessly split between the Fatah-ruled West Bank and Hamas-run Gaza, there seemed little leeway for Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas to sign an agreement that would end the conflict. Since the Palestinians had already turned down offers of statehood in almost all of the West Bank, Gaza and a share of Jerusalem, in 2000, 2001 and 2008, there seemed no reason for Israel to make further concessions only to be turned down a fourth time.

But Kerry was undaunted by these realities and set out to restart Israeli-Palestinian talks. Kerry has persuaded the two sides to negotiate and may get both Abbas and the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to agree to a framework to extend the talks that were slated to last only nine months.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, left, is seen talking with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during one of his recent visits to the Middle East in an effort to hammer out a lasting peace plan. *[Avi Ohayon/GPO/Israel Sun photo]*

Secretary of State's actions have served to delegitimize Israel

Kerry may even coax the Israelis to offer the Palestinians, as has been reported, a state in 90 per cent of the West Bank plus territorial swaps of land inside the Jewish state. If so, he may be as close to cutting the Gordian Knot of Middle East peace as any of the Americans who have preceded him. Even if he fails, this would seem to be a praiseworthy endeavour. But those who care about Israel shouldn't be cheering.

What Kerry has forgotten – or never knew in the first place – about the failures of his predecessors is that peace initiatives don't occur in a vacuum. The dynamic of every negotiation to broker an end to the conflict is that, in the eyes of international public opinion, progress is only measured in terms of Israeli concessions.

That means that rather than bolstering Israel's image and support for the country around the globe, every such effort – including Israel's aforementioned three generous offers of Palestinian statehood and the withdrawal from Gaza – only served to make Israel even more unpopular. In the 20 years since the signing of the Oslo accords, Israel has made concession after concession, and yet, international efforts to delegitimize Zionism and support the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement aimed at the Jewish state have only grown.

Israelis well understand that the current Palestinian leadership is not likely to sign any deal that will recognize the legitimacy of a Jewish state, no matter where its borders are drawn. Nor will the Palestinians renounce a "right of return" for the descendants of the 1948 refugees.

No matter what Kerry pressures Netanyahu into offering Abbas, the answer will probably be same one Ehud Barak and Ehud Olmert received: no. When that happens, expect the BDS campaign to redouble its efforts and European nations to blame Israel regardless of the fact that, once again, Palestinian obstinacy will have ended the negotiations and not a lack of Israeli flexibility or generosity.

Even worse, by seeking to frighten the Israelis into concessions by speaking, as he did last fall, about the chances of a third intifadah if the talks fail, and more recently, by predicting an upsurge in boycotts if no peace deal is achieved – while failing to acknowledge Palestinian intransigence as a possible cause of any failure – Kerry has not only tilted the diplomatic playing field against the Jewish state. He has also signalled that if he fails, it will be Israel's fault. While he may not have intended to encourage either violence or boycotts of Israel, that's exactly what he has done.

While Kerry entered this process thinking only of its success, an individual with less hubris and a clearer understanding of history would have known from the start that the costs of failure might be considerable. Israelis, who will pay the price for that failure, should be forgiven for thinking that Kerry deserves no thanks for his part in this sorry exercise in narcissism.

Jonathan S. Tobin is senior online editor and chief political blogger of Commentary *magazine.*

European parliament head 'hurt' by MK 'extremists' snub

JTA

Martin Schulz
[Wikimedia Commons]

European Parliament President Martin Schulz called the Israeli lawmakers who walked out during his Feb. 12 speech to the Knesset "extremists."

Schulz told the German newspaper *Die Welt* Feb.13 that he was "surprised and hurt by the harsh reaction because the speech I delivered was pro-Israel."

The Jewish Home party members who walked out in the middle of the address are "extremists," he said.

The lawmakers left after Schulz criticized Israel using incorrect facts, and party head Naftali Bennett has called on Schulz to apologize for his misstatements.

"Naturally, I cannot only say things that would be pleasant to everyone's ears. I must also present the controversial side of the things," Schulz told *Die Welt*, adding that he "presented to the Knesset the position of the European parliament."

Speaking in his native German, Schulz accused Israel of allowing its citizens to use four times the amount of water per person that is allocated to Palestinians, a figure that reportedly is highly inflated. He also criticized the Israeli blockade of Gaza.

Schulz also said there is no European economic boycott of Israel and that the European Union will always stand by Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu later criticized Schulz for what he called "selective hearing."

"He said that he visited Ramallah and heard from Palestinian youths that an Israeli citizen uses four times as much water as a Palestinian," Netanyahu said of Schulz. "According to both the Palestinian water authority and our data, this number is not true and is significantly smaller.

"The parliament president said, in all honestly, 'I didn't check.' But that didn't prevent him from casting aspersions."

Danish Jews defend new kosher slaughter rules

JTA

The president of Denmark's Jewish community disputed a government minister's claims that new regulations would outlaw all kosher slaughter in the country.

"We find this an odd statement," Finn Schwarz told *JTA* Feb. 13 about statements made earlier by Agriculture Minister Dan Jorgensen to the *Ritzau* news agency.

Jorgensen was speaking about slaughter without prior stunning – a requirement for kosher certification of meat in Jewish Orthodox law and for halal certification of meat for observant Muslims.

"There has sometimes been demand for this type of slaughter, and I want to ensure that it's not going to happen in Denmark," Jorgensen said, referencing a regulation that was scheduled to go into effect on Feb. 17 against slaughter without prior stunning.

But Danish Jews already agreed in 1998 to the certification as kosher of meat from cattle that were stunned with non-penetrative captive bolt pistols, Schwarz said, adding that the decision was made in consultation with the British Chief Rabbi's office. The new regulation will not ban the slaughter of animals after stunning with non-penetrative captive bolts, he said.

Jewish Orthodox law and Muslim law require animals be intact and conscious when they are killed. Non-penetrative captive bolts were permitted because they do not wound the animal, which is slaughtered immediately after being knocked on the head.

Danish Jews took issue with the minister's statements this week, however, because he cited the need to observe animals' welfare, thus suggesting shchitah is cruel. He also cited the rareness of kosher slaughter, or shchitah, in Denmark as justification for a ban.

"The ministry has not banned other rarely practiced customs, so is there a focus on minorities?" Schwarz asked.

Israeli hotels anticipate a record-breaking Pesach season

Steve Walz
Special to The CJN

Israeli hotel executives are exuding an air of confidence ahead of the competitive Passover holiday vacation season after Israel's Ministry of Tourism (IMOT) reported that 2013 was the best year ever for incoming tourism.

More than 3.5 million foreign travellers visited the Jewish State for business, pleasure and religious pilgrimages.

According to IMOT, 3.54 million visitors came to Israel in 2013, 0.5 per cent more than the previous record year of 2012. Once again, the largest percentage of tourists came from the United States, with 623,000 visitors, and representing 18 per cent of all incoming tourism, one per cent more than 2012.

However, the 72,000 Canadians who visited Israel in 2013 represented a two per cent decrease over 2012. No explanation was offered by the IMOT for the downturn in Canadian tourism to Israel.

While 53 per cent of Israel's incoming tourism was derived from Christian pilgrimages, only 28 per cent of the total number of tourists came from the global Jewish community, including North America. That number would probably have been even lower without the influx of thousands of Jewish youngsters from around the world who partake in the Taglit-Birthright programs, where almost all of the costs (flights, hotels etc.) are defrayed by North American philanthropists and the Israeli government.

Jerusalem remained the most frequented city amongst tourists (75 per cent), with the Western Wall (68 per cent), Jewish Quarter (64 per cent), Church of the Holy Sepulcher (57 per cent) and the Via Dolorosa (55 per cent), which are located in the Holy City, being the most popular attractions for tourists and pilgrims alike. Tel Aviv-Jaffa was the second most visited city by tourists (64 per cent), who come to frolic along the beachfront promenade and revel in Jaffa's historical beauty. Despite the large influx of Christian tourists, Nazareth was only the fifth most visited city (35 per cent) amongst foreign visitors.

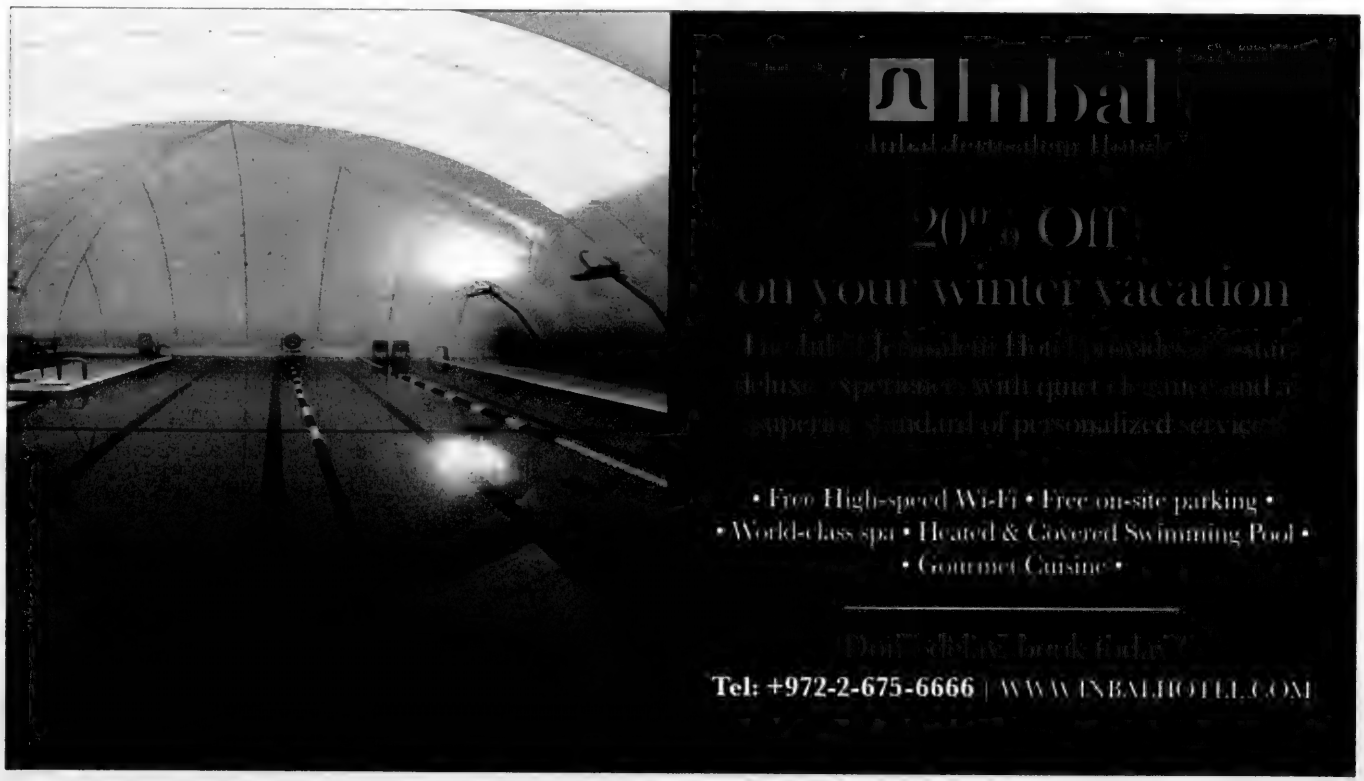
The record number of foreign tourists also provided an economic boon for the hotel industry as well as ancillary businesses, ranging from museums to shopping malls, coffee bars and even boutique wineries. IMOT revealed that 2013's tourists pumped nearly $12 billion dollars into the Israeli economy and provided work for 195,000 workers or six per cent of the Jewish State's total workforce.

"2013 was a record year for tourism and we are proud of that," said Dr. Uzi Landau, Israel's minister of tourism.

Inbal hotel's new lobby

"Despite 'Operation Pillar of Defence' (at the beginning of the year in Gaza) and the overall security situation in the region, tourists voted with their feet.

Continued on page 26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Dan Hotels experienced slight increase in demand

Continued from page 25

The Tourism Ministry will continue to invest in maintaining the numbers of tourists arriving in Israel by opening new markets and actively marketing the tourism product around the world.

"2013 was a good year, despite the fact that we were influenced by events around us [Gaza, Egyptian political instability, Syrian civil war,]" Rafi Baeri, vice-president of sales and marketing for the Dan Hotel chain told the *Jewish Week*.

"The Dan Hotels experienced a slight increase in demand, which helped us to finish 2013 with a small increase in occupancies. From the initial indication of the first quarter of 2014 and demand for individuals and groups for later months in 2014, we see a marked increase in demand and interest from all the main feeder markets and especially from North America.

"For North America, which is the largest source market for Dan Hotels, it looks as if our previous record which was set in 2010, will be surpassed in 2014. Demand for our hotels for Pesach is manifest to this expected growth.

"Comparing the number of reservations we had 75 days prior to Pesach 2013, we have 'on the books' about 20 per cent more reservations for Pesach 2014. At some hotels we are already sold out on specific days and room categories, and at others we have just a few last rooms to sell. As Pesach falls in mid-April this year, we expect to see a very pleasant spring in terms of both incoming business and the beautiful holiday weather."

Dan Tel Aviv Hotel Seder

A number of major hotels that regularly host guests from Canada during Pesach are still actively marketing their remaining rooms to potential clients. Amongst the hotels offering deals are:

• Dan Hotels (www.danhotels.com): At the luxurious Dan Tel Aviv, rates are valid from arrival date (April 13 or 14) for seven nights stay. The package includes seven night accommodation, two seder meals and five dinners. Categories include: standard double and single rooms, as well as a standard triple room (including a child up to 12 years old). There are still upgrades to deluxe (limited number of rooms available), as well as supplements for deluxe and executive sea view rooms. Rates can be received via travel agents or can be found on the hotel's website.

• Inbal Jerusalem Hotel (www.inbalhotel.com): The renowned hotel has been renovated from top to bottom, including the lobby and shopping arcade. The Inbal is the only luxury class hotel in Jerusalem offering bike rentals as well as guided bike tours. Day and nighttime tours leave from the hotel on a daily basis. Pesach package options at the hotel include:

Seven nights, April 14-21: double occupancy starting from $4,990; single $3,965; 3rd in room $1,865.

Kids ages 3-12 $828; 12-18 $1235; two kids 3-12 in 2nd room $4,105.

Packages include six holiday meals, including first night seder; four night package April 18-22 starting from $2,880; double, $2,280; single, $1,080, 3rd in room (ask for children's rates.) Package includes 4 holiday meals.

• David Citadel Hotel (www.thedavidcitadel.com): Amongst the most popular Pesach venues in Jerusalem, the hotel has added one of the most sought after gastronomic attractions, Chef Itzik Mizrachi Barak, who has worked at several luxury Israeli hotels and elite restaurants abroad. He will be prepping the sumptuous menus throughout the Pesach holiday. A special seven-night Pesach package, which includes six unique culinary experiences prepared by Chef Barak, starts from $5,950 per couple in a Superior Room.

• Sheraton Tel Aviv Hotel (www.sheratontelaviv.com): The beautiful beachfront facility is highlighting two Pesach promotions. Prices for guests staying up to five nights start from $410 for a single room and $430 for a double room in the deluxe category.

Supplement for a spacious club room is $70 per night. Guests enjoy free Wi-Fi in their rooms, as well as lobby, swimming pool and lounge. The new outdoor pool area also features a toddler's pool. The new restaurant/bar- DECK115- will be open for guests during Pesach to revel in Tel Aviv's exquisite sunsets and enjoy a delectable informal meal.

All prices quoted in U.S. dollars

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Fight for social justice starts at a young age

Rishona Altenberg works on letters for her fundraiser, a screening of the film *Girl Rising*.

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Rishona Altenberg is only 10 years old, but she is already working to spread a message about girls' right to education and human rights around the world.

She's planning her first social justice event in the form of a screening in Toronto of *Girl Rising*, a film directed by Academy Award-nominee Richard Robbins, at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Feb. 20 – coinciding with World Day of Social Justice.

The film tells the story of nine girls who share with the viewer their struggles to overcome the obstacles in the way of their education and human rights.

"These issues are very important to me," Rishona said. "I think all children, including girls, deserve the right to an education."

The girls featured in the movie span the globe, coming from countries including Nepal, Haiti, Ethiopia and other places. It features narration by Hollywood legends like Meryl Streep, Cate Blanchett and Liam Neeson.

The money Rishona raises through ticket sales will be split between two organizations: Room to Read, which works with communities in Asia and Africa to develop literacy skills in primary school children and encourage secondary education for girls, and the Canadian Women's Foundation, which seeks to help women and girls in Canada move out of violence and poverty.

She chose the two groups because the first focuses on girls around the world while the second focuses on issues for women and girls within Canada, she said.

Although it may seem unusual for someone her age to be so active in social justice issues, she said her friends are also interested in working for this kind of change. She described how some of them baked macaroons with her, which they then sold in farmers' markets as a fundraiser.

She and a friend even attended a protest asking Toronto Mayor Rob Ford to step down because of his alcohol and drug use.

She did receive some help from her parents in setting up the movie screening, but she said she did a lot of the work herself, and she was surprised that it was easier than she had expected. Many people were willing to help her spread the message about girls' right to education, she found.

"It's definitely been not as hard as it could have been," she said.

Rishona said the screening could be a step toward her becoming even more of a social justice activist.

"From a very young age, I have been very passionate about justice and fairness, and I've wanted to do something to make a change," she said.

She said she hopes her passion will spread to the audience.

"I'm hoping it will make them want to make changes," she said. "I hope they will learn about these issues if they don't know about them already. I hope they will be inspired by it."

Girl Rising, which is rated PG, will be screened at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre on Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. Tickets are $15. For more information, visit algreentheatre.ca/events/47-girl-rising

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

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Miller, Erwin	Feb. 1/14	484 Steeles Ave. W
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Cherniak, Lawrence	Feb. 2/14	115 Antibes Dr
Levy, Feliz	Feb. 4/14	161 York Hill Blvd
Wolman, Frieda	Feb. 3/14	
Zeligman, Jane	Feb. 4/4	425 Connaught Ave
Friedman, Trude	Feb. 4/14	8 Chater Crt
Newman, Rabbi Leiby	Feb. 4/14	7440 Bathurst St
Korman, Ester Baila	Feb. 5/14	118 Frontenac Ave
Wajchendler, Chajuta	Feb. 6/14	541 Finch Ave. W
Seidman, Isidore Al	Feb. 5/14	302 Hidden Trail
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Glinsky, Yuri	Feb. 7/14	Private
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Rabinovich, Solomon	Feb. 3/14	89 Skymark Dr
Rotter, Leon	Feb. 2/14	105 Clifton Ave
Koblin, Ruth Helaine	Feb. 7/14	145 Elmridge Dr
Weintraub, Aranka	Feb. 7/14	170 Red Maple Dr
Woszczyna, Michael	Feb. 9/14	Private
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Joseph Betel	Feb 3/14	7071 Bayview Avenue
Pearl Ehrlich	Feb 4/14	147 Elder Street
Renee Morgenstern	Feb 1/14	765 Cummer Avenue
Rosalie Latchman	Feb 4/14	285 Ridley Blvd.
Rose Eisen	Feb 4/14	866 Sheppard Ave., West
Dorothy Sagarman	Feb 5/14	718 Sheppard Ave., West
Hilda Clemens	Feb 4/14	4000 Yonge Street
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Clubmom is a destination for mothers

Discount card program has grown to include more than 200 vendors

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Tal Srulovicz, left, and Stephanie Kleiman

Two Toronto mothers with seven young children between them, including a newborn, and a set of twins each, both left their corporate jobs to pursue an entrepreneurial business venture: clubmom.

Clubmom's flagship product, the clubmom shop-and-save card, began as a loyalty program in 2012, giving Toronto-area moms access to discounts at retailers and services across the GTA.

When done well, loyalty programs can keep customers coming back for repeat purchases, potentially turning a passerby customer into a loyal brand advocate.

"I always knew I wanted it to be more," founder Tal Srulovicz said of clubmom.

"The business started as an innovative fundraiser at my kids' school. The idea was to have a card that moms could use and that could be sold at different charities, schools, and hospitals, with participating schools receiving $10 back for every $30 card they sold. The name 'clubmom' captured all things 'mom' and would allow me to grow the business to more than just the card."

Discounts range from 10 to 30 per cent, and the card has grown to include more than 200 vendors, including Canada's Wonderland, Second Cup, Yogurty's, Yogen Fruz, OLLY shoes, Higher Ground, What-A-Bagel, fashion retailer Thyme Maternity, and Canadian children's clothing company Hatley.

Srulovicz and her partner, Stephanie Kleiman, met online.

"The business was growing very quickly, and Tal was looking for a partner, so she posted an ad online," Kleiman said. "Our chemistry was great. I am a marketing person and complimented Tal's background as a lawyer with fundraising and non-profit experience."

With a business plan in place, Srulovicz and Kleiman set up the clubmom.ca website as an online destination for mothers to get sound advice and practical tips on how to shop and save money every day. Moms can also tap into the 20-plus expert panel of bloggers who provide original content each week on issues such as parenting, health, fitness, sex, relationships and entertainment.

"I set out to put together a team of bloggers with varied expertise. We wanted to be different than other bloggers out there targeting moms – we wanted to include professionals and experts to add content versus just mommy stories," said Kleiman.

Clubmom has grown to 10,000 active users of its card program, and its website attracts 20,000 views per month.

"What makes us unique is that our vendors are hand-picked. We spend a lot of time networking with other moms, speaking to them about whom they want to see on board. At this point, we're getting vendor referrals from our member base about who they want us to approach," said Srulovicz.

"We are the demographic. We are targeting people like us: moms. Moms are our business and they talk a lot – whether in person or on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Pinterest. We have been fortunate with our more than 200 businesses that are promoting us to their clients. We have bright pink stickers in the windows of our participating vendors. Through our school fundraising, we have been able to reach out to moms via school newsletters to help us build the brand," Kleiman added.

Clubmom's focus in 2014 is to grow.

"Our goal for this year is to hit 300 vendors, and we want to expand the blog. We're constantly adding bloggers, not just in the GTA, but also across Canada. We hope to build a presence in cities across Canada and grow nationally.

"We are currently re-launching the website to read as more of a magazine style, so that content is more forward and accessible," said Srulovicz.

The shop-and-save loyalty card can be purchased for $30 on the website and is also available through charitable organizations, community fundraisers, most Jewish day schools, the Toronto District School Board and many private schools.

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The songbooks of Leonard Cohen

The Wordless Leonard Cohen Songbook George A. Walker.

Limited artist's edition of 80 copies; Trade paperback, The Porcupine's Quill.

Reviewed by Norman Ravvin

Songbooks were once a plentiful commodity. An updated presentation of old-time sheet music, they were packaged with glossy covers, photographs of the artist, excerpts from interviews, and chord diagrams to help the beginning player.

In my suburban youth, the local mall boasted a music store where I could safely count on finding songbooks for all of Leonard Cohen's records in the $5 to $10 range. Who else was on the prowl in southwest Calgary, circa 1980, for the tablature instructions to *Chelsea Hotel #2*, I cannot say. But Bob Ingles Music at Chinook Centre was happy to sell me a copy.

In the late '60s and early '70s, Cohen's music publishers were savvy about how to cash in on his mystique. His songbooks included plenty of cinema-ready close-ups, and lyrics were laid out, as in poetry stanzas, separate from the music notation. This was accompanied by interviews from magazines and newspapers, full of Cohen's pithy and at times oracular pronouncements (he was waiting, one insisted, for "women to take over the world.")

George A. Walker's *Wordless Leonard Cohen Songbook* is a print artist's reimagining of what a Cohen songbook might be. Most notably, it contains images – 80 of them – one for each of Cohen's 80 years. Each image is carved into the endgrain of a hardwood block, then printed on the Vandercook press in Walker's west Toronto studio.

The Wordless Leonard Cohen Songbook is Walker's third "wordless biography." He first presented the life, artistic apprenticeship and mysterious death of Group of Seven painter Tom Thomson. After this, in 2013, Walker moved in an entirely different direction, as he created 100 images for *The Life and Times of Conrad Black*. Walker's choice of his subject followed from his appraisal of Black as "one of the most outspoken and charismatic characters in the elusive one per cent of people who make up the establishment in Canada. He is a public person of international stature, at one time a media baron and still a man of great influence and wealth." Black was not averse to Walker's interpretation of his life, and agreed to sign a few copies.

Leonard Cohen, a celebrated figure in Canada and abroad, is a less provocative choice. Cohen's career has included idiosyncratic periods when he faded from view, and released books of poetry and record albums that reached only a hard core audience of aficionados. Some of this work, arguably, is his best. It is in his later and less creatively exciting years that he has gained a mass audience. These days, Cohen's songs are covered by the likes of Lana Del Ray, whose young fans are unlikely to know what he had in mind as he sang about the limousines waiting in the street outside the Chelsea Hotel.

Walker's wordless narrative follows Cohen from his Westmount youth, through his McGill years under the influence of poet-teacher Louis Dudek, to his penchant for writing poems in $5 rooms on Montreal's tenderloin, to iconic meetings on Canadian television with Pierre Berton. He then leaps into the late '60s, when Cohen's musical career put him in the company of the key makers of that period's popular culture. Among these are Andy Warhol, Allen Ginsberg, Joni Mitchell and Jimi Hendrix. For those interested in the finer details of Cohen's doings, Walker includes portraits of Nico, Phil Spector and Cohen's poetic hero Garcia Lorca.

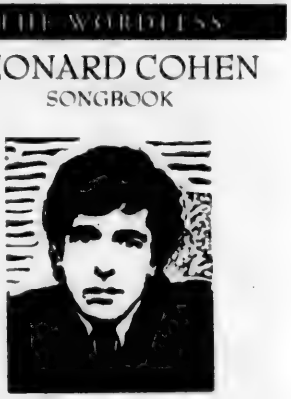
Walker's woodcut style is rich and varied. He sometimes cuts an image to mimic an actual photo, coming to terms with the challenge of how to carve the tiny typescript on an unspooling sheet of paper, or cigarette smoke blown casually upward.

Some of his prints are wholly imagined, and these are suggestive of his ideas about Cohen's creative process, his status as a bard and a troubadour. In one case, he sets out the images from a song, the "tea and oranges that come all the way from China," in *Suzanne*.

The careful viewer might wonder, beyond this, what is there of song in Walker's wordless songbook? There are many images of Cohen performing his songs, and it's fun to try to pin down the chords his fingers are forming. Walker has made his own version of an early photograph, which appeared in the 1969 songbook *Songs of Leonard Cohen*, showing Cohen's teenage musical group, The Buckskin Boys. Alongside it he has set an imaginary portrait: a youthful Cohen in western hat, overseen by the real cowboy singer, Hank Williams, who is positioned, as Cohen says he must be, "a thousand floors" above him in the Tower of Song.

The Wordless Leonard Cohen Songbook demands close and careful viewing. In this, it is like cinema, or the photographic work of a Richard Avedon or Diane Arbus. Each image is full, suggestive and rich in context and style.

The book's creation is a complex process and follows the model set by Walker's previous wordless biographies. First he creates a limited edition of hand-printed copies. These arrive in a carefully detailed box, are composed of engravings printed on Walker's press, are hand bound, signed and expensive. When I visited a limited edition of *The Mysterious Death of Tom Thomson* at McGill's Rare Books Library, I felt as if I were turning the pages of a paper treasure, a piece of art I could hold, if only for a short while, in my own two hands.



A trade paperback is due out at a modest price from Erin, Ont.-based Porcupine's Quill. Just as I did in my teenage years, the Lana Del Ray fans may stumble upon Walker's songbook in their local megastore and muse over his interpretation of *Chelsea Hotel #2*. The limousines are, of course, still waiting in the street.

Norman Ravvin is a writer and teacher in Montreal.

Book has a moving pay-it-forward message

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A Toronto man is hoping to spread a bit of kindness with a kids' book that raises money for the Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Tumor Centre at the Princess Margaret Hospital.

Fred Levine wrote *Triple Trouble: One Good Deed Deserves Another*, a book about his four kids, including 12-year-old triplets. He said the book is meant to acknowledge his family's love and support as he goes through life with brain cancer.

"It's a children's book that's a celebration of my family during difficult times," Levine, 47, said. "Despite my struggle with brain cancer, which is three years and counting, I found a way not to lose sight of who I am."

Levine, who has a background in advertising and marketing, said he hasn't been working since he was diagnosed with the tumour. Not wanting to sit at home feeling miserable, he said he focused his efforts on writing and illustrating the book, which is about how small acts of kindness can have such a positive effect on people, influencing them to spread the kindness around.

Fred Levine

"Every crisis serves as an opportunity to make a difference," he said. "This is my crisis and it's a little bout of brain cancer, but here's my opportunity to demonstrate it's not going to hold me back."

The fact that he's able to thank his family through the book while also contributing to the organization that has been helping him and many others was a big bonus, he said.

Every penny from the book sales goes to the Pencer Centre.

Since its release in late October, sales of the book have raised $2,000 for the Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust.

Linda McKie, executive administrator for the brain trust, said the book's message, as well as Levine's writing and illustrating talents, are what made them decide to publish it.

"It had such a beautiful theme, a pay-it-forward message. We just loved that message. It's a book that deserves to be published," she said.

Levine said he has plans for more *Triple Trouble* books, which he hopes will inspire people to do good.

"I wanted it to be a positive story," he said. "I just wanted smiles and I wanted people to get it, and if it makes people kinder, I couldn't ask for more than that."

Find out more about the Pencer Brain Trust and ordering the book at www.pencerbraintrust.com.

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

HOLOCAUST ORATORIO COMPOSED BY SURVIVOR OF BERGEN-BELSEN TO BE PERFORMED IN VICTORIA

The University of Victoria's Faculty of Humanities is presenting the world premiere of *A Twentieth Century Passion*, a Holocaust memorial oratorio by **A. Peter Gary**, a survivor of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

The oratorio, which is essentially an opera without action or sets, will feature an orchestra, a choir, a children's choir, several soloists and a child narrator. The performance is slated for April 2, the anniversary of the composer's liberation and two weeks before his 90th birthday.

Born in 1924 into an upper-middle class Jewish family in Hungary, Gary studied music as a youth. During the Holocaust, he escaped a mass slaughter in which his mother was killed, and he spent three years in Majdanek, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen. He was liberated by the British Army on his 21st birthday, then achieved a PhD in musicology from the Sorbonne.

After immigrating to the United States in 1950, he worked in the Hollywood film industry, composed music, developed several businesses and taught at the University of California. He moved to Victoria in 1991 and founded the Victoria Holocaust Remembrance and Education Society under the auspices of which Holocaust-education talks have been given to more than 65,000 children and teens.

For more details about *A Twentieth Century Passion*, please visit ring.uvic.ca and click on "Oratorio" in the Culture section.

• • •

Between Stages Play Reading: The play *Tough Jews* by **Michael Ross Albert** takes place in Kensington Market and "the crime-filled Jewish ghetto of Prohibition-era Toronto." The story involves a family of Jewish bootleggers who fight to stay together and stumble into the "crime of the century."

A Between Stages reading of *Tough Jews*, directed by **David Ferry**, features actors **Claire Armstrong**, **Ben Clost**, **Natasha Greenblatt**, **Luke Humphrey**, **Tanja Jacobs**, **Adam Pettle** and **Jordan Pettle**. $10 admission at the door (no advance tickets). Miles Nadal JCC, Saturday, March 1, 7 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• • •

New in Print: Famed Yiddish writer **Sholem Aleichem** endured an impoverished childhood, married into fabulous wealth, but then lost it all through bad luck and terrible business sense. His work as a writer and performer of his work brought him immense success and celebrity: more than 150,000 people were said to have attended his funeral in New York in 1916. Creator of the Tevye the Dairyman stories that were later packaged as *Fiddler On The Roof*, Sholem Aleichem has achieved a posthumous fame that would have likely extended beyond his wildest dreams.

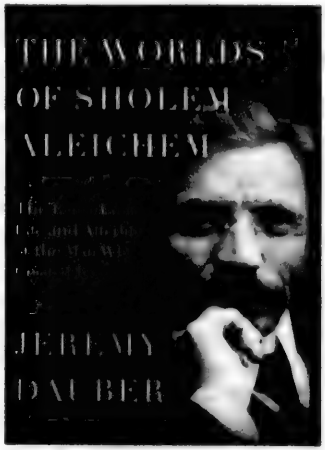
Jeremy Dauber, a professor of Yiddish literature at Columbia University, has written what is being billed as "the first comprehensive biography" of this beloved author. Dauber's *The Worlds of Sholem Aleichem: The Remarkable Life and Afterlife of the Man Who Created Tevye*, was recently published in a 448-page softcover edition by Schocken/Nextbook.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• **Shlomo Schwartzberg** continues his series on "Defining Greatness: Director Steven Spielberg," with a look at the films *AI: Artificial Intelligence*, *The Terminal*, *War of the Worlds* and *Munich* (with film clips). $11.25 drop in, student $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Feb. 24, 7 to 9 p.m.

• Instrumentalists are invited to participate in a Klezmer Music Ensemble led by conductor **Eric Stein.** Meets Tuesdays 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC; pro-rated registration available. music@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 0, to register.



• A Klezmer Purim Celebration features the **Yiddish Swingtet Duo**, consisting of clarinetist **Jonno Lightstone** and pianist **Jordan Klapman**. Presented by Adult 55+, Culture, Education, Community. $4, includes hamantashen. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, March 6, 2 p.m. (Doors open 1:30 p.m.) Pre-registration required by Feb. 28. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Teatron play hopes to appeal to local Israelis

Kathryn Kates
Special to the CJN

Actor Tal Rosenzweig is hoping her current play *Handle With Care* will attract members of the Israeli Canadian community to the Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre.

"Because this play has both Israeli and Jewish content in it, I think it's a really good opportunity to bring more Israelis to the theatre," the Israeli-born actor says. "There are a lot of Canadian Jews coming to Teatron, but there is not as much awareness within the Israeli community about this theatre. It is a very uplifting play, and I hope that both Israeli and Canadian Jewish audiences give it a chance and come to see it."

Rosenzweig makes her Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre debut in *Handle with Care*, a romantic comedy by Emmy Award-nominated writer Jason Odell Williams, at the Toronto Centre for the Arts – Studio Theatre beginning Feb.20

Handle with Care won the coveted *New York Times* Critic Pick for its current off-Broadway production. Rosenzweig's castmates include Teatron veterans Zack Amzallag, Tal Shulman and Gloria Valentine.

"The play takes place in a remote town called Goodview in Virginia," she says. "My character's name is Ayelet, she's in her 30s and she's single. She follows her grandmother who left Israel because she wanted to visit Goodview, but Ayelet doesn't know the real reason for the trip.

"Unexpectedly, her grandmother passes away. Then she finds out the courier, who was to deliver her in the casket back to Israel, loses the casket. He can't speak Hebrew and she can't speak English, so he brings a friend, Josh, who is Jewish so that he can try to understand her. There is a lot of miscommunication and the comedy comes from there."

Through all the goings on, a love story unfolds between Ayelet and Josh, played by Amzallag. Rosenzweig says that in-between the comedy that surrounds the disappearance of the casket there are flashbacks showing Ayelet's time with her grandmother. The audience gets to see the relationship between grandmother and granddaughter, and eventually learns the reason for their trip to Virginia.

Tal Rosenzweig

"*Handle with Care* brings up the whole question whether things happen because of destiny, or is it just random," says Rosenzweig, who now makes Toronto her home. "It would be interesting if the audience left with this question in mind."

She says the fact that her character is Israeli and that she herself comes from the same culture really helped her to have a better picture of who Ayelet is.

Rosenzweig began performing at the age of 12. Then, when she was an engineering student in California, she had the opportunity to perform in an original play call *Edges* at the Silicon Valley Theatre. Now an electrical engineer by day, her passion is still the theatre. She has spent six years performing for Mifgash, a Toronto Hebrew-speaking theatre company.

At the beginning of April, Rosenzweig, who enjoys reading and salsa dancing in her spare time, will perform once again for Mifgash in a musical called *Kazablan*.

Handle with Care *runs from Feb. 20 to March 2. Tickets at Ticketmaster, or 1-855-985-ARTS or www.teatrontheatre.com.*

Rescuing Chagall's paintings, abandoning Chagall

Rafael Medoff
JNS.org

The Monuments Men, tells the thrilling story of U.S. military personnel who risked their lives during World War II to rescue paintings by the likes of Rembrandt, Picasso, and Chagall that the Nazis had stolen.

But for Connecticut civil rights attorney Bill Bingham, the story is one of tragic irony. His father, Hiram Bingham IV, was a dissident U.S. diplomat who helped rescue Marc Chagall after the Roosevelt administration abandoned the painter – the same administration that later made such efforts to recover Chagall's paintings. Save the artwork, abandon the artist? It's a peculiar legacy, as Bingham explains in this exclusive interview.

JNS: ***Is it true that Chagall was initially reluctant to leave Europe?***

Bingham: Chagall had lived in France for most of the previous two decades. Like many Jews, he felt bound to it by family ties, by the familiar sights and sounds and pleasures, and of course by the general uncertainty that goes with starting a new life halfway across the world. So when the pro-Nazi Vichy government took over in 1940, he wasn't immediately ready to make the break.

How did your father come into contact with him?

Dad was a vice-consul at the American consulate in Marseilles. Officially he was supposed to implement the Roosevelt administration's visa policy, which was basically to look for reasons to reject visa applications from Jewish refugees. But unofficially, Dad was actively helping Varian Fry, an American journalist who came to France in 1940 to rescue refugees.

How did the U.S. government respond to Fry's mission?

Under pressure from [his wife] Eleanor Roosevelt, the president very reluctantly agreed to let Fry rescue a few hundred prominent European intellectuals and artists. FDR could accept the idea of saving the 'cream of European civilization.' Helping ordinary Jewish refugees was a different story, unfortunately.

What exactly did your father do to help Fry?

He surreptitiously issued travel documents for refugees – documents that the other consular officials refused to approve. He hid refugees in his home when they were fleeing from the Nazis. He even helped smuggle the famous novelist Lion Feuchtwanger out of a French forced-labour camp – he had Feuchtwanger dress in women's clothes and pretend to be my dad's mother-in-law. It wasn't just Fry and Bingham – Fry built a network of several-dozen rescue activists, some of them French, some of them American expats who were living in Europe.

So what happened to Chagall?

In the fall of 1940, the Museum of Modern Art applied to the State Department for a visa for Chagall. The museum promised that it would have exhibits of Chagall's paintings and would make sure that he could support himself. But that wasn't enough, apparently. The administration stalled and stalled on the application. Months went by. Finally, Fry took Chagall to see my father. Fry wrote in his diary that on the spot, my father 'got him an immigration visa with no affidavits at all. In fact, all he had in his dossier was a letter from me [Fry].'

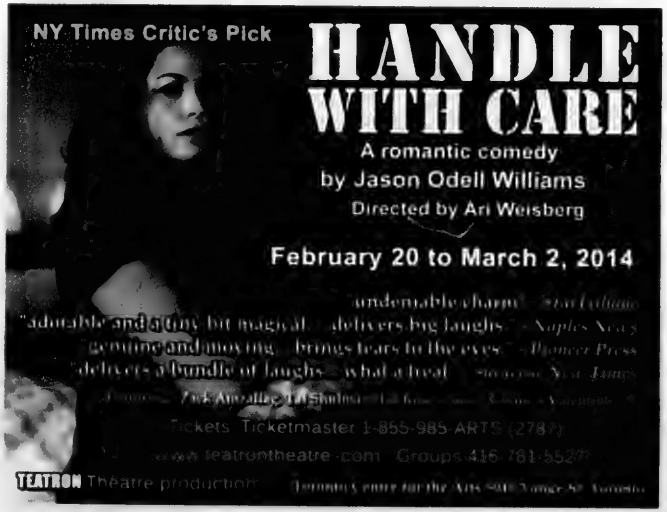
The delays were almost fatal. Because of all the stalling, Chagall was still in France when the Vichy police carried out a huge roundup of Jews in April 1941, and Chagall was imprisoned.

Fry and my father personally intervened to get him out. Chagall and his wife, Bella, left Spain on May 7, 1941. If it had been left up to the Roosevelt administration, he might never have gotten out.

And his paintings?

The Chagalls managed to take some of the artwork with them. But some of it was left behind. And of course some of it was in museums or private collections in Europe—which is how the Monuments Men ended up finding some of it, three years later.

Dr. Rafael Medoff is director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, in Washington, D.C., and author of 15 books about Jewish history and the Holocaust. The latest is FDR and the Holocaust: A Breach of Faith.



Jewish life flourishes in Baltimore

Michael Stavsky
Special to The CJN

When thinking about major Jewish communities in North America, several come to mind right away. New York, Los Angeles and even Toronto have large communities nestled within major urban centres.

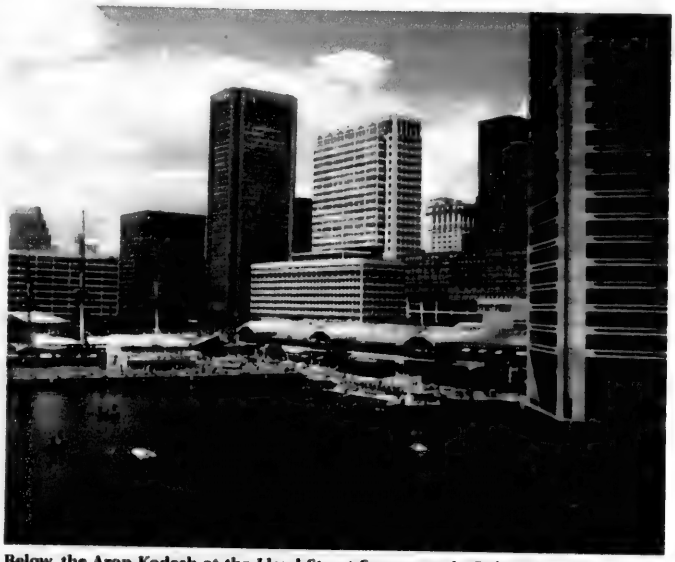
You might be surprised, however, to learn that Baltimore, Md., with over 60,000 Jewish residents throughout the county, has one of the country's oldest and fastest growing Jewish communities.

The city of Baltimore played a significant role during both the War of 1812 and later the U.S. Civil War, as a strategic deepwater port with easy access to Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. It was during this period that Baltimore's Jewish community quickly grew into one of the largest ethnic neighbourhoods in the city, establishing itself along Lombard Street, just east of downtown. The area, affectionately called "Corned Beef Row", was so named due to the numerous Jewish delis that sprang up in the area. In 1929, the *Baltimore Hebrew Times* referred to East Baltimore as "a little city in itself" due to its uniformly Jewish populace.

While the community today has taken root in northwest Baltimore, a few vestiges of Corned Beef Row remain. Two large synagogues from the 1800s still stand in the area. B'nai Israel, a grandiose Moorish Revival design built in 1876 as Chizuk Amuno Synagogue, is the city's longest actively operating shul. Having been established in protest to the liturgical change from Orthodox to Reform occurring at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, the synagogue still operates as Orthodox today, in contrast to many other synagogues from the period.

The Lloyd Street Synagogue, situated next door to B'nai Israel, no longer functions as a synagogue. Built in 1840, the Greek Revival-designed synagogue was the first in the state of Maryland, and is currently the third oldest synagogue building in the United States. Started by German Jews as Congregation Nidche Israel, the Lloyd Street shul was also the pulpit for the first rabbi to serve in the United States, Rabbi Abraham Rice.

By the 1960s, Baltimore's Jewish community had begun to migrate to fashionable northwest Baltimore. Spread out along the east side of Reisterstown Road in the Park Heights and Pikesville sections of town, the Jews of Baltimore have a large Orthodox constituency, in sharp contrast to many other North American cities. In fact, a 2010 Jewish Federation study showed a higher percentage of Orthodox residents (32 per cent) than Conservative (26 per cent) and Reform (23 per cent).



Below, the Aron Kodesh at the Lloyd Street Synagogue in Baltimore. Above, Baltimore's skyline, with the city's inner harbour in the foreground

[Michael Stavsky photos]

In recent years, the city has done much to curb the high crime rate and urban blight that plagues much of Baltimore.

The revitalized inner harbour, adjacent to downtown, has become a trendy spot for retailers and visitors alike. The Maryland Science Center and critically acclaimed National Aquarium of Baltimore are a short walk apart, along with the circa 1854 USS Constellation, the last all sail warship built by the United States.

In an effort to attract commerce to the city, numerous early 20th-century factories and warehouses were converted into high-end shopping districts during the 1990s.

The Power Plant building, built in 1900, retains its original appearance as an electrical power station, but now houses numerous shops and eateries.

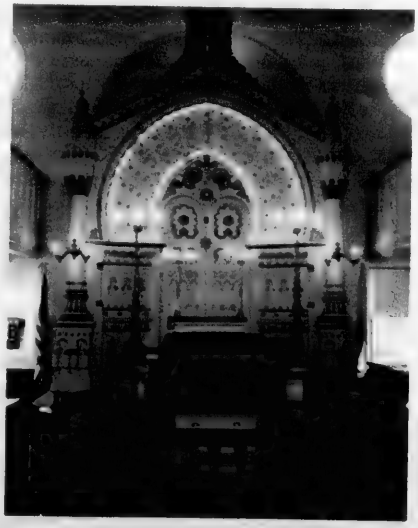
The B&O Warehouse, located in nearby Camden Yards, was built for the Baltimore and Ohio railway in 1899, and is among the longest brick buildings in the United States. Measuring more than 330 metres from end to end, it stood vacant for much of the 1970s and 1980s. It was later redeveloped as part of the Oriole Park at Camden Yards baseball stadium complex, and is now office space for the Baltimore Orioles franchise.

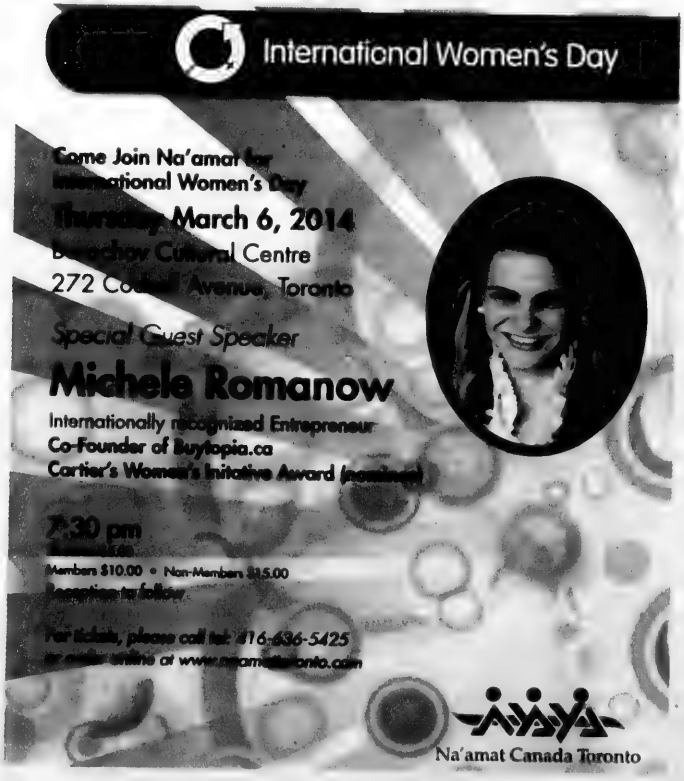
Camden Yards is home to several interesting museums. Geppi's Entertainment Museum, a large gallery depicting American entertainment history, includes vintage collectibles and novelties from more than a century of American radio, television and movies.

The museum shares space with the Sports Legends Museum dedicated to Baltimore area sports history, with the Babe Ruth birthplace museum a short Charm City Circulator bus ride away.

Whether visiting nearby Washington D.C., or as a destination itself, Baltimore truly embodies its moniker as the "Charm City."

Michael Stavsky acknowledges the assistance of the Visit Baltimore Visitor's Bureau and the Admiral Fell Inn in arranging his family's trip to Baltimore.





More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

SPREAD KINDNESS, NOT DRUNKEN RECKLESSNESS

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Two childhood friends from Toronto are joining other young people around the world who are putting a positive twist on a potentially dangerous Internet craze, spurring their peers to do a mitzvah in an effort called Feed the Deed.

Russell Citron and Josh Stern, both 22, watched a YouTube video earlier this month of Brent Lindeque, a South African who gave a homeless man a sandwich, chocolate bar and Coke.

Lindeque's selfless act inspired them to be Good Samaritans. Citron bought a cupcake for a random person during his lunch break. Stern handed out sandwiches to homeless people as he walked home from an exam at the University of Ottawa, where he's a medical student. Both uploaded videos of their good deeds to Facebook.

When Citron found out that Stern was doing something similar – with a clip that featured the catchy slogan and hashtag #feedthedeed – he called Stern in the hope of aligning the idea with his own non-profit organization, Kindness Counts.

"We both agreed that the goal here is to make the biggest impact possible and inspire people to be kind," says Citron, president of Kindness Counts and a consultant at Monitor Deloitte. "From there, the response [on social media] has been really inspiring."

Feed the Deed and Lindeque's challenge are a more positive spin on Neknominations, a drinking challenge that has gone viral online and which Lindeque changed to become a challenge to perform acts of kindness.

For Neknominations, young adults post footage of chugging (or "necking") a drink and then dare their friends to do something even more outrageous, usually involving binge drinking. The online challenge has been linked to two deaths in Ireland.

At the end of their videos, Citron and Stern each nominated three friends to continue doing random acts of kindness within 24 hours, then record a video or take photos of their kind acts, share them on Facebook and forward the challenge to a few more friends.

"It feels really good to help people, and you might as well put your money to good use instead of booze," Stern wrote in a Feed the Deed Facebook post, hoping to shift friends away from the unhealthy viral sensation.

A week after it began, Stern says the movement had inspired more than 250 Feed the Deed videos, and its reach is expanding by the day.

"I was raised in a very loving family built on a very strong foundation of giving back and kindness," says Stern, who has volunteered with Magen David Adom in Israel. "I've always been a strong believer in acts of kindness and this is the perfect project for something like that."

Citron's non-profit initiative, Kindness Counts, is focused on spreading kindness in creative ways. It shares its initials with Citron's uncle, Ken Citron, who died of cancer in 2004. The organization is a tribute to him.

"I think that society views kindness as a very passive concept," he says. "There's some attitude toward being kind now that it's not the cool thing to do. It's not fun. But in order to really make an impact and get people talking at their dinner tables, you have to be creative and unconventional in the way you address kindness."

One of Stern's nominated friends, Ben Cowley, went to Tim Hortons and gave a staffer at the drive-through window $35 to pay for the warm drinks of the customers behind him.

"It felt good," Cowley says. "I liked the idea of being anonymous, reminding us that sometimes people are just out there to do something nice and cheer people up without recognition."

Feed the Deed and Lindeque aren't the only ones around the world putting a more positive spin on the Neknominations concept.

Josh Stern, left, and Russell Citron

RAK (Random Acts of Kindness) Nominations is a craze that launched in Australia and became very popular when the #raknominations tag trended on Twitter. Social media has been key to mobilizing so much generosity among the public.

"I was so excited immediately when I heard about this," says Nicole Rosenberg, president of the Jewish Student Union at Forest Hill Collegiate in Toronto. "It's such a positive initiative. I thought that was a much better way to use social media [than Neknominations]."

Among the people nominated to keep feeding the deed are celebrities such as NBA superstar LeBron James (whom Citron nominated), astronaut Chris Hadfield and comedian and talk show host Ellen DeGeneres.

Citron also posted a message on the Kindness Counts Facebook page asking friends to nominate and tag the *Ellen DeGeneres Show* with the hope of spreading Feed the Deed to a North American audience.

Many Feed the Deed videos are in a hub on the Kindness Counts Facebook page. Citron told *The CJN* that he's considering making the kindness initiative an annual event every February.

"It's incredibly inspiring to see how many people actually go out and do acts of kindness and care," Citron says. "If this entire initiative just inspired one video, if it made just one person's day… the entire thing would be worth it."

For updates on Feed the Deed as it moves forward, "like" the Kindness Counts page on Facebook.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of Feb. 27 is Feb. 17. The deadline for the issue of March 6 is Feb. 24. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Feb. 20

FAMILY CAREGIVERS

A support group for people caring for parents with cognitive or physical impairments will meet Thursdays, 7 p.m., starting today at the Day Centre for Seniors, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

Saturday, Feb. 22

FIDDLER SING-A-LONG

Makom holds a Sing-Along *Fiddler on the Roof* fundraiser. Prizes for the best costumes. 8 p.m., Al Green Theatre. Tickets include lyrics, snacks and props. $36/$45. For tickets, www.makomto.org/fiddler.

SCHWARTZ DYNASTY

Beth Tikvah Synagogue shows the film *Schwartz Dynasty* (in Hebrew with subtitles), 7:30 p.m., $5/$10. Call 416-221-3433, to register.

TEEN IMPROV NIGHT

Pride of Israel Synagogue holds a night for teens to learn improvisation and dramatization, 7-9 p.m. Call to register, 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

CRASH COURSE IN HISTORY

Judy Hazan discusses "The Great Revolt and Masada," 9:30 a.m., Lodzer Synagogue, 12 Heaton St.

PJ PARTY

Shaar Shalom Synagogue holds a Havdalah and movie night, starting at 7 p.m. Contact youth@shaarshalom.ca

Sunday, Feb. 23

PLAY MAH-JONG

Come play or learn mah-jong with Shoshana Chapter of Hadassah-WIZO, 2:15 p.m., Earl Bales Community Centre. $36. To register, call 416-630-8373.

ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

An open house about summer programs for adults with special needs will be held at 7:30 p.m., DANI Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Co-sponsored by Camp Moshava and Moshava Ba'ir. For more information, email ssokol@dani-toronto.com.

KOL AMI BUSINESS CIRCLE

Kim Ades, president of Frame of Mind Coaching and JournalEngine Software, is the guest speaker at Temple Kol Ami's business circle, 1 p.m. Call 905-709-2620.

MAKE A TALLIT

Join Judaic textile artist **Lisa Rose** to create a tallit at Temple Sinai. $72 for full-day workshop (includes materials and lunch). Call 416-487-3281, or email programs@templesinai.net.

THE LION SEEKER

Author **Kenneth Bonert** discusses his award-winning novel, *The Lion Seeker*, 7:30 p.m., First Narayever Synagogue, 187 Brunswick Ave. Free. Call 416-927-0486.

JEWISH DIVERSITY

Kalman Weiser discusses "Diversity Within the Jewish People: Ashkenazi and Sephardi Communities," 7:30 p.m., Lodzer Synagogue. $10.

Wednesday, Feb. 26

ON THE SLOPES FOR CANDY

Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation hosts a ski and snowboard day in memory of Candy Schaffel Black. Tickets include ski pass, transportation, kosher breakfast and lunch. Spa alternative for non-skiers. $195. For tickets, visit www.slicetheice.ca.

RUSSIAN CAREGIVERS

Psychologist **Victoria Orekhovsky** will speak at a seminar for Russian-speaking family caregivers on "Psychological well-being when caring for a family member," 6:30 p.m., Circle of Care Day Centre for Seniors, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 498.

Upcoming Events

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

Volunteers who speak Russian, Yiddish, Hungarian, German, Polish, Cantonese or Romanian are needed to speak with clients at Baycrest. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2572 or email volunteer@baycrest.org.

Reena is looking for a friendly visitor to spend time with a Jewish man who is currently in Baycrest Hospital. Call **Mille Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112 or email mchadwick@reena.org.

Continued on page 37

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SHARE YOUR HAPPY MOMENTS

UPLOAD YOUR PHOTO TO www.cjnews.com/mazeltov

Continued from page 36

The Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women is seeking volunteer legal support workers to help women who have experienced abuse. Training is provided. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

YOUNG JUDAEA

Young Judaea holds its leadership convention **Feb. 28-March 2.** See www.youngjudaea.ca for details.

VENDORS WANTED

Vendors are wanted for a market **March 23,** benefiting B'nai Brith Canada and Uptown Chabad. Call **Sandy Gordon,** 416-605-0868, or email sandygord@gmail.com.

FAMILY HISTORY NEEDED

First Narayever Congregation is looking for family photos and stories, letters and other documents about downtown Jewish Toronto as it celebrates its centennial. Call 416-927-0546, or email centennialcelebrations@narayever.ca.

HEBREW CLASSES

Beth Emeth Synagogue is offering a free Hebrew reading course for those who can slowly read Hebrew and want practice reading, singing and understanding prayers. Six sessions, starts **March 2.** Call 416-633-3838 to register.

KNITTERS/WOOL NEEDED

Act to End Violence Against Women is seeking donations of wool suitable for knitting hats and mittens. Knitters are also needed. Call 905-695-5372 or email miriam@acttoendvaw.org.

REGISTER FOR CAMP

Registration for Chabad of Markham's summer camp for children age 2-6 is now open. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221 or online at www.kindercamp.ca

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 6-week bereavement group for men and women who have lost a spouse, starting April 24. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10 for more information.

FAREWELL BABYLON

Writer **Naim Kattan** discusses the Jews of Iraq, **March 2,** Congregation Darchei Noam, 7 p.m.

ORCHESTRA OF EXILES

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto is showing the film *Orchestra of Exiles* with live classical music **March 1,** 8 p.m. Tickets, $18/$25. www.bayt.ca or 905-886-3810.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Debby Feldman of JF&CS discusses "Domestic violence and abuse in the Jewish community," **March 6,** 8 p.m. Temple Har Zion.

WINE AND CHEESE PARTY

Beth David Synagogue hosts a wine-and-cheese reception, **March 11,** 7:30 p.m. Sample kosher wines for Passover and visit gift and craft boutiques. Tickets $10/$15. Call 416-633-5500, ext. 28 or www.bethdavid.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn how to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly divorced or separated individuals. Starts Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at the Lebovic Community Centre, 9600 Bathurst St.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women under 50 who have lost a spouse in the last few years, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila,** 416-665-3333, or **Marcia,** 416-932-1229.

Association of Jewish Seniors presents **Suzanne Cohen Share** discussing "Accessibility: Know Your Rights" Feb. 20, Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Breakfast at 9:30 a.m., presentation at 10 a.m. Free for members, $2 for guests. Call **Arnold Foss** 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+Culture, Education, Community, Miles Nadal JCC. The Yiddish Swingtet performs Klezmer music for Purim, March 6. Doors open 1:30 p.m., show starts at 2 p.m. RSVP by Feb. 28. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. Feb. 25, travel photographer **Robert Shechter** discusses "Amazing Arizona: Canyons and Red Rocks," 10 a.m.; Feb. 26, **Rita** and **Alex Maslov** in concert, 1:30 p.m. Feb. 27, **Barry Shainbaum** discusses "Inspiration through music," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Hairdresser/barber Feb. 27, 10 a.m. Casino Woodbine March 26 (register in advance). Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George,** 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the 2014/2015 school year for the daycare and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

The book club discusses *The Invisible Bridge* by **Julie Orringer** Feb. 24, 1 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Mystical Meaning of the Hebrew Aleph-Bet," Feb. 23, 11 a.m.

Noam Sienna discusses "Torah as Hard as Iron: The Story of Rabbi Akiva," Feb. 23, 2:30 p.m.

Shlomo Schwartzberg discusses the work of director **Steven Spielberg,** 7 p.m. Feb. 24: "Cuteness and Controversy."

A play reading of *Tough Jews* by **Michael Ross Albert,** will be held March 1, 7 p.m.

Purim Carnival, March 2, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register. The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Harissa, Honey and Hyssop, photos by **Nelli Sheffer,** is on display in the gallery until Feb. 24.

Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays until March 18, 7 p.m. or Wednesdays to March 26, 11 a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call 416-898-1818, ext. 574

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

An osteoarthritis workshop will be held Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.

The movie *The Frisco Kid* will be shown Feb. 24, 1 p.m.,

Israeli cuisine with a twist of Iraqi and French cuisine will be discussed Feb. 26 at 7 p.m.

Book club with reviewer **Bruria Cooperman** meets Feb. 28, 10:30 a.m.

Social club for singles 50+ meets March 1, 7:30 p.m. Live music starts at 8 p.m. Tickets $15-$23.

Social club for singles 35-50 meets March 8, 7:30 p.m. Enjoy a movie and social time.

To register for programs, call **Andrea,** ext. 3006, or email adaiam@srcentre.ca.

מזל טוב

Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Mazel Tov to Eliezer Aryeh Oppenheimer on his bar mitzvah. We're so proud of you!! Love Mom, Dad, Ruby, Ezra and Asher.

Dalia & Jason Mail are ecstatic to announce the arrival of Emily Reese born on Dec. 25. Big Brother Ezra already loves his baby sister!

Mazel Tov Lily & Saul Steinfeld on their 65th anniversary March 6. Love your children, Joanne & Bruce, Robbie, Joel, Ellen & Mitchel, Marla, grandchildren, great-grandchildren.

Susan & Robert Heckler, Mara Ludwig & Steven Grover announce the engagement of Lisa and Samuel. Suzie Keller and Farla Grover are excited grandmothers

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on "**Family Moments**"

Happy 85th birthday Dad and Zaidy, Leo Lavine, on Feb. 18 love from your family

Downsizing a hoarder

Ask Ella
By Ella Burakowski

Dear Ella,

My wife and I have lived in our large home for almost 40 years. We've raised three children and have seven grandchildren. My wife has kept just about every memento, from baby teeth to artwork to report cards. Our bedrooms, garage, den and basement are packed with memories. We're getting older, and climbing up and down our stairs is difficult. We need to move, but she won't hear of it. How am I going to convince her?

Married to a Hoarder

Dear Married to a Hoarder

Compacting, discarding and choosing through a lifetime of memories may just seem too insurmountable to your wife. Where do you start? What's important? Every item has a memory or a story attached. Just the thought of what lies ahead to get to your goal is daunting. But if you really want to get this done you can – together. Do a little research first so when you present the idea to your wife, you'll have the solutions to all her objections.

If you look at the whole picture, it will be too overwhelming – almost impossible. So don't take that approach.

First, talk about the safety issue. If you want any kind of control of your future, you're better off doing this while it's still physically possible and before there's an accident, like a fall, which will force a lifestyle change.

Take one room, one closet and one drawer at a time. Separate your piles into items to distribute, donations, garbage and keepers. Take a photo of that Grade 2 report card or the finger painting, and store many of the memories on a computer. One of your grandkids can help with that. Make it fun – offer them an incentive to help. They'll feel good about it and you'll enjoy spending extra time together.

There are professional companies that can help. You're not alone with this daunting task, but first you both have to admit you want to move.

Second, you have to be realistic about the work ahead, and third, ask or pay for help. Write down your plan and make sure each step can be executed. Create a rule, such as if you haven't seen, used or touch something in a year, out it goes! Give yourselves a daily quota and stick to it. It took a lifetime to accumulate all of your stuff, and it will take time to downsize, but you'll get through this if you keep your eye on the prize: moving to a newer, more manageable lifestyle.

Dear Ella,

One friend fails to tell me about singles parties and another "good " friend fails to do me favours when I ask. Both gals are eager to contact me, though, to listen to their problems. I've always been a good ear and consider myself a good friend, but I'm disappointed in them and feel resentful. I'm considering cutting them both loose, as I just want sincere friendship with people who have my back and look out for me.

Disappointed

Dear Disappointed

Loyalty and friendship go hand in hand. If a friendship is one-sided, it isn't really a friendship. You have come across two gals with whom you have that kind of relationship.

First, look at yourself objectively. Are your "favours" realistic or are they a burden? Are your expectations of what you consider friendship too high? The way it stands now, you don't feel the friendship scale is balanced, and if these two people are in fact close, you should be able to have that discussion. It's not easy, but it may be a good investment in the health of your relationship with them.

Ultimately, this is your decision. If you feel you want to invest the time and emotional energy to fix things, then go for it. Right now, you feel resentful, so there's no option of leaving the situation the way it is.

Some people are just more emotionally draining than others. They don't mean to be, nor do they realize they behave that way. Some even try to listen to your problems, but really are only biding their time till they can jump in and turn the attention back to themselves. It doesn't make them bad people, maybe just a bit needy.

I understand you're getting frustrated and probably feel a little used. Don't give up too quickly. Good friends are precious and are worth the effort.

Be prepared, though: you may be surprised to hear something about yourself you were not aware of either.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, email: ellacjn@gmail.com. Ella is not a professional counsellor. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

Get inspired in the kitchen

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

Are you bored with making the same recipes every week? Are you looking for ways to get inspired in the kitchen? Look no further. Estee Kafra's latest cookbook, *Cooking Inspired: Bringing Creativity and Passion Back into the Kitchen*, features more than 200 creative recipes and fabulous full-colour photographs. Many of the recipes are from her website, www.KosherScoop.com, one of the fastest-growing websites for kosher recipes, cooking articles and cooking videos. Her business partner, Dassi Slater, is in charge of ensuring that their website runs efficiently and smoothly.

Cooking Inspired features a collection of more than 200 creative, triple-tested recipes, plus kitchen tips and ideas that will help keep you inspired. There are more than 100 gluten-free and Passover recipes. You'll find amazing appetizers, dips and spreads, beautiful brunch dishes, hearty homemade breads, nourishing soups, creative salads, fabulous fish recipes, marvelous main courses for holidays or every day, scrumptious side dishes, plus a variety of delectable desserts, cookies and bars.

Kafra's recipes include traditional kosher classics as well as creative, trendy dishes for those cooks who are more adventurous: Squash Pear Soup, Roasted Vegetable Shakshouka, Spinach, Mandarin and Almond Salad, Simple Sesame Glazed Fish, Slow-Cooked English Ribs or Spare Ribs, Fruity Moroccan Chicken, Best Burgers Ever, Honey Balsamic Rice, Onion-Noodle Kugel, Marble Pound Cake, Chocolate Babke, Sweet Squash Muffins, Decadent Halva Ice Cream Cake, Almond Toffee Squares and Jazzed-Up Bread Pudding.

Cooking Inspired also features recipes from several well-known cookbook authors and chefs, including Daphna Rabinovitch, Paula Shoyer, Levana Kirschenbaum, David Blum, Sam Kanner and myself.

Estee Kafra is very artistic and an extremely talented food photographer – she did her own photography for the book. This is her third cookbook. When I recently interviewed Kafra, we discussed her passion for preparing beautiful, delicious food and the simple things that inspired her in the kitchen.

When I asked her why she decided to write *Cooking Inspired*, she replied: "It's very important for me to inspire people to get into the kitchen and cook. I want them to think outside of the box. The recipes in *Cooking Inspired* are simple to make and taste terrific. These are the dishes that I love to cook for my family and friends. I found I was cooking 'safe' meals for my kids, meals that I knew they would eat and that wouldn't cause too much grumbling. I knew that something had to change. I planted my herb garden and got my kids involved. I talked to them about all the amazing ingredients that are available to us."

She continued: "The world around us inspires me. In order to make the most of the world we live in, we need to open our hearts and our minds to the inspiration all around us, to the myriad of experiences and items that can shape our everyday lives. Food is so central to our religion. Friday night is one of the highlights of the Jewish week. Here are some of my favourite dishes that I love to serve for Shabbat, simple classics but with a creative, contemporary twist. That's cooking inspired!"

MAPLE ROAST

Kafra said, when her friend Rachelli came by with this roast after she had her son Chaim, she was positive that she had put chocolate in it. "Chocolate is always on my mind and the roast's sweet scent with rich tones of flavour all but convinced me. (Did I mention that I was a chocoholic?) Alas, I blamed my inability to detect the inclusion of maple syrup and soy sauce on my post-partum status, but based on the success of this recipe, I would have to guess this was one of the best baby gifts I ever received. A great recipe is the kind of present you use over and over again.

1 brisket or brick roast (about 3-4 lb.)
3 tbsp. Dijon mustard
2 onions, sliced
2 sweet potatoes, cut into large chunks
1 cup red baby potatoes, cut in half
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/3 cup soy sauce

Preheat oven to 350. Spread the Dijon mustard over the sides and top of the roast.

Arrange the onions in the bottom of a Dutch oven. Top with the sweet and baby potatoes. Place the meat on top of the potatoes.

Sprinkle the salt and pepper evenly over the meat and potatoes. Stir together the maple syrup and soy sauce in a small bowl. Pour over the meat. Cover the Dutch oven and bake for 2 1/2 hours. Let cool. Chill overnight.

Slice the meat, return to the pot with the vegetables. Reheat in a 250-degree oven until warmed through. Makes 12 servings.

JAZZED-UP BREAD PUDDING

Kafra said she is "so excited about this recipe. There is something so rustic and enticing about bread pudding (especially when there is a whole challah left over from Shabbat to use). I incorporate unusual flavours, like orange and cardamom, and even the most conservative of my guests loved the combination.

1 medium challah
5 large eggs
1 cup + 3 tbsp. granulated sugar
1/2 cup oil
1 pkg (3.3 oz) instant vanilla pudding
4 Granny Smith/Gala apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
1 tbsp. cinnamon
3/4 tsp. ground cardamom
2 tsp. grated orange zest
1/2 cup raisins or dried cherries

Peel or cut away the crust from the challah. Tear the challah into large pieces and soak in a large bowl of water for 30 minutes. Discard the water. Squeeze out any remaining water by pushing the wet challah against a colander.

Preheat the oven to 350. Grease a 13x9-in. baking pan (or grease 16 4-oz. ramekins).

Transfer the challah to a large bowl. Add the eggs, 1 cup of the sugar, oil and pudding mix, mixing well.

Stir in the apples, spices, orange zest and raisins. Transfer the mixture to the prepared pan or ramekins. Sprinkle with the remaining 3 tbsp. of sugar.

Bake in the centre of the preheated oven for 1 hour or until golden. Serve with warm pancake syrup or maple syrup. Makes 16 servings

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue has an exciting and challenging opportunity for a dynamic and enthusiastic

YOUTH PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Job Purpose: Implement and oversee the organization and administration of all aspects of Synagogue youth programming. This will include overseeing, staffing, leading, supervising and running programs/activities.

You will use your leadership, strategic and program planning skills and experience to engage, retain and recruit children ages 6 months to teens (up to grade 12), young professionals (22-30 years old) & Young Families (with children ages 0 to 10 years old).

You will be responsible for developing innovative and creative programs that are educational and contain Jewish components. Other responsibilities include:

- Managing part-time staff and volunteers in the delivery of youth programmes
- Communicating with parents on a regular basis
- Developing appropriate and engaging programming for young professionals and young families
- Developing & implementing high quality weekly Shabbat, Jewish holiday and other programs for youth oriented synagogue events
- Marketing and advertising programs through social media and other creative routes

As an integral part of the Synagogue staff team, you will work closely with volunteers from all arms of the synagogue including the Synagogue's Youth Council as well with the Clergy and other Synagogue professional staff.

The applicant must possess a Bachelor's Degree in a related field of study, a good knowledge of Judaism and be comfortable working in a traditional Conservative synagogue environment.

If you are a committed individual with a proven track record working with youth, young families and young professionals, possess strong leadership skills and high energy, and can demonstrate an ability to engage this demographic in synagogue life, please forward your resume by e-mail to pearl@bebyorg, in confidence by February 28, 2014.

Only those applicants invited to an interview will be contacted.

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Friend's 'little sister' becomes his wife

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

For Kayla Goldrich Bernick and Josh Bernick, it might not have been love at first sight but it definitely turned into more happiness than either of them ever dreamed.

Josh, 25, had known Kayla for years before they started dating – he was good friends with her older brother, was often at her house hanging out with him and spending Shabbat dinners. "I think he may have been using my family to get close to me," laughed Kayla.

After years knowing her as his friend's little sister, he hoped there might be something more there. "I probably asked her out a billion times before she finally said yes to me," said Josh.

"Once she finally did agree to go out with me, it was just the best decision, hopefully, she's ever made in her life, and the best decision I ever made was to keep going. We've been together for four years and every day is way better than the last day."

His persistence paid off. Once they were together, they both said they knew they had found something special. "He was literally the nicest person I've ever met in my entire life. He just genuinely wants everyone around him to be happy," said Kayla. Because they were friends first, it didn't take long before they entered a comfortable stage in their relationship.

"We're just happy to be in each other's company," she said. "We always settled into that quite early and I think that's why marriage has been so easy for us."

The proposal was carefully planned, down to the last detail – but it almost didn't go off as planned. "I made it super hard for him," said Kayla.

"I was at school and he messaged me and said come over when you have your break, but it was a snow storm. Then he said he'd cook me lunch and I said I'm coming," she recalled.

"I drove over, opened the door, there was music playing, and yellow rose petals leading to the first door – yellow is my favourite colour. The first door said 'open me' and in the kitchen was a collage of all the fun things we've done together, hung from the ceiling on these yellow streamers and pieces of yellow cardboard. Then there were rose petals on the floor leading to the table, with an envelope that said 'read me.' I read this note that he wrote for me that was really sweet. And then it said to go to the next door. On the door were pictures of us and it said 'open me.'

"So I opened the final door and Josh was kneeling there in his freshly pressed tux on the floor with a ring in his hand and a bouquet of yellow flowers. And he said 'will you marry me?' I said after all that I will."

They were married Oct. 14, 2013 and said the past few months have been the best of their lives. "Somebody went up to Josh the other day and said honestly we've never seen Kayla so happy," she said.

Although they're both very busy –Kayla is finishing law school and Josh is in his first year of medical school – they make sure their priorities are making each other happy every day.

"I've only been married for four months but the best advice is to make sure your wife is always happy. If you go the extra mile to make sure she's happy, you're going to have a very strong marriage," he said.

Kayla Goldrich Bernick and Josh Bernick

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Longtime friendship turns to romance

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

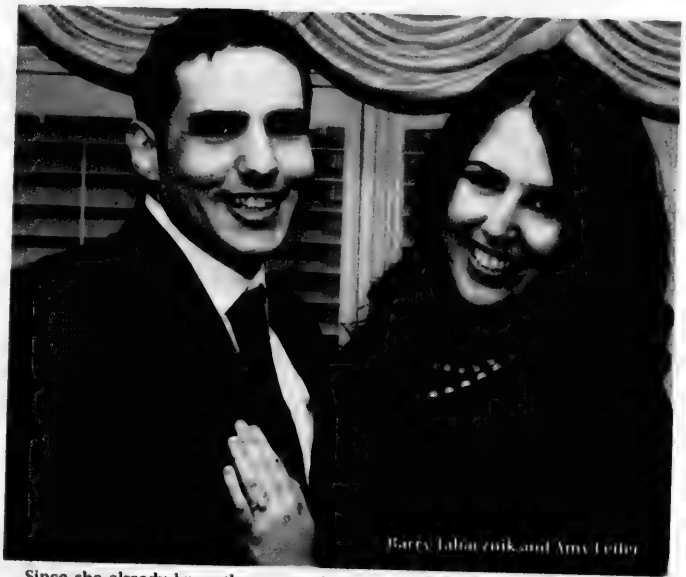
It's not always easy keeping a long distance relationship alive, but for Amy Leifer and Barry Tabacznik, it was definitely worth it – they got engaged this past December after dating for two years, and plan to marry in June.

Leifer and Tabacznik had met as teenagers but never pursued each other as a romantic interest until years later.

"We always knew each other and one day we just started talking and then we started to go out. It was very natural the way it happened," said Leifer, 26. For part of the time they were dating, Tabacznik was in school in Winnipeg while Leifer was in Toronto, so he would often plan romantic surprises for her.

"He would always do small things for me. One time he sent me a bouquet of flowers when he was away in school. The front desk said these are for you and I was like where did these come from? I was really surprised. He's very spontaneous," she said.

After over a year of dating, she said they both knew they were ready to take the next step. "We just knew. It was a good time in our lives. We could be able to start a life together. It was just a matter of time to propose," she said.


Barry Tabacznik and Amy Leifer

Since she already knew the proposal was coming soon, Tabacznik tried to throw her off the trail. "For two weeks before he proposed, he always had a box with him. I totally freaked out and I didn't know what he was doing. I was so confused. So he was very sneaky," she said.

Finally, one Sunday morning he called and said he had a problem at work and he had to go in – even though they had plans to spend the day together. "I said do you need me to come in and help you and he said yes. He knew I would offer. I get ready and head down there. I go in and I start to hear music and I see he has flower petals on the floor going up to the desk and a big present wrapped," she said.

"I knew the present was this big dog we had seen at Costco, and I was joking and I said if you need an idea for Chanukah, you can get this dog for me. I'm a dog lover. It's a huge dog like you'd win from Canada's Wonderland. Then I turned around to look at the dog again and in the mouth of the dog was the ring. He gets down on one knee and he says this whole sweet thing and says will you marry and I say yes – I didn't even let him finish the question, I was so excited."

They're looking forward to celebrating with their friends and family, especially those coming in from out of town, at their wedding in June.

"I'm excited to start a home together, leaving the nest and building our own nest," said Tabacznik, 29 "And having Amy test all the foods I'm going to cook for her."

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Nothing more romantic than coming home, say Canadian olim

Jennifer Tzivia MacLeod
Special to the CJN

There's no place like home to celebrate an anniversary, but for the many Canadians living in Israel (25,000, according to estimates quoted by Prime Minister Stephen Harper on his recent visit), Israel has become home – and a place to find and establish new anniversary traditions. Or, in the case of my husband and I, who made aliyah with our two youngest kids last August, a place where an anniversary can fall by the wayside in the overwhelming *balagan* of establishing a new life.

It wasn't supposed to be that way. The Hebrew date of our wedding anniversary falls on the second day of the month of Shvat, easy to remember because schools and kindergartens are all busy gearing up for Tu b'Shvat. Still, the date came and went, and nothing happened. We're still waiting, searching for an opportunity to celebrate.

With our move here, of course, we lost our free babysitters back in Toronto. But it's not just about the money. It is more about networking, finding someone we like and trust enough to babysit.

Isolation is common during most couples' first years in Israel, although organizations like Nefesh b'Nefesh do their best to create social interactions with other English speakers. Ironically, that means it's probably even more important to commemorate special events in a wonderful way.

"We probably won't be celebrating it officially this year," says my friend Rachel, who also moved to Israel last summer, leaving behind in-laws who babysat. "Maybe next year, we'll try to get a babysitter, go out to dinner and a movie."

That's always been our default anniversary celebration, too – the dinner-date, maybe with a movie. With four children and busy lives, it's always been very special to just take an evening off and gaze at each other, ideally over a romantically flickering candle, but we're not too picky.

Rachel is more philosophical than I am. "The romantic… part for us is that we're alive; we didn't kill each other." She's only half-joking. "When you look back over what you've done… you've moved to Israel with a spouse. The fact that we're still together, speaking to each other, loving each other deeply… it's very powerful."

Of course, there is hope over the horizon, for both of us.

Veteran Toronto oleh Stephen Epstein, who made aliyah in 2005 with his wife Alison and two young children, used a special anniversary and milestone birthday in November 2012 as an excuse to join in the Israeli national obsession and travel to Asia, in their case, to India with their daughters. "Israelis love to travel," Stephen says. "In Canada, one can drive 1,000 miles to reach the Manitoba border. Here it takes less than two hours to get to the end of Highway Six [a new road connecting northern Israel with the centre of the country].

A highlight of the visit for Stephen and Alison was a trip to the Elijah Rock, thought to be the location of a visit from Elijah the Prophet, considered sacred by both Bene Israel Jews and local Hindus.

For newer olim, like Rachel and myself, with travel generally made impossible by young children, ulpan studies, or renting an apartment, we have to find our romance in less grand gestures, and sometimes, just in the wonder of being in this holy land in the first place.

"One of the things we do every anniversary," Rachel told me, "is we review the last year, how have we done, how we are as a couple. We look back at what we've been through and where we are now. This past year, we returned to Israel. We were married in Israel, had intense experiences in Israel… and now we've brought our family back home."

Definitely better than "we didn't kill each other." I look at my husband, across the table here on a Sunday morning workday in our tiny Haifa apartment, listening to the traffic and birds chirping outside, seeing the gently warm sunlight, and realize – we're home.

There's no candle in the middle of this table, no glatt kosher meal served by waiters, and soon enough, we'll have to go pick up our kids from school. But in the meantime, we don't need to go anywhere else or do anything else. We have given ourselves the ultimate anniversary present this year. After two millennia, there's nothing more romantic than coming home.

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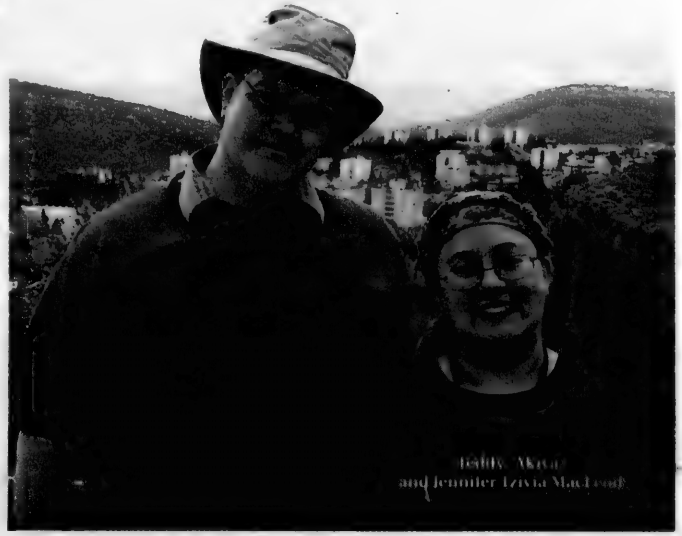


The delicate art of chupah music

Binyamin Kagedan sings under the chupah.

Binyamin Kagedan
JNS.org

The hall has been booked, the dress fitted, the flowers selected, the food tasted, the photographer approved, the bands auditioned, the rings engraved, and the honeymoon suite reserved. With all the material components of the wedding in place, the focus now turns to the intangibles. What makes a Jewish wedding truly moving and memorable is not what is seen, but what is heard. The emotional tone of the ceremony won't be set by the size of the bride's bouquet, but by a heartfelt blessing, a unique vow, or a special song.

That's where I come in.

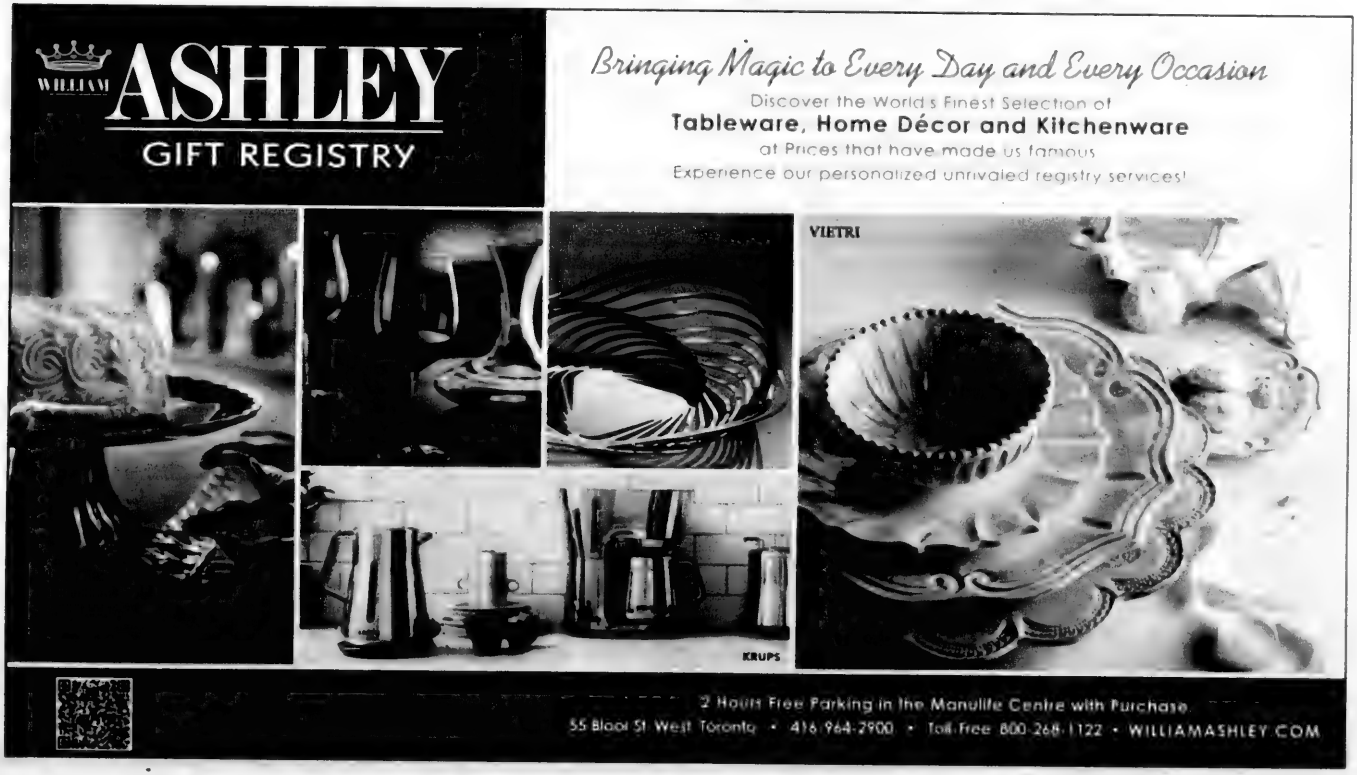
A musician and singer by hobby, I have had the happy fortune of being asked to sing under the chupah at the weddings of most of my best friends, as well as close family members. The Jewish wedding ceremony is rich in opportunities for powerful emotional expression, especially in its music. Songs about holy love punctuate and enliven each step of the process: the groom's entrance, then the bride's; the last of the seven blessings; the breaking of the glass. The quality and combination of the tunes used for these moments lend each and every chupah a unique emotional texture.

I view my role in these weddings not just as cantor or entertainer, but as consultant. In order to create a "score" that channels the couple's individual personality, I provide them with a range of options for each musical moment, and give ideas and tips on how to fit the music into the complex choreography of their chupah.

Some couples like the more elegiac melodies, while others prefer a more cheerful ambience. Some include pop music in their ceremony, others keep to the traditional Hebrew verse. Certain brides want guitar accompaniment, others request pure voice or prefer that I sing with the band they hired. A few grooms will break the glass underfoot while I am still singing. "If I forget thee o Jerusalem," but most will wait until after the last note, letting the sound of the shattering signal the eruption of "Mazal Tov!" from the crowd.

Chupah music is an art, and like all good art, it comes together in the details. Attention to detail is essential to creating a seamless esthetic experience for the bride, groom, and assembled guests, and for my part, is a gesture of love and dedication toward the marrying couple. I begin rehearsing weeks before the event, nailing down the perfect tempo, finding the optimal key for my vocal range and making certain that I can comfortably hit the lowest and highest notes. When the specifics are set, I get in touch with the band leader to bring him or her up to speed. Come wedding day, I drag the keyboardist out of the smorgasbord to run through the set with me in person, just to be sure that nothing is left to chance.

There are few acts more gratifying than to enhance the sweetness of the wedding day for dear friends. I got to experience one of them recently, as I designed and performed (along with my new sister-in-law) the vocals for my own chupah. Singing to my glowing bride as she circled around me seven times, I felt as though all the time and care I had put into every previous chupah performance, all of the logistical and esthetic expertise I had accumulated, all of it was meant to prepare me for that moment, for her. And though the October weather was perfectly unseasonable, the hanging candles perfectly placed, and her dress perfectly tailored, it was the music that made the night so perfect.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SARS-delayed wedding has happy outcome

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

Andy Warhol predicted that everyone would be famous for 15 minutes. And for Michelle Markowitz, 36, and Brad Goldsmith, 37, their moment of fame came on Memorial Day weekend 10 years ago.

They had planned their Toronto wedding for that long weekend in May, to accommodate the many out-of-towners who were travelling from the United States. Goldsmith, a financial analyst, is from the Detroit area. While May 25 was a convenient date for many of the American guests, the timing turned out to be less than perfect: Toronto happened to be in the throes of the SARS epidemic.

By the time that weekend was over, the Markowitz-Goldsmith wedding made headlines worldwide. Their story was featured in dailies across North America and as far away as Great Britain. The couple was even interviewed on CNN and later they appeared on Canada AM.

Markowitz and Goldsmith met in 1996 at Camp Tamarack in Michigan, a Jewish communal camp serving the Detroit area. They carried on a long-distance relationship until Goldsmith proposed and moved to Toronto.

He recounted how many of his friends and family in the United States were apprehensive about coming to Toronto for the wedding because of the SARS epidemic, but the travel ban had been lifted by May. On the Thursday before the wedding some of the out-of-towners began to arrive.

Markowitz, who had recently graduated as an occupational therapist, had found a locum position at St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital. While Goldsmith was with his family downtown at the Sheraton Hotel, Markowitz says she got some devastating news. "They announced that there was an outbreak of SARS at St. John's."

Goldsmith says they were expecting 130 guests from out of town. "I was at the hotel handing out visitors' baskets – pre-wedding stuff – and then I got this call from my father-in-law. He said, 'You have to come home right away.'

"I didn't know what had happened, but I could hear Michelle crying in the background. My dad said I turned white. I told him, 'They're ordering me back to the house.'

"I had no clue what had happened... As I drove home, I wondered if someone had died. Or maybe it was the dress. Had I turned on the car radio I would have heard. The new outbreak of SARS was all over the news."

Brad Goldsmith and Michelle Markowitz

Markowitz says they weren't sure if the wedding had to be cancelled. Guests were still arriving, but the family had not yet heard from the hospital. "We didn't sleep all night.

"My father-in-law said, 'Let's keep it quiet'," recalls Goldsmith. "He didn't want to start any mass hysteria in the family. He didn't want people to panic."

But the family knew they didn't have a lot of time, he adds. "You can't wait until 3 p.m. to cancel a dinner at 6 p.m."

The next day, he accompanied Markowitz and her mother to the public health office. "My mother-in-law went into the office, and Michelle and I waited outside.

"When her mother came down from the meeting she handed Michelle the SARS mask. 'You're not allowed to be in public,' she told her. 'You have to go home. You're quarantined.'"

"It was very a traumatic event," says Markowitz.

"As she walked down the street wearing the mask people on the sidewalk parted from us like the Red Sea," said Goldsmith.

"My mother-in-law told us the wedding had to be cancelled. The two of them walked down the street together crying."

In the meantime there were many calls to be made, he said. "It's a lot of work to cancel a wedding. They made a telephone tree like we do on snow days at school."

There were some arrivals from the west coast, but one uncle was contacted in time to get off the plane while it was still on the tarmac.

Goldsmith says he is known to be quite a kibbitzer, and so when he called his friends about the cancellation, they thought he was joking.

"They didn't believe me until they heard Michelle crying in the background."

Everybody involved in the wedding was very sympathetic, says Markowitz. "The synagogue [Beth Sholom] was terrific. They told us to book another date right away so we would feel better."

The caterer charged them cost for the food as did the florist, and they were able to roll over other deposits for the new wedding day, which was set for the fall.

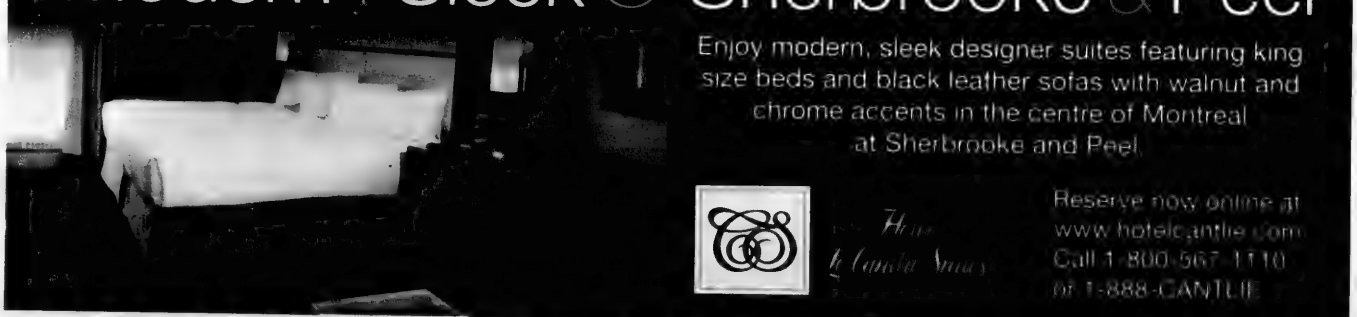
"We took the honeymoon we planned in Bora Bora, but it turned out to be the rainy season," Markowitz laughed.

Next month the couple will be celebrating their 10th anniversary. They are trying to plan a special getaway, but life is more complicated now that they are the parents of three young sons ages 6, 5 and 2. Markowitz has also switched professions. Today she's an optometrist.

Their November wedding was a great party, the couple say, but their SARS experience, which they call "Black Sunday" will always be part of their family lore. In fact, their wedding video begins with their CNN interview with Jason Caroll.

Goldsmith muses how months before the wedding a friend of his from New York had suggested that he buy wedding insurance. "When I told my father-in-law about it, he laughed. He said, 'Brad, are you planning to run away?'

"If I would have bought the insurance, I would have been quite the hero."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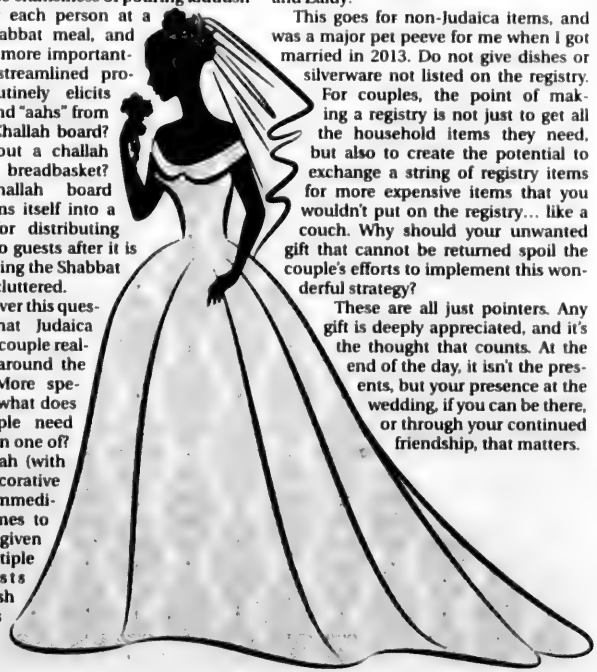
Gift etiquette for Jewish weddings

Jacob Kamaras
JNS.org

Not another challah board! That's the collective cry heard 'round the Jewish world when newlyweds receive a Judaica gift they already possess. Don't be that friend – follow my simple do's and don'ts for Jewish wedding gifts.

There are inventive spins on Judaica items that are sure to leave a more lasting impression than their traditional counterparts. Kiddush cup? How about a kiddush cup fountain instead? It includes a centre cup as well as eight to 12 matching small cups, and when the reciter of kiddush pours the wine from the centre cup into the base of the fountain, the wine trickles down into the small cups. This avoids the clumsiness of pouring kiddush wine for each person at a large Shabbat meal, and perhaps more importantly, the streamlined process routinely elicits "oohs" and "aahs" from guests. Challah board? How about a challah board breadbasket? This challah board transforms itself into a basket for distributing challah to guests after it is cut, keeping the Shabbat table uncluttered.

Mull over this question: What Judaica does the couple really need around the house? More specifically, what does the couple need more than one of? A mezuzah (with a decorative case) immediately comes to mind, given the multiple doorposts in Jewish homes calling for one.



Even more practical –and more memorable – is providing the glass cup that the groom will break with his foot under the chuppah, along with a broken wedding glass mezuzah, whose case includes room for those sentimental shards.

The couple will likely get multiple challah boards, challah covers, menorahs, seder plates, and the like. Don't join the fray. Be original. Now, I admit, it would be quite unfortunate if everyone followed my advice and the couple ended up with none of these hallowed Judaica fixtures.

The couple's parents or other close relatives may purchase them silver Shabbat candlesticks or a kiddush cup, or the bride and groom may have had these items passed down in their family over time. Don't try and compete with Bubbie and Zaidy!

This goes for non-Judaica items, and was a major pet peeve for me when I got married in 2013. Do not give dishes or silverware not listed on the registry. For couples, the point of making a registry is not just to get all the household items they need, but also to create the potential to exchange a string of registry items for more expensive items that you wouldn't put on the registry... like a couch. Why should your unwanted gift that cannot be returned spoil the couple's efforts to implement this wonderful strategy?

These are all just pointers. Any gift is deeply appreciated, and it's the thought that counts. At the end of the day, it isn't the presents, but your presence at the wedding, if you can be there, or through your continued friendship, that matters.

Gemologist elaborates on diamonds from here and abroad

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

The sight of sparkling diamonds in a jeweller's showcase is bound to attract attention. However, to truly appreciate the finished product, it pays to learn about diamonds from the ground up, said gemologist, Odile Civitello.

Civitello conducted a PowerPoint presentation at one of the fall/winter lectures at the Cote St. Luc Eleanor London Public Library.

A certified appraiser with more than 20 years experience, Civitello is the founding director of the Montreal School of Gemology (École Gemmologie de Montréal).

She has written articles for gemology magazines and journals, and she is certified by the GIA, Gem-A, CGA, and CJA.

Civitello elaborated on the formation and transformation of diamonds, discussed diamond quality and criteria, and expounded on Canada's diamond mines. Diamonds are sold now with a quality lab report, she said.

"Diamonds are found much deeper [in the ground] than most gems," she said, providing background information on the their evolution and history.

She also showed slides of Canadian mines, such as Kimberlite Pipe in the Northwest Territories. Other Canadian diamond mines are located in Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Baffin Island.

Mine discovery is difficult and it took geologists 10 years of checking materials before finding the first Canadian diamond mine in 1998, she said.

Before attempting to exploit, a geologist must make sure the expedition is feasible. The value of a mine is based on the life span yield in karats of the rough diamond. Canadian diamonds rate third place in the world. Botswana is deemed in first place for gem quality and Russia comes second.

Civitello reviewed the cutting process and underlined the importance of precision to achieve brilliance. Conversely, she noted some consumers now lean toward rough diamonds. A diamond can mark any other stone.

There are not too many cutting factories in the world, she said, and most diamonds are cut in India. Sometimes highly skilled diamond cutters will carry out the operation from beginning to end.

Canada does have a few diamond cutters and they tend to cut bigger diamonds and special cuts, she said. Canadian cutting factories are located in Yellowknife, Vancouver and Sudbury.

The price of diamonds is based on the four Cs: cut, carat, colour, and clarity. Diamonds should be kept sparkling clean. Civitello suggested a simple solution. Immerse the diamond in a bowl of soapy water and let it sit overnight. Use a mild dish detergent. The next morning, take a toothbrush and lightly brush the stone under the setting, rinse and dry the stone.

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FANTASTIC JAN-APRIL PROMOTIONS AVAILABLE

Dishes in your signature style

Anita Szabadi-Gottesman
Special to The CJN

We have come a long way from the days of yesteryear when the pewter mug, plate and spoon were used over and over again for every meal.

The Victorian age brought us to the standard place setting we see today. This includes a dinner plate, salad plate, bread plate and soup bowl. A cup and saucer or mug finish the ensemble.

All-white dinnerware remains a popular choice to setting a beautiful table.

The dinner plate measures approximately 10 inches, the salad plate ranges from four to eight inches, and the bread plate is slightly smaller. The soup bowl is the most versatile, suitable for soup, cereal, desserts and even salad, if preferred.

Whether for casual dining or more formal fair, the range of choices is at once dizzying and inspiring.

While the choices may seem overwhelming, one thing remains constant, purchasing a set of dishes, whether for everyday use or special occasions, should be a reflection of the style of the homeowner.

Choosing the type of material for the dishes is the way to begin. Evaluate your needs, and consider whether you are looking for microwave and freezer safe dishes and if they must be washed by hand or are dishwasher safe.

Bone china, an expensive choice, is made from a mixture of clay and bone ash making for durable dinnerware despite appearing slightly translucent.

Ceramic dishes are made from clay and are fired or baked providing versatility in colour and design.

Stoneware is a more durable choice, often chosen for everyday use. Stoneware is microwave safe, can withstand temperature changes, and is quite chip resistant.

Porcelain, the most expensive choice appears thin and transparent, but is very chip resistant.

Glass dishes are very decorative and dishwasher safe although they can be quite fragile. For the very busy household with lots of kitchen traffic, melamine or polycarbonate dishes may be ideal with the ubiquitous Corelle brand remaining the industry leader.

Mixing and matching various patterns and textures creates an individual signature look for the table. A plain white set can be dressed up or down for casual or more elegant entertaining combining interesting patterns or floral accents. Adding varying shapes creates interest such as mixing a square soup bowl with a round dinner plate. Dressing up your table adds to the ambience and welcoming feel of a meal.

Mixing and matching different colours and shapes adds interest and creates a signature style for your table.

[Anita Szabadi-Gottesman photos]

Start with a set of 12 place settings. Popular priced dinnerware is most often sold in sets of four. When purchasing a more expensive set, pieces can be collected individually over a longer period of time but make sure the manufacturer will continue to produce the dinnerware. If buying from an outlet store, complete the purchase all at once. Serving sets including salad servers, serving spoons and the like are a nice addition along with large serving plates. Purchase at least one pitcher to complete the set.

To keep your dishes looking their best and to minimize wear and tear, Martha Stewart points to the correct way of stacking the dishwasher:

Heavy duty dishes should be placed on the bottom rack and delicate dishes on the upper rack. Dry dishes on the lowest temperature setting, and always use the recommended amount of detergent. Too much can leave dishes streaky, and too little can result in unclean dishes.

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Coffee makers serve as great gifts for newlyweds

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

Coffee makers always make a good gift, whether or not the bride and groom drink the beverage.

As hosts, the couple will encounter numerous occasions when their family and friends appreciate the opportunity to socialize over a cup of coffee.

According to the Coffee Association of Canada, coffee is the preferred adult beverage in this country. The only exception is tap water.

A 2012 association survey indicates 65 per cent of adults consume coffee daily. The bulk of consumption takes place in people's homes, and Canadians drink 2.6 cups of coffee daily.

Although traditional manual percolators and drip makers, which are placed on an oven burner, still exist, they are no longer the norm. More than two decades ago, they were replaced by automatic, self-contained multi-cup coffee makers.

In recent years, single-serve pod coffee makers surpassed expectations and now take the lead. Pod coffee makers and accessories are accessible in supermarkets and online throughout the nation.

"In the old days, many commuters lacked time to linger over the stove every morning to oversee coffee preparation, dispose grains and clean up," says kitchenware guru Linda Feldman.

Before retiring several years ago, Feldman devoted more than two decades to managing the houseware section in a department store. An astute consumer, she continues to keep abreast of recent trends.

"Personally, I've witnessed a change of routine in many young households over the past few years. Couples tell me how they used to make a pit stop for coffee on the way to work. No doubt, many still do, but others have discovered the simplicity and convenience of owning single-serve pod coffee makers. It takes a minute to prepare a fresh cup of steaming coffee. Now, they can head straight to work and save money."

In addition to the pod devices, kitchenware departments stock numerous diverse multi-cup coffee makers. Consumers can produce fresh, piping hot dependable brews.

Single-serve coffee makers use pods, discs, cups or cartridges as primary at-home preparation devices. The number of homes equipped with newly acquired single-serve devices rose from six per cent in 2010 to 15 per cent by the end of 2012.

Attitudes bode well for future success of the pod format according to recent Canadian *Consumer Reports*. Single-serve is hailed for providing a quick, convenient and easy fix. On the down side, critics report the brew, though acceptable, is mediocre even when incorporating Colombian or comparable coffee.

Three DeLonghi models topped tests in a recent *Consumer Report* evaluation. In addition, a Nescafe Dolce Gusto Genco model edged out two other picks from the same brand. The evaluation took note of LED bars, and remarked on the brew strength and the prompt that indicates water is hot. New coffeemakers often need a break-in cycle, and some need a water-only cycle before brewing coffee the first time. Some machines work with a limited menu of coffees exclusively from a brand, whereas others are compatible with some 250 coffees from multiple brands.

Consumers are advised to examine the device to see if the water reservoir can be detached and brought to the sink for fill up. Check to see if the device is fitted with a drip tray to adjust cup height and a built-in water filter. Coffee production speed is important for couples running out to work. One minute for the first cup and not quite a minute for the second cup is a time saver. Temperature is important. The goal is to serve and savour a steaming hot brew.

Multi-cup coffee makers – drip, percolator or other devices, are preferable for serving a small group. Furthermore, couples who want more control over the brew strength and opt for two giant-size mugs each at a sitting may find the multi-maker more convenient.

Using a grinder to chop the beans is a coffee connoisseur's method of choice. When checking out grinders, consumers will discover some are manufactured with rotating wheels and others with blades. Both do the job. To eliminate grinding the beans, purchase packaged ground coffee.

Storing coffee is a debatable point. Numerous experts insist on keeping packaged beans or ground coffee in the freezer, whereas others simply put packages in the fridge or pantry. To ensure coffee tastes good, serve it fresh. Dispose of grains or pods immediately. Keep the coffee maker clean.

Try different blends. Darker roasts have been cooked longer and have a stronger taste than the lighter, milder varieties. A coffee blend is a combination of roasts/beans designed to give a more complex flavour. By exploring different blends, individuals will gradually find a particular favourite. For those who seek variety, check the shelves for seasoned blends, such as vanilla, amaretto, mocha, caramel, Brazil nut and chocolate.

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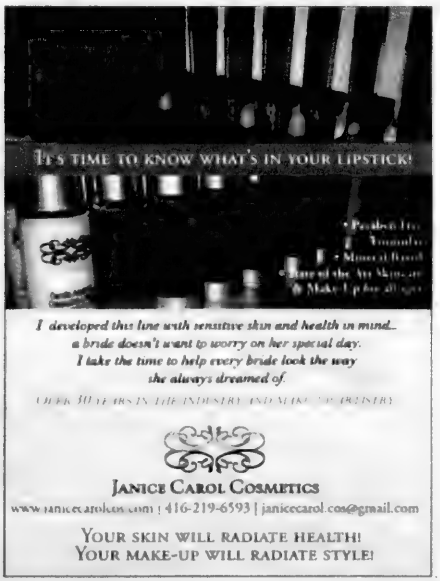
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Airport layover leads to marriage

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

Few travellers have happy memories of flight delays but Jessica "Jess" Meryl Black and Matthew "Matt" David Isaac Weinstock are the exception.

Although they were both in their 20s and had always resided in Saint-Laurent, neither was aware of the other's existence until they met at Toronto's Pearson International Airport on Dec. 17, 2007. Both had signed up for the Taglit-Birthright Israel 10-day trip.

Jess was immediately attracted to Matt. "I thought he was smart and personable," she says, adding, "I fell in love right away but I could sense he needed more time. Our relationship developed in Israel and we spent a lot of time together. We like to laugh and Matt has a dry sense of humour. We have always found lots to talk about."

Matt said, "I admired her intelligence and personality, especially the way she challenged me, but even though I found her attractive, I wasn't even thinking about settling down or marriage. We saw each other and remained friends but I was happy just going out. It wasn't until later that I realized Jess is the only one for me."

They not only share the same principles but encourage each other to pursue their respective ambitions. Matt was in engineering at Concordia University when he decided to change direction and become a pilot.

He currently holds a full-time job as a technical co-ordinator at Shaw-Direct and simultaneously continues working toward his pilot's licence.

Jess, a Concordia University graduate, majored in business administration. She loves her challenging full-time post as project manager at Zed Graphic Communications. In addition, Jess turned her fascination with cruise vacations into a sideline as an outside travel agent for cruises.

"I consider it a hobby and we chose a cruise for our honeymoon," she says. They took a three-week Mediterranean cruise and describe it as an awesome experience.

Despite busy work schedules, they always make time for each other. In addition, family and friends play an integral role in their lives.

Jess's mother and father, Serena and Jerome Black, and Matt's parents, Anne and Morris Weinstock, reside in Saint-Laurent.

Jess is close with her younger sister, Alex, who is currently pursuing her master's degree in nursing.

Earlier in their relationship, Matt and Jess bought a condominium in Saint-Laurent. They adopted two kittens, Milo and Purr, which have become treasured family members.

"Our personalities complement one another," Matt said. "Jess is extremely pro-active, whereas I am more laid back. That's good because she encourages me to strive for more."

Jess said, "Matt is always calm, whereas I am more high strung and always planning projects. He has a calming effect. We're strong believers in the importance of face-to-face communication and don't depend on texting, when we have something important to discuss. A couple must protect their relationship beyond all else."

Matt surprised Jess with a marriage proposal and diamond ring a year before the wedding. She was completely unaware of his elaborate plans and dazzled by his dramatic presentation.

"The only time I ever saw him nervous was when he proposed," she says.

"My parents and sister were in on the act. When we arrived for the weekend at my family's country home, I was greeted with hundreds of twinkling lights, Beyonce belting out Halo, and a ring."

On Sept. 1, Rabbi Alan Bright, spiritual leader of Congregation Shaare Zedek, officiated at Matt and Jess's wedding. The couple was married at Chateau Vaudreuil.

"We met with Rabbi Bright several times beforehand, and Matt was delighted to discover the rabbi was an accomplished pilot. He flew with Matt a couple of times before the wedding and complimented Matt's progress."

Jess is detail oriented and Matt likes to be involved, therefore, they put a lot of work into their wedding preparations.

Jessica Black wed Matthew Weinstock, Sept. 1. (Photo courtesy of Marlon Kuhnreich)

"We personalized everything including kippas, [and had] an Appy Couple wedding app, a telephone charging station at the wedding, and flip flops for the dance floor," Jess said.

"We invited a lot of non-Jewish guests and Rabbi Bright enlightened everyone on Jewish traditions. We even printed a program book with a glossary of Jewish terms."

The couple also wanted to take advantage of Chateau Vaudreuil's outdoor amenities and grounds, so they were concerned about the weather. Fortunately, it turned out to be a beautiful weekend and everything went according to plan.

Now, Jess and Matt are in the throes of moving into a new home. A warm, gregarious couple, they value the location close to their families in Saint-Laurent. "We usually go to the family for holiday dinners but in the future we hope to host and entertain," Jess says.

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Stuffed vegetables: serving bowls are edible

Beverly Levitt
Special to The CJN

As every great chef will tell you, presentation is everything. So for a wedding shower I try to create recipes where we can keep our vegetables whole and utilize the bounty of live vessels from the garden rather than prosaic ceramic containers off the kitchen shelf.

What's more beautiful than taking a gorgeous striated kabocha, scooping out the centre, and piling back complimentary ingredients? A new and nourishing relationship is born.

What really warms my heart is when the host vegetable insists on a dramatic filling – the outside challenges the inside – in a yin-yang, sort of way. Just as a carved-out portabello mushroom container plays host to the Italian Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, kalamata olives, and flat leafed parsley, and a feisty corn kernel/red pepper mélange of black cumin, pumpkin and sesame seeds snuggles in a bright green and yellow striated kabocha; while toasted pine nuts, currants, and almonds nestle happily inside an ambrosial Vidalia onion.

Flavour synergies are restrained only by our imagination. And isn't that a wondrous lesson to teach a new bride so that she can teach her children and her children can teach their children? L'Dorvador…l'dorvador! (From generation to generation)

STUFFED ZUCCHINI

(Adapted from *La Vera Cucina* by Carlo Middione, Simon & Schuster, 1996)

1/4 oz. dried porcini mushrooms
3 large zucchini, about 6 in. long and 1 1/2 in. in diameter
1/2 cup grated Parmesan
1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs
1 large egg, beaten
1 to 2 teaspoons olive oil
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
4 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
extra olive oil as needed

Soak porcini in warm water for 15 minutes so they float at least 1 in. off of the bottom of the container. Scoop them off surface of water, squeeze well, chop fine. Strain through paper towel. (Water may be saved to use in stocks.)

Preheat oven to 400.

Simmer whole zucchini in lightly salted water for 5 minutes. Remove; cool in bowl of cold water. Split in half lengthwise, leaving stem attached. Scoop out pulp but leave enough thickness on sides and bottom to support stuffing. Chop pulp; add chopped porcini, 1/4 cup Parmesan, and remaining ingredients. Mix well.

Stuff zucchini with mixture, mounding it up, place in lightly oiled, ovenproof dish. Sprinkle with remaining cheese; bake for 30 minutes or until tops are golden and bubbly. Serve hot.

SWEET ONIONS STUFFED WITH PINE NUTS AND CURRANTS

(Adapted from *La Vera Cucina* by Carlo Middione, Simon & Schuster)

6 medium Vidalia or other sweet summer onion
4 tbsp. unsalted butter or olive oil, or less if desired
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
1/4 cup pine nuts
1/4 cup currants
1 large egg
pinch of cinnamon
small amount of freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 350. Carefully cut tops off onions, about 1/4 in. Peel onions carefully so only membrane is removed, leaving root end intact. Using a melon baller, carefully remove hearts of onions, leaving 1/2 in. shell, so that onion looks like a basket. Rub onion shells, inside and out with butter, put aside.

Chop hearts; place them into a small bowl. Add cheese, pine nuts and currants, half of the butter or oil and mix well.

In another dish beat together egg, cinnamon, and pepper. Combine with onion mixture and stuff into the onions.

Grease a small casserole, place onions in it, barely touching each other. Dot tops with butter or oil. Bake 45 minutes, or until onions are soft but not falling apart. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Continued on page B17

Sprucing up the modern simchah

Diana Burmistrovich
JNS.org

If the words kosher catering conjure up visions of bland and unhealthy food, and memories of bar and bat mitzvahs past still haunt you, remember that planning your upcoming simchah doesn't have to be a monotonous process full of seen-it-befores or tried-that-onces. With the help of creative kosher catering professionals – or by simply looking within yourself – your special day can be one of a kind.

By including yourself in the process of *creating* (not just planning) your simchah, the event itself automatically creates a more personal feeling. One way to do this is by making invitations by hand, which allows control over colour scheme, font, and design. You can make the invitation an extension of your celebration's theme or personal interests. Imbuing the invitation with your personal style makes the atmosphere both more memorable and more meaningful.

Rebecca Friedman of Asheville, N.C.-based Farmer's Daughter Catering suggests crafting your own table centrepieces as a way to infuse personality into the event's ambiance. She also mentions that many clients want to work with the party planner, rather than allowing the planner to have total control.

Others may break from the traditional style of first having a cocktail hour and then a formal dinner for weddings, or from having separate meals for adults and kids.

"When working with a client, I always ask them what they're envisioning with regards to the flow of the celebration," Ellen Vaknine, vice-president of sales and marketing for New York City's Espirit Events kosher caterer, tells *JNS.org*. .

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WEDDINGS BAR/BAT MITZVAHS NAMINGS FUNERALS

Presentation is everything

Continued from page B16

STUFFED EGGPLANT ITALIAN STYLE

1 large or 2 medium eggplants
1 sweet onion, chopped
2 large cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup red pepper, chopped
1/2 cup yellow pepper, chopped
Olive oil for sautéing
1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 tbsp. fresh chopped basil or 1 teaspoon dried
1 tbsp. fresh chopped oregano or 1 teaspoon dried
1/2 cup black olives, sliced (optional)
1 cup mozzarella cheese, grated
1/2 cup fine, dry bread crumbs
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1/2 tsp. paprika
salt and pepper to taste
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated (optional)

Halve and parboil eggplant 15 minutes. Drain. Scoop out meat carefully, so that eggplant shells remain intact.

Chop eggplant and sauté in olive oil with onion, garlic and peppers for 5-7 minutes, hashing them as they cook.

Place in bowl; mix with lemon juice, basil, oregano, olives, cheese, eggs, bread crumbs, and spices. Stuff eggplant shells, dust with Parmesan.

Place in baking dish with an inch of hot water at bottom. Bake at 350 for 30 to 40 minutes or until stuffing is tender.

STUFFED PORTOBELLO MUSHROOMS

(Adapted from *Antipasti* by Julia Della Croce, Chronicle Books, 1993)

6 large portobello mushrooms, cleaned
1 tbsp. dried bread crumbs
6 pitted kalamata olives, chopped (optional)
1 1/2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp. freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
1 tbsp. fresh Italian parsley, chopped
1 tsp. fresh or 1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, chopped
1 tsp. fresh or 1/2 tsp. fresh sage, chopped
1 clove garlic, peeled and finely chopped
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 to 2 tbsp.red wine, or as needed

Preheat oven to 400. In small bowl, remove stems and chop. Combine with all stuffing ingredients, making sure you have enough wine to keep it moist. Place mushrooms in baking dish in single layer, rub lightly with olive oil. Stuff caps, patting each into an evenly rounded mound. Sprinkle lightly with water. Pour hot water in bottom of baking dish to equal 1/2 in. Cover loosely with foil, dull side out. Bake 20 to 30 minutes until mushrooms are sizzling hot.

Kids' food at simchahs can be gourmet

Continued from page B16

Vaknine notes that for simchahs being planned for 2014, she is seeing more people "opt for the extended cocktail [hour] with passed hors d'oeuvres and stations," without having a formal sit-down dinner. That way, children, young adults, and adults have the option of spending more time together, and kids don't have to face the ubiquitous schnitzel and pigs-in-a-blanket offered at so many simchahs.

Even for the parents who do choose to have "kid food," Vaknine suggests updating the presentation with funky touches. Soup can be served in eggshell bowls, and kebob skewers can be made from bamboo.

Customizing menus to include today's culinary trends is another way to modernize an event. Friedman – who specializes in catering using only organic and local ingredients, and typically provides farm-to-table food options – notes the growing trend in using vegan, gluten-free, soy-free, and dairy-free foods as part of the simchah menu.

"Although kosher food is usually unhealthy, it is slowly getting on board with foods that are more environmentally friendly and healthier," says Friedman. "I've had a bride who grew her own herbs and greens to incorporate into my catering menu. It took a year in advance [to plan], but everyone remembered that part."

Friedman suggests looking into old family recipes that can be used as part of the catering menu. That will create a catering menu that many guests haven't seen before, and relatives will enjoy the sentiment.

Whether it is through personalizing decorations or bypassing traditional kosher fare, party planning doesn't have to be dreaded and stressful. With just a little bit of creativity, and by recognizing exactly what you want for your special day, you can make your dream simchah a reality.

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Kosher honeymoon in Prague, Czech Republic

Anita Szabadi-Gottesman
Special to The CJN

A large bronze statue of Franz Kafka sits in a small plaza on Dusni Street just a short walk from the old town square of Prague. The statue looms over its many admirers and serves as a welcoming ambassador to the historic Jewish Quarter of Prague.

Appropriately located near Kafka's home, the tall black sculpture measuring over 12 feet, straddles the entrance to the fascinating Jewish quarter of modern day Prague. Regarded by many as one of the most influential authors of the 20th century through his existential writings, Kafka, a Jew, is honoured a few short steps from his home, from which he authored his many books and short stories.

Six synagogues and the Jewish Town Hall make up the Jewish Quarter or ghetto area. Just behind the statue sits the Spanish Synagogue majestic in its Moorish design, which was completed in the late 19th century. Classical concerts are held in the synagogue known for its beauty and favourable acoustics.

Nearby, the Old-New Synagogue (*Altneu Shul*), dating from approximately 1280, is the oldest preserved synagogue in central QEurope. The synagogue, with its original furnishings and intricate exterior stonework, is used today for services as well as bar and bat mitzvahs and other simchahs by Prague's Jewish population, numbering approximately 5,000, which includes about 2,000 Israelis.

A twelve-foot bronze statue of Czech Jewish author Franz Kafka welcomes visitors to Prague's historic Jewish quarter. ***(Anita Szabadi-Gottesman photos)***

Tourists flock to the Jewish Quarter of Prague to visit the well-preserved historical Jewish sites.

The Maisel Synagogue, no longer in use, shows a detailed history of the Jews from the region from the communities' founding in the 10th century through to the 18th century. The Pinkas Synagogue, which dates from 1535, serves as a memorial to the Czech Jews who perished in the Holocaust. The walls are inscribed with their names, numbering more than 80,000 people.

Ironically, the scope of Jewish life which has been preserved in Prague stemmed from Adolf Hitler, who chose to keep the artifacts and synagogues along with several buildings intact throughout the war as a legacy to the Jewish race he attempted to destroy. Many other Jewish valuables from various occupied countries were brought to Prague, and are on display in the Klausen Synagogue, Ceremonial Hall and the Robert Guttman Gallery.

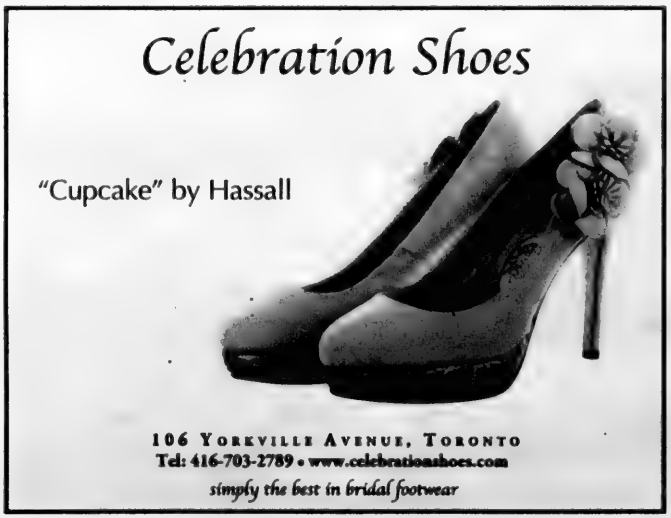
The solemn sounds of prayer resound daily from individuals surrounding the tomb of revered Rabbi Judah Loew who died in 1609. Each day, Jews from around the world come to pay their respects and pray graveside. He is most famous for bringing the legend of the Golem to life. The mysterious Golem was said to come out at nightfall and protect the Jews of Prague of the time. Rabbi Loew was laid to rest in the Old Jewish Cemetery, the oldest Jewish cemetery in Europe.

As Jews lived in the ghetto area for generations, there are thought to be more than 150,000 Jews buried in the small graveyard. Headstones of various generations stand intertwined as graves were piled one on top of the other 10 to 12 layers deep. The oldest grave in the cemetery is thought to belong to Rabbi Avigdor Kara, an influential Prague rabbi in the late 14th century.

Today's Jewish quarter has seen a complete facelift where not far from the historic synagogue area are beautifully appointed apartment buildings along tree covered avenues built in Parisian style. Upscale retailers such as Prada and Breitling, amongst rows of others, line the streets where upscale shoppers rub elbows with tourists flocking to see the Jewish sites nearby.

Keeping kosher is not a problem as there are several kosher restaurants in the area. The strictly glatt kosher Dinitz restaurant is run by a team of young Israelis. The familiar menu of Mediterranean treats, and the warm atmosphere add to the Prague Jewish experience. There are several four- and five- star hotels in the district where some kosher services are available. A great option is a kosher apartment with a kitchen or kitchenette.

For more information about Jewish Prague, consult www.kosherprague.com.



Couple treasures 56 years of marital harmony

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

In 1941, Steve Acre, born as Sabih Ezra Akerib, a nine-year-old Iraqi Jew, witnessed a Farhud attack that culminated in the massacre of Jewish people and pillage of homes. While Steve shuddered in horror from his perch atop a date tree, his mother and siblings cowered in the house.

Steve's father, Ezra Akerib, had died in 1938, leaving Steve's mother, Shafika Kattan, a widow with nine children to support and defend the family from Arab pro-Nazi predators.

Meanwhile, 5,756 miles away, Leila Dawn Azoulay, also nine in 1941, had heard tales at Talmud Torah School and at home about Nazi-initiated atrocities in other corners of the globe. Fortunately, Leila, the eldest of three children, growing up in Montreal led a comfortable life nurtured by her father, Dr. Leon Azoulay, a surgeon, and her mother, Anna Fay (nee Klein) Azoulay. Leila earned degrees at Sir George Williams (predecessor of Concordia University) and the University of Toronto.

Although Leila and Steve's childhood habitats and circumstances differed, they discovered common links when they met in 1957. In addition to being the same age, the couple shared pride in their Sephardi heritage and significant connections to Israel. Many decades earlier, Leila's father had emigrated from Jerusalem to Montreal. He began his medical studies at Laval University but later switched to University of Manitoba and attained his degree in 1914. Imbued with a love for the Holy Land, Leila spent a year in Israel after she graduated from university in the 1950s.

As for Steve, after escaping from Iraq in October 1949 with a two-month stopover in Iran, he finally found refuge in Israel. "In April 1950, I was called up," Steve says, recapping his military duty. "Then it was two years, and now it is three, but I served four."

In 1957, he ended up travelling across North America, where he visited Jewish agencies at every stopover. That is how the couple met in Vancouver.

"I was working with the Jewish agency in Vancouver because they needed a social worker to take care of the influx of Hungarian Jews in 1957," Leila said. The Jewish community was sparse then but the government relied on Jewish agencies to support the heavy influx of Hungarian Jewry.

Steve remembers chatting with the director when Leila entered the room. They were introduced and shortly after, Leila invited him to attend a movie with her and a friend. Within two weeks, Leila and Steve fell in love.

Seated in their cozy kitchen in Cote St. Luc, the couple recalls the highlights of their courtship and marriage. "I remembering phoning my parents in Montreal to announce I was coming home to get married," Leila reminisced.

After their wedding on Sept. 9, 1957, the bride and groom honeymooned in the Laurentian Mountains. "I was due back in Israel but plans changed after Leila [had an accident,"] Steve said. "Neither of us had ever gone horseback riding, so we had decided to try it. Leila was thrown off the horse, broke her back and landed in the hospital."

Steve was unable to return to Israel. He had Leila to look after and bills to pay (pre-Medicare). Hence, he sought permanent employment in Montreal.

An outgoing individual, Steve is conversant in English, French, Hebrew and Arabic. Initially, he opted for real estate but ultimately found insurance more appealing. Through personal experience, he felt strongly about the latter. "If my father had been insured, our family in Iraq would have been better off," he laments. At one time, Steve's father had been a wealthy exporter in Iraq, but after a warehouse fire, the family's finances were depleted.

"I have been in the insurance field for 52 years and still work five days a week," said Steve, 81, "but now I am an independent. I sold my business after a heart bypass in 1991."

While their three children were growing up, Leila and Steve owned a home in Dollard des Ormeaux. They have always played an active role in the Jewish and secular communities. Among his many volunteer pursuits, Steve was a prime mover behind the formation of West Island B'nai Brith Lodge. "We used to take psychiatric patients from the Lakeshore Hospital bowling every week," he says, "and we also organized cars to take patients to Expo 67." In addition, Steve coached soccer for 10- and 11-year-olds.

Married 56 years, Leila and Steve are proud parents of their children and eight grandchildren. Their son Danny resides in Ontario; daughter Amira is a concert pianist in Massachusetts; and youngest daughter, Yael, is a physician in Montreal.

"Yael's family joins us for Shabbat," says Leila, who bakes her own challah.

Determined not to let cardiac conditions impede their productivity, they follow fitness programs. Leila also takes courses at Cummings Centre. They both enjoy movies, theatre, ballroom and Israeli dancing.

The couple believes willingness to compromise plus a good sense of humour enhance a relationship. "My husband is more involved in politics than me but I follow his interests. In turn, I like opera, so he became interested."

Steve said, "our personalities also complement one another. I tend to worry about things but Leila is an optimist."

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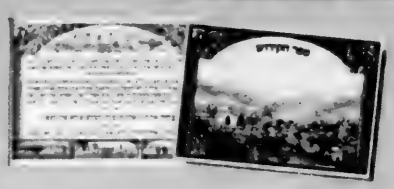

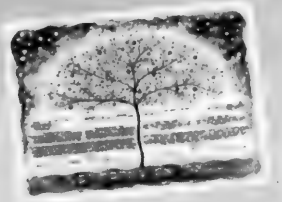

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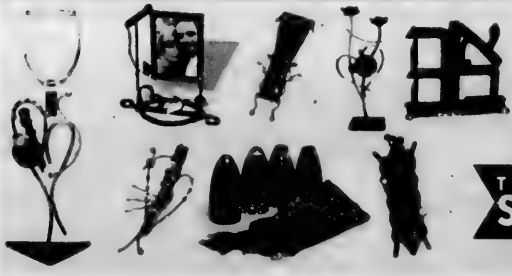

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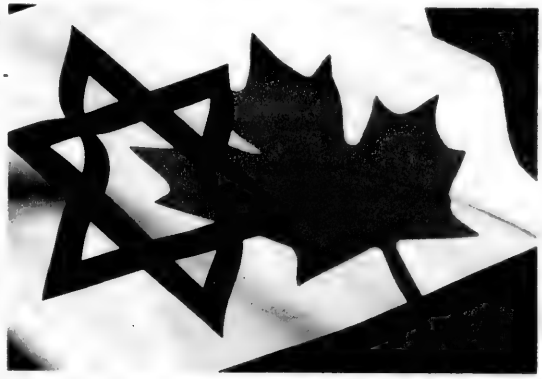
Israelis living in the Diaspora: Like the desert generation



Sara Dobner
Special to The CJN

"They are all orphans. They have cut themselves off from their roots and have turned their backs on their parents… Godless, parentless and homeless… Having lost one civilization, they had to construct another… We have distanced ourselves from our previous identity. Overnight we were uprooted from the rich soil of our parents' culture that was rich with thousands of years of history."

As I read Ari Shavit's new thought-provoking book, *My Promised Land*, and his vivid description of the settlers who came to Israel in the 1920s '30s, '40s and '50s, I could not help drawing parallels between these settlers and us, secular Israelis who live abroad.

Opinion

I do not suggest that the passion and sense of purpose that characterized the newcomers to Israel are equivalent to those of Israelis living outside Israel, but there are some analogies one can draw. The main difference is, however, that while the settlers to mid 20th-century Israel eagerly adopted a new, meaningful identity, many Israelis abroad have found themselves in a "no-man's identity land."

Secular Israelis generally feel little connection to God, religion, Jewish culture or heritage. We exhibit a lack of interest in anything that reminds us of the miserable Golah (Diaspora), and focus instead on our modern Israeli culture.

And now, in the Diaspora, somewhat like the settlers who came to Israel, we are orphans, godless, parentless and homeless. Like them, we are faced with the identity dilemma between the Israeli (secular) mentality – which has turned its back on thousands of years of rich Jewish heritage, culture, wisdom, spirituality and community life – and the opportunity to adopt a new Diaspora mentality and culture. But, unlike the new settlers to Israel who embraced their new Israeli identity enthusiastically, Israelis who wish to acquire a new Jewish identity in the Diaspora often face some challenges.

In many cases, secular Israelis have lost touch with the treasures of Judaism. We have forgotten where we came from and the reason why our ancestors took part in the 2,500-year journey in the Diaspora before our parents and grandparents arrived in Israel.

In Israel too, there is growing recognition of this ignorance and disconnect from Judaism. A new Be'eri Program, run by Jerusalem's Shalom Hartman Institute, in partnership with the Israeli Ministry of Education, is being introduced in 125 secular middle schools and high schools across Israel to teach teens Jewish values, social justice, identity, knowledge and tradition, demonstrating how all of this Jewishness fits naturally into modern daily life.

Israelis who have decided to relocate to the Diaspora are gradually coming to the realization that they may need to become part of the Jewish Diaspora – the one that their parents and grandparents had turned their back on, that many despised – so that they can regain a sense of identity.

Continued on page 20

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Curtain comes down on Winnipeg theatre
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Foster parent of ex-Lev Tahor kids speaks out

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — When Eluzor and Vita Moscowicz welcomed five young foster children into their home about six months ago, they were shocked by their appearance and demeanour.

The kids, ranging from infancy to seven years old, had been entrusted to them by Quebec's youth protection officials after they were removed from the controversial Lev Tahor chassidic sect, then based in Ste-Agathe des Monts, Que.

Eluzor Moscowicz said the children were not clean and wore shoes that were so ill-fitting that they were not walking normally.

Even the toddler girls were attired from head to toe in the black chador-like cloaks and kerchiefs that all female members of the sect are required to wear.

Disturbing as well was their suspicion and timidity, even about taking a shower or using soap that might have a scent, and the boys' fear that their heads would be shaved with a straight razor, as was the custom each Friday among the Lev Tahor.

Moscowicz was struck by the children's habit of talking against one another, behaviour that he persuaded them was not right, reassuring them they were all now loved and safe.

His wife sent written testimony about the children to a Knesset committee, which has been hearing from Israeli relatives of Lev Tahor members who are worried about what is going on within the group.

Allegations against it include forced underage marriage, failure to provide adequate education and inappropriate discipline of children using force

Moscowicz said in an interview that the foster children's father ran afoul of Lev Tahor chief leader, Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, when his unhappiness with the sect became apparent. He made plans to leave and bring his family with him.

Rabbi Helbrans had already split up the family, placing the children among other families in the community because he felt they were not being brought up according to his notions of proper Jewish practice.

Moscowicz said the authorities got involved after Lev Tahor leaders called in the police, claiming the father was acting violently, including abusing his kids.

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Shekalim-Pekudei
Candlelighting: 5:47
Havdalah: 6:51
Greater Toronto Area

It's time to Live and Learn
See Supplement — Section B

Jewish Agency aids Ukraine Jews — please see page 25

CANADA

Forgery Alleged

MONTREAL — Canada gave a new passport to a Mossad agent who took part in the 2010 killing of a Hamas military leader in Dubai, an Iranian-Canadian businessman alleges. Arian Anzbar told *Postmedia* that Passport Canada national security officer Trina Kennedy revealed the information during their 1-1/2-year-long affair that began in 2012. As part of an RCMP-led task force, Kennedy had been assigned to investigate Anzbar's suspected espionage activities. Mahmoud al-Mahbouh was killed in a Dubai hotel in 2010. Dubai police later said a 26-person Mossad hit team carried out the killing, which Israel denies. Citizenship Minister Chris Alexander has reportedly called in police to investigate and ordered a probe at Passport Canada.

WORLD

Books Vandalized

TOKYO — More than 100 copies of Anne Frank's iconic Holocaust memoir *Diary of a Young Girl* have been vandalized in public libraries in Tokyo. Pages have been ripped from at least 265 copies of the diary and related books, Japanese officials said last week. It's not clear who's perpetrating the vandalism or why. The head of Japan's library council told *AFP* that five of Tokyo's wards had reported the vandalism so far. In terms of absolute numbers of diary copies sold, Japan is reportedly second only to the United States, and 30,000 Japanese tourists visit Anne Frank House in Amsterdam annually.

Vassar Hillel 'Open'

NEW YORK — Vassar College's Jewish Union declared itself an "Open Hillel" last week, repudiating international Hillel guidelines rejecting partnerships with groups deemed hostile toward Israel. The Vassar Jewish Union, a Hillel-affiliated student group, is the second campus Hillel organization to designate itself an Open Hillel. Swarthmore College Hillel voted to reject the international guidelines for campus Israel activities in December. The rules forbid individual Hillel chapters from hosting groups or speakers that among other things deny Israel's right to exist or support boycott or divestment from the Jewish state. "We believe that this policy censors and delegitimizes the diverse range of personal and political opinions held by Jewish students," the Vassar Jewish Union stated.

Council To Examine Muslim Condo Plan

TORONTO — Vaughan city council has set up a working group to address concerns about a controversial Muslim condominium complex in Thornhill Woods, a predominantly Jewish suburb.

Alan Shefman

The development came after a public hearing earlier this month that drew hundreds of people, many of whom opposed plans by the Islamic Shia Ithna Asheri Jamaat to build subsidized housing in the form of two 17-storey towers, 61 townhouses as well as assisted-living facilities for seniors on its 30-acre property adjacent to the Jaffari Centre mosque at 9000 Bathurst St., south of Rutherford Road.

The Association to Preserve Thornhill Woods, an organization founded by local residents to protest the development, says the project would have a negative impact on the infrastructure of the low-density suburb.

The working group, made up of ward and regional councillors, city staff, and members of the Thornhill Woods community, is expected to report back to city council with its recommendations in about five months.

"What's going to happen, I would hope, out of this [working group] will be some further insights, information, perhaps even some significant changes that would be made to the application that would come from the agreed-upon results of this group's deliberations," Vaughan Coun. Alan Shefman told the *Vaughan Citizen*.

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Proposed citizenship reforms raise concerns

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

Many Jewish officials have turned thumbs down to the federal government's proposed sweeping reforms to the Citizenship Act.

Critics say the changes will erect roadblocks to citizenship for those who need protection, and could pose an abuse of power by the government.

In what Ottawa called "the first comprehensive reform to the Citizenship Act in more than a generation," Bill C-24 is intended to crack down on fraud and weed out those convicted of terrorism, treason or spying.

If passed, it would require would-be citizens to live in Canada longer before applying for citizenship, while permanent residents applying for citizenship would have to live in Canada for four of the last six years, instead of the current three years out of four.

"Citizenship is not a right, it is a privilege," Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander said in introducing the measures.

Among other provisions, the bill would:

• No longer count time spent as a non-permanent resident (such as students or workers) toward the residency requirements for citizenship;

• Require citizenship applicants to declare their intent to reside in Canada;

• Expand the age for applicants required to demonstrate language proficiency and take a test to age 14 to 64, up from the current 18 to 54;

• Increase application fees for each adult to $300 from $100;

• Reduce access to courts. Under the new proposal, a person whose citizenship is revoked will have to apply to the Federal Court for permission to appeal. Currently, appealing revocation is an automatic right.

• Grant the minister powers to revoke citizenship. Currently, citizenship can only be removed by a judge.

Chris Alexander

Guidy Mamann, a Toronto immigration lawyer and board member of Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) is bothered most by the bill's language requirement.

"It will affect people who come here under the family class, who have come later in life and find learning a new language a tremendous challenge," Mamann told *The CJN*. "Typically, [for] those who come as a sponsored parent or refugee in their 40s or 50s, it's going to be very difficult to learn a new language."

He's also sour on the bill's residency requirements.

"The quality of your contribution is not what is important to this government. It's the number of days you have your feet on Canadian soil," he said. "There should be a provision to grant citizenship to people who have been permanent residents for four years and who have made a significant contribution to the Canadian economy or cultural or artistic life, and who do not otherwise speak the language."

If passed in current form, the changes are "clearly going to put full participation in our Canadian way of life out of reach for many immigrants," Mamann said.

Ken Rosenberg, chair of the recently formed Jewish Refugee Action Network (JRAN) said his group's focus is refugee matters, not citizenship.

Continued on page 12

SACRED TRADITIONS

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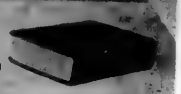

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Confusion reigns as Iran nuclear talks restart

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Could coverage of the Iran nuclear story be any more confused than what we witnessed when the opening round of P5+1 "comprehensive" talks with Iran were held last week in Vienna?

The comprehensive talks about Iran's nuclear program are intended to reach an agreement within six months, but, if necessary, can be extended for another six months.

Part of the confusion in the coverage stems from the fact that the two sides don't even agree about what's at issue. The P5+1 (the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany) want to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, while Iran insists that it has no such goal – that it's merely aiming to develop a peaceful civilian nuclear program.

Succumbing to international sanctions imposed on its oil and financial sectors, Iran agreed last November, as part of an "interim" plan, to temporarily scale back its nuclear activities in exchange for limited sanctions relief. Taking effect Jan. 20, the interim agreement requires Iran to stop production of 20 per cent enriched uranium but, despite a series of UN Security Council resolutions passed since 2006 ordering a halt to all Iran's enrichment activity, allows it to continue to enrich uranium to five per cent.

Iran has insisted all along that it has a "right" to enrich nuclear fuel and, even though the international community disagrees, the P5+1 felt that to foster any possibility of successful negotiations, Iran should be allowed temporary, limited enrichment. Israel and Saudi Arabia vehemently disagreed and want to see all of Iran's 20,000 enrichment centrifuges eliminated. That's not going to happen either – according to the interim plan requiring Iran to limit its use of existing equipment and not make operational its new generation of more advanced centrifuges.

Negotiations on a comprehensive or long-term agreement are meant to address these and a number of other issues, including another potential pathway to an atomic bomb: Iran's development of a heavy water plutonium reactor. But it's not clear whether the comprehensive plan will address other components of Iran's nuclear program, such as its work on nuclear weapons devices and ballistic missiles capable of delivering them. Some news reports indicate these additional items will be covered in the negotiations, while other reports, citing Iran's abject refusal to even consider them as part of the negotiating process, deny it.

Even seasoned Israeli military correspondents such as Ron Ben-Yishai, writing for *Ynetnews* on Feb. 18 when the comprehensive talks were commencing, contributed to the confusion. Consider this passage: "The world powers are... demanding that Iran stop building a reactor and facilities accompanying the production of fissile material (plutonium) from used fuel rods. If Iran accepts this demand, it will stop being a threshold state and the West will have more than a year's warning if Tehran tries to make a breakthrough towards building a bomb. This will allow the West to properly prepare its options to prevent such a breakthrough, including a military response."

By definition, Iran cannot simultaneously cease to be a threshold state and retain a "breakthrough" capacity, since it is that breakthrough potential that defines a nuclear threshold state.

Even the more western-friendly "moderate" Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has declared that Iran will not dismantle any part of the country's nuclear facilities, thereby indicating how difficult it will be to deprive Iran of what is more typically called a "breakout" capacity.

In the meantime, Iran's conservative Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who makes the decisions about Iran's nuclear program, went on record on the eve of the latest talks as saying that "they will not lead anywhere."

Ironically, this is one subject on which both Khamenei and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agree, though for entirely different reasons. Netanyahu fears Khamenei will get exactly what he wants – sanctions relief – while Iran, successfully dragging out the talks, remains a nuclear threshold state.

Even U.S. President Barack Obama has said the chance of negotiations succeeding are, at best, only 50/50. A relatively upbeat Feb. 20 press conference held by the parties does not alter these odds.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

ASYLUM PROTEST

About 1,000 African asylum-seekers demonstrated last week opposite the open detention facility in Holot to protest the Israeli government's policy toward them. The protesters demanded that the government cancel a law that allows them to be held at the facility in southern Israel, release everyone currently held there and recognize them as refugees.

[Israel Sun photo]

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Can open Orthodoxy stand on its own?

Early last month, Rabbi Hershel Schachter, 72, the rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva University, issued a responsum regarding women and the wearing of tfillin. In his letter, Rabbi Schachter, a prominent authority figure in the Orthodox world, especially in North America, declared in no uncertain terms that women may not wear tfillin. He also compared those who follow the egalitarian stream of Orthodoxy to the disciples of Korach, who rebelled against the Jewish leadership of the desert-wandering years and were eventually swallowed up by the earth.

Rabbi Schachter's words were clearly aimed at the two New York-area Orthodox high schools that had previously announced they would encourage female students who want to wear tfillin to do so, but in the grand scheme of things, the letter was a shot across the bow of so-called "open Orthodoxy," the new(ish) brand of Judaism that campaigns, among other things, for more female inclusion in Orthodoxy, and claims there is precedent for doing so according to Jewish law.

In response to Rabbi Schachter, Rabbi Josh Yuter, 36, the open Orthodox leader of Manhattan's Stanton Street Synagogue (and one of Jewrotica's "Sexiest Rabbis of 2013"), tweeted: "The shorter version of R. Herschel Schachter's missive... is that the greatest sin a Jew can do is disagree with him." Two days later, Rabbi Yuter followed up with a post on his popular YUtopia blog in which he questioned Rabbi Schachter's classification as a "rav" – i.e., an authority on Jewish law – and suggested Judaism probably doesn't need that type of authority figure anymore anyways, concluding: "The democratization of knowledge is thus a significant threat to those who wish to control it, and by extension, the people who depend on it. R. Schachter must create and rely on his myth that he and his cadre are the true arbiters and representatives of Judaism, and by extension, God's will."

Rabbi Yuter's tweet and blog set off a storm online (I first caught wind of the story on the Facebook page of Rabbi Schachter's son, who posted the tweet along with the hashtag "#idiot"). Some say Rabbi Yuter had no right to challenge the older, wiser Rabbi Schachter – and especially not in such a public way. Others argue Rabbi Schachter's original responsum was an insult to Jewish women, and full of legal holes. Both points of view raise the question: how much longer can the Orthodox and open Orthodox share a religious umbrella?

The answer, I think, is not much – these two groups probably need to go their separate ways, for everyone's benefit. The truth is Orthodox Judaism has never been particularly "open," and open Orthodoxy will never have the sort of numbers necessary to outflank the ultra- and modern Orthodox. And if that means open Orthodoxy needs a new name, so be it (though the "neo-Conservative" moniker some have suggested sounds clunky to me).

Open Orthodoxy is gaining popularity because it celebrates complexity – the halachic imperative remains, but it is simultaneously countered by a refusal to accept the status quo and rabbinic hierarchy. It's a complicated religious response to our complicated age, and it's time to see whether the movement can stand on its own.

yoni

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The CJN presents a wider view

I would like to congratulate *The CJN* on some of its recent articles that present broader, more nuanced perspectives on Israeli politics, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's refusal to attend Nelson Mandela's funeral in South Africa, and the rise of vigilantism by Jewish settler groups in the West Bank.

I was dismayed to see some readers react negatively. One of the many wonderful things about Israel is that it permits voices from across the political spectrum, including those critical of the government and its policies. This is the bedrock of any healthy democracy. It is ironic that many Diaspora Jews are less willing than Israelis themselves to tolerate diverging views.

Daniel Douek
Montreal

Day's true colours

Notwithstanding former federal Conservative cabinet minister Stockwell Day's moving testimonial about the two boys whose fathers were killed in a terrorist attack ("A Canadian triumph over terror," *The CJN*, Feb. 13), Day's credentials listed at the end on the article are incomplete.

Day sits on the board of directors of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), an affiliation surprisingly not enunciated by Day in the article.

In his capacity as a board member, Day has represented the Jewish community at official events and contributes to the governance of CIJA, Canada's self- appointed group purporting to speak for the Jewish community.

Day and other board members who are not Jewish constitute 15 per cent of CIJA's board of director membership, raising serious questions as to the authenticity of CIJA as a Jewish organization. Even Independent Jewish Voices, anathematic to CIJA, is at least a bona fide Jewish organization.

Philip B. Berger
Toronto

Harper's visit to Israel

On reading the scholarly but misguided article about Prime Minister Stephen Harper's trip to the State of Israel ("Harper has made Israel a wedge issue," *The CJN*, Feb. 13), it easy to see why Adam Goldenberg is a former speech writer for the Liberal Party.

If the purpose of Harper's significant visit was merely to garner the Jewish vote for his re-election, he would have been much wiser to have sought the attention and approval of the Arab/Muslim vote since there are vastly more Muslims in Canada, and worldwide, than there are Jews.

I wholeheartedly believe that our prime minister has to be a man of courage and principled conviction to state Israel's dire position in his speech in the Knesset and thus to a worldwide audience.

Israel has tried to exchange land for peace, only to find ferocious response to its efforts – witness the disaster in Gaza. It is time that the Israelis are realistic and not swayed by wishful thinking.

No peace or two-state solution can be even contemplated until Palestinians can agree on one state being theirs and the other belonging to the Jewish People. This is a fundamental beginning to any sort of negotiation.

Phyllis Sugar
Toronto

No Palestinian state on Jewish land

The problem is not that a Palestinian state will or will not recognize Israel as Jewish. The problem is that so many are willing to recognize a Palestinian state on Jewish land ("Recognizing Israel as Jewish is part of ending conflict," *The CJN*, Feb. 20).

First, Israel's historical and legal claims to the disputed territories are being totally ignored.

Second, a state that promises to cleanse their new country of Jews even as they cleanse it of Christians, both crimes against humanity, should never be allowed the right of birth.

Third, when the words and charters of the current Palestinian governments pledge to destroy Israel and its people while their imams justify it theologically, those governments should all be banished from the civilized world.

It is a tragedy that we are willing to hand over land that is ours to enemies who want us dead while we worry about how magnanimous they will be in granting us the right to be Jewish.

Steven Scheffer
Burlington, Ont.

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My son, the activist

Seven-year-old protests the inhumane treatment of animals in captivity

Miriam Porter

On Jan. 26, in the bitter cold and blowing snow, my seven-year-old son Noah and I spend two hours outside a marine aquarium in Toronto.

It is freezing out, almost -30C. After the first hour my extra socks, scarf, double sweaters and knitted leg warmers stop working. I am ready to leave but Noah refuses. He's the boss (sometimes) so I listen. He proudly holds a sign that reads "Free The Fishies!"and stands in front, with 40 other protesters behind him.

My sign reads, "Sea Life Belongs in the Sea Not Tanks" while other signs declare "Welcome to the Aqua Prison!" and "Wild Animals Belong in the Wild!"

With our teeth chattering, we energetically chant: "Shut It Down"! Onlookers and guests of the aquarium stare at us and shake their heads. One mother yells angrily, in front of her two young children, that we are wasting our time. She doesn't like being challenged on another point of view while waiting in line for a ticket – a ticket that is contributing to the destruction of our precious ecosystem.

This protest occurs as Japan's fishermen are brutally rounding up dolphins in Taiji to be slaughtered or held captive. Approximately 20,000 dolphins of all species are caught yearly in Japan. The dedicated Sea Sheppard Conservation Society Cove Guardians record this massacre for the world to witness.

Media around the world are finally starting to document the horrors of this yearly dolphin slaughter, and, because of films like *The Cove* (2009) and *Blackfish* (2013), social media has been ablaze with photographs and testimonials.

I am curious if rabbis and observant Jews believe the dolphin massacre to be an act of cruelty. Jewish law prohibits causing unnecessary suffering to animals. *Tza'ar ba'alei chayim* (kindness to animals) is the prohibition against causing pain to any living animal. I saw brutal recordings of the dolphins being captured and killed in Taiji where the blue water turns bright red and they are tortured for days until their vicious death. The dolphins are not being use for what Torah considers "legitimate needs, so I would hope families following Jewish law will not buy tickets to aquariums.

Additionally, there is nothing educational to be learned from an animal in captivity. You are not seeing the creature in its natural environment. Animals behind bars and in tanks do not behave in the same way they do when free – for zoo and aquarium owners it's all about making money. Noah has never visited animals in captivity, yet he will happily tell you about his favourite wild mammal thanks to books and films.

I am proud of my boy. Noah has the option of going to a movie on this freezing winter day but insists we attend the protest. This isn't his first protest and I am quite certain won't be his last. We recently attended a demonstration on Queen Street outside a popular clothing store selling Canada Goose jackets. The fur trim on the hoods of these jackets is the stolen life of a coyote.

Noah protesting outside the aquarium.

My little guy, the powerhouse, as other protesters call him, gives out over 300 leaflets about the horrors of the fur industry. Noah knows he's making a difference because he witnesses potential customers deciding not to go inside the store – and even others march back in to return their furry jacket once they learn the truth. That day we join other activists, including children, to speak out for the voiceless coyotes.

It has been wrongly suggested that I "convince" Noah to attend protests or rallies. Not only is this not true but it sadly undermines Noah's true passion for the causes he believes in. Noah was born with an empathetic desire to help others. At an early age he rescued ladybugs from park slides, worms from the rain soaked sidewalk and made the decision at age five to become vegan. "I don't want to eat my friends," he told me.

Of course it helps to lead by example. I have always taught Noah the importance of standing up for his rights and the rights of others. I have been an activist since I was 12 when I demanded my junior high school stop dissecting frogs in science class. Noah has seen my passion but his desire for change and equality run deep.

But how do you raise an activist? This was never my intention, but looking back there are perhaps several things that contributed to Noah's activism. Hanging on his bedroom wall are the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – all 54 of them. I tell Noah the truth, at age appropriate levels, about industries that exploit others and that it doesn't have to be this way. We discuss animal and child welfare organizations that can help.

Noah's first peaceful protest was at age four. We gathered with like-minded individuals to raise awareness about Tilikum – the 12,000-pound killer whale living in a bathtub at SeaWorld. Tilikum is the main character in the documentary *Blackfish* and has been in captivity for over 30 years despite killing several people, including his trainer.

We stood proud and held our signs high at Dundas Square in Toronto. Suddenly Noah asked me, "Does Tilikum know we care about him and that we are trying to set him free? Do you think he can hear us all the way at SeaWorld in Florida?"

I tell Noah he has the ability to make his voice heard all over the world if he wants to – he just needs to speak loud enough.

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Our culture could use a dose of Jewish guilt

Sara R. Horowitz
in Toronto

My husband and I have a running joke about the television game show *Jeopardy*. We imagine it with Jewish categories. "I'll take medieval commentators for $200, Alex." (Alex, of course, is Canadian Alex Trebek, the show's long-standing host.) "*Chumrot* [halachic stringencies] for $300, Alex." "Aramaic texts for $500."

The absurdity of it is funny to us. Not that a Judaic version of Jeopardy is inherently absurd. It would, I think, be a good pedagogic tool in a Jewish education context. But the idea of broadcasting the minutia of Judaic knowledge as a mainstream trivia-based competition is, of course, a non-starter. Television strives for broad public appeal – the better to garner advertisers – and the audience for deep Jewish literacy comprises a very small chunk of the general public.

But I've been thinking lately that an overlay of Jewish commentary on mainstream popular culture might not be a bad thing. People joke about Jewish guilt complexes. Our culture doesn't have a monopoly on this, but if guilt feelings were an Olympic event, we'd be on the podium. Jewish writers and thinkers of the past century have made much of the inhibiting effect of guilt, shame and embarrassment on our fulfillment and happiness. Think early Philip Roth, or Freud.

Maybe it's a case of early millennial malaise, but I find myself longing for the return of guilt to the popular arena. It might put a curb on the cult of celebrity that has been spiralling downward. Think of it as a Jewish gift to the new future. Call it the new shame.

Media venues are currently awash with reminiscences of the debut of the Beatles in North America 50 years ago. Watching some of these appearances on the web remind us of how innocent that era was and of how jaded we have become. Today, there are few boundaries on what celebrities can do publicly without losing their following: nastiness, crime, callowness, addiction. Celebrity has become its own entity, with some celebrities celebrated not for anything they've done, but simply for being celebrities.

Take the example of the good-boy-turned-bad-boy Canadian pop icon who recently has been investigated for vandalism and driving while drunk. During one drunken evening, he was reportedly caught on camera urinating into a janitor's bucket. He's a kid, of course, immature and prematurely empowered by his celebrity. He's buffered by the wealth he's amassed, as well as by the admiring pack that travels with him and the adoration of fans. But what of the others on the road when he drives under the influence? What of the poor janitor who must deal with the sullied bucket?

Or take the mayor of the city I live in. He's excused lying about drug use because he was in a "drunken stupor" and couldn't recollect his actions. He, too, has driven under the influence, driven while texting – that is to say, been on the road and endangered others. He has singularly provided a wealth of Canadian material to late-night TV comedians.

Although I've mentioned Canadian illustrations because they hit close to home, the cult of celebrity without accountability is by no means solely a Canadian phenomenon. It's certainly entrenched south of the border.

Why does this matter? Why should the actions of people I've never met and see only through various media outlets have any bearing on me or my life, or on you and yours?

It matters because through their ubiquity, they set the parameters for acceptable behaviour. Their actions, combined with their lack of visible shame, convey the message that anything goes, even if it's illegal, tawdry or harmful to others. They inure us to behaviour that then becomes less shocking and comes to seem more ordinary, more acceptable.

More than a century ago, the American writer Mark Twain wrote, "Man is the only animal that blushes – or needs to." Blushing – a sign of embarrassment or shame – signals to us that something is off-kilter, that we need to address what we've done, to apologize, to change. These, of course, are the components of the Jewish concept of tshuvah.

But our celebrities don't blush, at least not publicly. And if they lead the cultural way, soon we, too, will no longer blush.

So, we're in double jeopardy. I'll take guilt for $1,000, Alex.

Poles, Jews and anti-Semitism

Rabbi Dow Marmur
in Toronto

On Jan. 27, the day when many countries marked International Holocaust Memorial Day, the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* published the results of a recent survey, conducted by the reputable Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) in Poland, about anti-Semitism in that country.

While almost half of the members of the Knesset and many Israeli public figures joined a delegation of Holocaust survivors on their pilgrimage to Auschwitz in Poland to mark the 69th anniversary of its liberation and participated in a memorial ceremony there, Poles and Jews were reminded that, despite efforts by the Polish government to foster a positive attitude toward Jews and Judaism, many Poles continue to harbour hatred of Jews with potentially lethal consequences for all.

The data are frightening: 23 per cent of the representative sample of 1,000 respondents said Jews would kill Christian children for ritual purposes. Only one per cent less affirmed that today's Jews are responsible for the killing of Jesus.

By all accounts, the Catholic Church in Poland has done much to shape this mindset. Thus, for example, a day before the Holocaust commemorations, the president of the small Jewish community in Poznan complained that a 17th-century fresco depicting the infamous blood libel adorns a wall in the local cathedral. When journalists had challenged the church leaders to offer at least an explanation to visitors, the clergy placed a note on a different floor with the ridiculous excuse that there was no room near the actual picture.

But it's by no means only religion that fuels the hatred. According to the CBOS survey, two out of five Poles believe that Jews rule the world, and roughly the same number maintain that it's the Jews who slander Poles by calling them anti-Semites. The glaring inconsistency between the two opinions didn't prevent about two-thirds of all Poles also to subscribe to various conspiracy theories involving Jews.

Ironically, while valiant efforts are being made to rebuild Jewish life in Poland, which has, in turn, alerted many Poles with Jewish forbears to come forward and even seek formal affiliation with the Jewish community, there's evidence of a mood that again may make life almost untenable for the relatively few Jews who live there now.

Most Poles insist that what happened to the Jews in their country during the Holocaust was entirely the work of German Nazis, with negligible collaboration by locals. When responsible and reputable scholars of Polish history bring incontrovertible evidence to the contrary, they're often met with hostility and worse.

Hatred of Jews, though it exists everywhere in the country, seems to be most prevalent in rural areas, where people would have never encountered a Jew. Citizens in the capital Warsaw and other urban centres are likely to be more open-minded.

In the course of my own travels in Poland, I've been impressed by the interest in, and knowledge of, Judaism among intellectuals and secular public figures. It's reflected in the many serious books published in the country, often written by local scholars.

Similarly, the Polish parliament has taken due notice of the CBOS report and is determined to continue its efforts to eradicate, or at least reduce, the disease of anti-Semitism. The government of Poland is encouraging Jews to live and work in the country. It also seeks to foster good relations with the State of Israel.

Tragically, Poland isn't the only European state infested with the hatred of Jews. The small Jewish communities in eastern and central Europe, as well as in Scandinavia and France, are being exposed to frequent anti-Semitic incidents. The remnant of the original and indigenous Europeans – as Jews have often been described because of their wholesome contribution to the cultural and economic life of the continent – may be forced to leave forever.

Poles living abroad, including Canada, can be no less prone to hating Jews, who in turn tend to reciprocate by voicing strong and equally unwarranted condemnations of all Poles.

It's with this in mind that in 1988, a few of us founded the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada. Our dual aim was to alert Jews to almost 1,000 years of Jewish history in Poland, much of it in relatively peaceful coexistence and, second, to promote understanding and co-operation between Polish and Jewish Canadians for the good of this country. A quarter of a century later, the need seems to be no less urgent.

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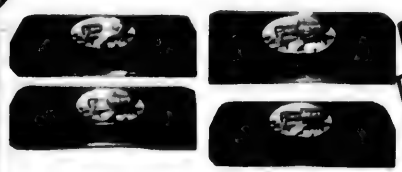

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Organization dedicated to human rights in Israel

Rabbinical student aims to unite Jews, Muslims

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Yonatan Shefa, assistant director of the occupied territories department at the group Rabbis For Human Rights in Israel, says his heart lies in bringing people of all backgrounds together.

Hired four years ago in an effort to bring new blood into the organization, which started up in the 1980s, he said that on his first day on the job, he got his boss's blessing to try and cultivate intercultural dialogue.

Shefa, a native of Toronto, and a rabbinical student at Yeshiva Sulam Yaakov in Jerusalem, spoke last week at an event sponsored by Congregation Darchei Noam's social justice advocacy committee.

Rabbis for Human Rights, which represents about 100 rabbis and rabbinical students from different streams of Judaism, is the only rabbinic organization in Israel explicitly dedicated to human rights.

Its mission is to inform the Israeli public about human rights violations and to pressure the state institutions to redress these injustices. It also engages in direct action to aid victims of human rights abuses.

The organization concentrates its work on such areas as rights of the poor, rights to housing, Bedouin rights in the Negev, human rights work in the occupied territories, promoting human rights education in Israel, and teaching human rights in pre-military academies.

Shefa said that several months ago, he arranged a meeting between students at his rabbinical school and a group of students from the largest Islamic college in Israel.

"We decided to meet at a park, break into groups of two or three, and go on a hike. Along with trail were small flags printed with questions, which the group discussed until it got to the next flag."

The questions started simply, he said, and then got more intimate, without getting into any political rhetoric.

"We tried to include questions that were challenging to both sides and that people answered from their own experience."

Shefa said that at that meeting, as well as others he has arranged, there is always "the first electrical moment [in which we discover] that 98 per cent of the people had never spoken to anyone from the other side.

"I love witnessing that moment. People tell me it is scary and exciting, but all it takes is that first step. Whatever conversation has not taken place is scary," he added.

"There is a lot to cultivate, but for me, that moment is crucial. It changes people's lives forever. They can no longer say they haven't spoken [to the other side]. It shifts people's hearts and outlooks."

Shefa said his background is in public policy – he has a master's degree from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University – but his interest lies with people.

Yonatan Shefa

"If we have peace, we have the natural realization of human rights. It's important to bring everyone into conversation. If we're going to live in peace, it is going to take all of us. If you say 'you're wrong', then you've lost that person."

The Staff of The Canadian Jewish News
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Rose Radelja and family
on the loss of their beloved
Nick,
our friend and former colleague.
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Support for those living with autoimmune diseases

World-renowned clinical nutritionist to speak at March 6 event

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Aaron's Apple, a charitable organization started by a child to help other children, helps fund the high costs of medication and treatment for families whose children suffer from chronic illnesses.

At a March 6 event for the charity, world-renowned clinical nutritionist Dr. Melvyn Grovit and psychotherapist Stacey Dombrowksy will speak to people living with inflammatory bowel disease and other autoimmune conditions.

"If you are suffering from Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, celiac, rheumatoid arthritis, allergies, eczema, psoriasis – or if you simply want to improve your health, this event will have something for everyone," said Mandy Maresky, co-founder of Aaron's Apple.

Your body's immune system protects you from disease and infection, but if you have an autoimmune disease, even the healthy cells in your body are attacked.

According to Dr. Edward Keystone, director of the Rebecca MacDonald Centre for Arthritis and Autoimmune Diseases at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, "there are 50 known autoimmune diseases affecting two million Canadians."

Aaron Maresky

While we don't yet understand the causes of autoimmunity or how to cure it, "there is a huge sense of optimism surrounding their ultimate cure," he said.

Researchers are learning more about the immune system and why it becomes overactive, including the role of genetics.

Aaron's Apple was born from the belief that every child has the right to experience a happy and pain-free life. Parents of children with chronic illness are faced with the harsh reality that they are unable to control the illness with which their child has been diagnosed.

The options to ease the suffering of these children often come in the form of highly priced medical treatments. Some families are able to meet the high costs with medical insurance, while others are not as fortunate. Aaron's Apple helps families pay for expensive medication and treatments.

"I want to be able to help other sick children who aren't as lucky as I am, so I started a charity called Aaron's Apple when I was seven years old," said Aaron Maresky, now 12, co-founder of Aaron's Apple.

"I believe that, as parents, we have expectations, hopes, and dreams. When a child is diagnosed with a health problem or chronic illness, these aspirations are altered in some way. While one parent is hoping to see their child graduate from university, another is praying that the child can simply live a pain-free life," Dombrowsky said.

Grovit's mission is to do research and educate others about the benefits of nutritional therapy in the management of chronic illness. He has developed new clinical nutrition protocols for individuals living with Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis and short bowel syndrome, focusing on the role of food and the microbiota (formerly known as gut flora, the microscopic living organisms in the bowel) in inflammatory diseases. Through the years, he has made a lasting impact on the lives of many individuals and their families.

The classic indicator of an autoimmune disease is inflammation, which can cause redness, heat, pain and swelling. Sufferers may have flare-ups, meaning the symptoms get worse, as well as remissions, when symptoms get better or disappear.

Dombrowsky will speak about living with a chronic illness and how it does not have to be a life sentence. Dombrowsky's approach to healing is naturalistic, spiritual, wide-ranging and eclectic, combining both traditional and the newest cutting-edge methods.

The event will be held at 7 p.m. at the SHAMBA Foundation, 48 Yonge St., Suite 1200, and will include a cocktail reception, food and a silent auction.

For ticket information, please visit www.aaronsapple.com.

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Citizenship bill opposed by Jewish groups

Represents 'a serious threat to rights of all Canadians,' lawyers say

Continued from page 3

But that didn't prevent JRAN's founder, Rabbi Arthur Bielfeld, from sharply criticizing the bill.

"I'm very concerned about the implications of this bill in terms of increasing the centralization of authority... specifically granting one minister the right to make decisions which, up until now, have been made by the courts," Rabbi Bielfeld said.

"As Jews and as human beings, we have a real need to make sure that every Canadian has the right to a legal hearing of his or her claim."

He compared Canada's proposal to Switzerland's recent decision to cap all immigration and introduce quotas.

"What we're seeing is a strong shift to the populism of the right that is going to affect many countries," said Rabbi Bielfeld, a longtime advocate for refugees. "As Jews especially, we know how dangerous it is when countries begin to close borders [to] people who are oppressed."

A scathing indictment of the proposals was issued recently by Lorne Waldman, president of the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, and Audrey Macklin, professor of law at the University of Toronto.

Writing in the *Toronto Star*, Waldman and Macklin said Bill C-24 represents "a serious threat to the rights of all Canadians" because it would "make citizens vulnerable to abuse of power by the government" and "broadly expand the requirements for citizenship in ways that will make it inaccessible to many, while dramatically reducing a person's due process rights when the government seeks to take citizenship away."

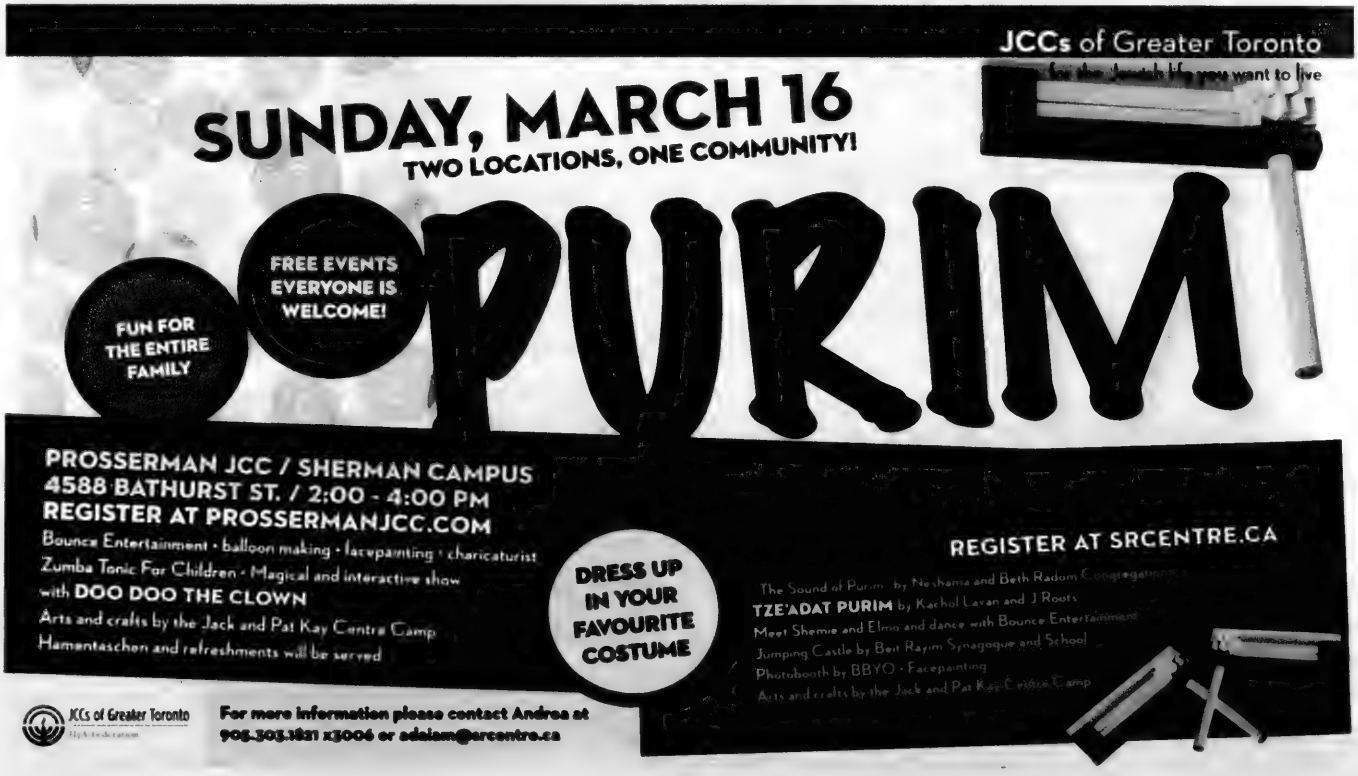
An implicit "threat" in the bill is that if a naturalized Canadian citizen takes a job somewhere else or leaves Canada to study abroad, the government may move to strip the person of citizenship because they misrepresented their intention to reside in Canada, the pair claimed.

Rather than strengthening the rights of citizens, the bill "demeans citizenship. Like the changes to the refugee laws that Ottawa sold by branding refugees as bogus, these proposals represent new Canadians as objects of suspicion and mistrust."

Speaking on behalf of JIAS Canada, Mark Zarecki, executive director of Jewish Family Services in Ottawa, said the legislation would decrease the number of citizens who have "extra status" – immigrants who receive Canadian citizenship in addition to keeping their native citizenship status – and then leave permanently. "It should close that loophole," Zarecki said.

Overall, he said, he has "no serious qualms" about the bill.

READING MONTH: Author Ayelet Tsabari poses with grade 4 and 5 students from Bialik Hebrew Day School, where she spoke about her journey as a writer and read from her book *The Best Place on Earth*. MS Reading Month and the MS Readathon are in full swing at the school.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2015 campaign chairs

United Jewish Appeal: the cause is right

Andrea Cohen and David Matlow
Special to The CJN

As the chairs of United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto's 2015 annual campaign, we, along with the chair of UJA's Women's Philanthropy, Alison Himel, share a common bond and the firm belief that Toronto's remarkable Jewish community can accomplish anything. That community, steadfast and united, can attend to the needs of the less fortunate and can support, educate and defend our Jewish right to live in peace in Israel and here in the Diaspora.

We are motivated and inspired to work on behalf of the countless Jewish men, women and children who are helped by the more than 100 UJA-funded agencies and programs for several reasons, including:

We all benefit from UJA. Toronto's UJA campaign is the third largest in North America, behind only New York and Chicago (and this is in absolute dollars, not per capita). Toronto is blessed with many uncommonly generous, visionary and compassionate UJA donors, all of whom believe in the caring community that UJA dollars help to create and nurture. This is something we should all be very proud of. The success of UJA's annual campaign – year after year – explains the strength, solidarity, safety and vibrancy of Jewish Toronto.

Andrea Cohen

David Matlow

Each year, we start fresh. Like they say in the stock market, past results are not proof of future performance. Each campaign starts from dollar zero. The funds that have been raised in the 2014 campaign during 2013 and that is wrapping up now will be fully allocated to support people and programs during the 2014 calendar year. The funds that the 2015 campaign will raise during 2014 will be spent during 2015.

Each donation is important. The number of people who are helped by funds raised in the campaign is so vast, and the programs and services funded by the campaign is so varied, that it is really hard for a donor or potential donor to fully understand how important each and every UJA donation is. We will try to help our community realize all that it does when it supports the campaign.

We could help more people. As successful as our campaign is, there are more people that could be helped if we were able to raise more money. We will try to help our community realize that every donation, large or small, is meaningful. Any donation could be the one that makes a difference in a person's life. Since the UJA is the common thread that binds us all together, we will try and inspire everyone with the capacity to do so to make a donation to the UJA this year.

UJA canvassers are the heroes. The voluntary canvassers, our unsung heroes, comprise the engine that drives the annual campaign. In this busy world in which everyone is short of time, there are 700 people who care enough about the condition of the Jewish people in Canada, Israel and across the globe that they are glad to share their talents and passions to help their fellow Jews by canvassing for UJA. We will try to help our community understand the vital, selfless role our canvassers play in the success of the annual campaign and how we can raise more funds and help more people by simply picking up the phone to answer the call, or by favourably responding to the offer to meet their canvasser for a coffee and conversation.

Most importantly, the cause is right. If you get past the various acronyms in our community's alphabet soup (most of which have a J in them somewhere), what UJA is really about is Jews helping each other fulfil our potential as individuals and as a people. This requires a social safety net for those who fall on hard times, care for all Jews during each phase of life, ensuring Jewish continuity, and preserving a strong Israel. This is what the UJA does.

As the 2015 campaign starts to roll out, we look forward to meeting current and new donors throughout the GTA to discuss our shared vision for our Jewish community. We look forward to working with our leadership cabinet and the vast team of volunteer canvassers in the important work of helping people. We look forward to welcoming anyone who wishes to join our team and help us help others. Being named chairs of Campaign 2015 is not an honour that we take lightly. We will do our best to serve Toronto's Jewish community and the many people who are touched by the funds raised by United Jewish Appeal.

Cotler unveils 'Never Again' manifesto for MPs

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Liberal MP Irwin Cotler will be presenting a "Never Again Manifesto" in the House of Commons that draws on the lessons of the Holocaust and is intended to prompt international action against present-day hate and genocide incitement.

The 12-point document, titled "Auschwitz, the Holocaust and Human Rights: Universal Lessons for Our Time," warns of the danger of state-sanctioned incitement. Although they're not named, Cotler said he has in mind in particular Iran and, for promoting hate, the Palestinian Authority.

"Parliamentarians have a responsibility to recognize, address and redress this crime," said Cotler.

Cotler, the Liberals' rights and international justice critic, said he drafted the manifesto following the commemoration held at Auschwitz on International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27.

Irwin Cotler

Cotler was the only Canadian parliamentarian among the largest number of politicians ever to attend the anniversary of the 1945 liberation of the death camp in Poland.

Nearly half of Israel's Knesset members were present, along with many Polish parliamentarians and broad representation from other European countries.

Cotler said he was asked by the delegation to put on paper principles that can be used as a guide to combating current gross violations of human rights.

He said many of the politicians were not aware that 1.3 million people were murdered at Auschwitz from 1942 to 1944 and that 1.1 million of them were Jewish.

Cotler unveiled the manifesto to the media Feb. 10 and subsequently to the Liberal caucus, which he said received it wholeheartedly. Within about a month, he plans to present it to the House of Commons as a motion, for which he hopes to receive unanimous support.

Groups protest Barak visit to B.C.

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) in British Columbia is "obviously thrilled" that former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak is set to visit Surrey on Feb. 27 to attend an economic conference, despite efforts by militant Palestinian supporters to block him.

In an "open letter" to Surrey, B.C., Mayor Diane Watts and Surrey city council, the Canada-Palestine Association calls Barak an "Israeli war criminal."

"It is like inviting a bank robber and killer with blood on his hands to address the banking industry."

The letter also supports the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel.

Darren Mackoff, director of CIJA's Pacific region, told *The CJN* in an email that his group was "obviously thrilled that... Barak will be speaking at the Surrey Regional Economic Summit and highlighting the budding partnership between Israel and Western Canada."

But he did not address a specific question about the effort to stop him from attending.

Surrey city councillor Linda Hepner told *The CJN* Feb. 21 the summit is strictly non-political and that her city would not consider rescinding its invitation.

"It's all about an economic summit, not a political platform," she said. "We're thrilled to have the three former prime ministers here for the occasion."

Former Australian prime minister Julia Gillard and former Greek prime minister George Papandreou are scheduled to join Barak at the annual Surrey summit to discuss what can be learned from their economies.

The open letter calls Barak a "terrorist" and cites alleged examples of his "war crimes." They include the 1988 targeted assassination of Palestinian leader Khalil El Wazir in Tunis, and a "Gaza massacre" from Dec. 28, 2008 to Jan. 18, 2009.

"It seems to us that the city of Surrey is following in the footsteps of the Canadian Conservative government which is making Canada and now Surrey part of Israeli occupied territory," the letter states.

"We ask all the Surrey councillors to come clean and disassociate themselves from what the mayor is doing."

Other signatories of the letter include Canadian Boat to Gaza, and Independent Jewish Voices Vancouver.

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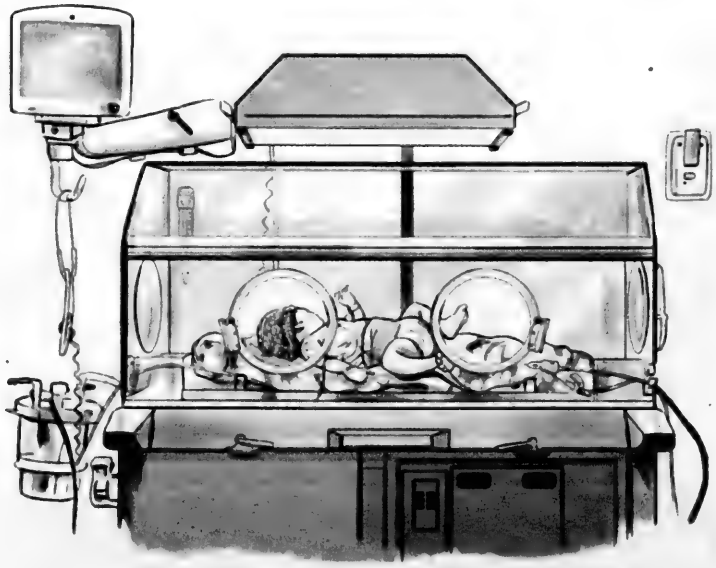

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Bringing a female voice to Orthodox spirituality

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — "Maha-What? Maharat!"

The title of Maharat Rachel Kohl Finegold's presentation at the Le Mood conference last November reflected how unfamiliar her groundbreaking role is to Jewish Montrealers.

Few realize that the title denotes that she is among the first women ordained as clergy within the Orthodox movement. Kohl Finegold was one of three in the inaugural graduating class last June of Yeshivat Maharat in the Bronx, N.Y.

In August, Kohl Finegold became director of education and spiritual enrichment at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, Montreal's largest synagogue, which dates back to 1846.

"Maharat" is a Hebrew acronym that translates as female leader in Torah, spirituality and religious law.

Kohl Finegold, 33, and her classmates completed a rigorous four-year program, with almost exactly the same studies as for the rabbinate, that qualifies them to do almost everything a rabbi can – as long as it's within the Orthodox understanding of Halachah, or Jewish law.

The graduates are certified "spiritual leaders and decisors of Jewish law," that is, competent to determine halachic issues, teach Torah in public, to officiate at life-cycle events, and provide spiritual and pastoral counselling.

The program has been controversial since its creation by activist Rabbi Avi Weiss. In May, the Rabbinical Council of America, which represents more than 1,000 Orthodox rabbis in 14 countries, denounced the impending ordination of women as "a violation of *mesorah* [tradition]… that contradicts the norms of our community."

Far from feeling defensive, Kohl Finegold responds that she is encouraged, because the statement also expresses support like never before for "advanced women's learning" and "halachically and communally appropriate professional opportunities" for learned women.

At Shaar Hashomayim, Kohl Finegold is a member of the clergy team.

Kohl Finegold, who has a warm, down-to-earth personality, downplays her trailblazing role, insisting that whatever she does at Shaar Hashomayim – or did at the Chicago synagogue where she worked before her ordination – has been done by women before and is not really a break with tradition, except that her qualifications and duties are formally recognized.

"I'm not really changing anything. It just looks different," she said in an interview. "There may have been skeptics at the beginning, but people see that I am deeply Orthodox… and not trying to make a statement or waves or be the token woman."

Rachel Kohl Finegold

She grew up in "a typical 1980s Orthodox Brooklyn family," but didn't think about a career as a Jewish leader until well after graduating from Boston University with a major in religion.

Since childhood she felt herself to be "a natural teacher, but I didn't want to be in a classroom, I wanted something more creative."

Three years at the Drisha Institute in New York, taking advanced Jewish and communal leadership studies, led to her to being hired as education and ritual director at Chicago's Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel Congregation.

Kohl Finegold was quite content with that role when she was headhunted, as it were, by Maharat Sara Hurwitz, dean of Yeshivat Maharat, and the very first woman it ordained in 2009. Kohl Finegold was one of only five women occupying such a high level of leadership at a U.S. Orthodox synagogue at the time.

Speaking in her comfortable office at Shaar Hashomayim, where toys and children's games are on the shelves beneath holy texts, Kohl Finegold said she was attracted to the possibility of being ordained because "it's hard to do the job without official credentials or title. People don't know what to call you or what questions they can ask you…

"Being a maharat allows me to do the job more effectively. It clarifies my role."

At the Shaar, Finegold gives sermons from the pulpit, but does not lead services, except to recite the prayers for the governments of Canada and Israel. She can marry a couple – although she has not been called upon to do so thus far – but cannot sign the ketubah.

She does not sit on the bimah with her male colleagues, but rather in the front row of one of the women's sections on either side behind the low-rise mechitzah. She can stand on the bimah to speak when no prayers are in progress.

She does not wear a kippah or tallit at services. At all times, she wears a hat or scarf and a skirt. Covering her head is her choice, something she feels she must do as a married Orthodox woman, and not a requirement of a maharat.

She hasn't had much time to form associations outside the Shaar Hashomayim yet, but is pleased that she was asked to speak to the Kollel Torah MiTzion to senior high school girls.

"Basically, we are trying to find a way to make women feel more connected to Judaism, to be more active in ritual, while remaining within Jewish law," she said.

Change starts with the young and in small steps for Kohl Finegold. One of her innovations is extending to girls Shaar Hashomayim's tradition of appointing "bimah boys," post bar-mitzvah teens who help out at services.

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, is seen with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Harper's Israel's trip worth $239,000 price tag: CIJA

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's trip to Israel reportedly cost at least $239,000, but many members of the Jewish community say it was worth it for its impact.

"We believe that the bilateral relationship was advanced significantly as a result of this trip – including the prime minister's decision to include senior cabinet ministers with mandates to expand the partnership with Israel in many key sectors of the economy," said Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, who was part of the prime minister's delegation.

"Certainly for the Jewish community it provided much valued twin-validation of our place in Canada as well as our connection and commitment to the Jewish state."

Fogel, whose flight was paid for by CIJA but who had three nights' accommodation covered as part of Harper's delegation, added that the composition of the 208-member trip "was varied, reflecting the broad range of Canadian stakeholders in the Canada-Israel relationship."

Twenty-one rabbis were among those who accompanied Harper. One of them, Rabbi Philip Scheim, spiritual leader of Toronto's Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation, downplayed the idea that the cost was high.

"It's such a minor expenditure in day-to-day political life," he said. "To show our compassion and concern for other parts of the world and those engaging in a peace process, it's worth it."

Bernie Farber, former head of the now-defunct Canadian Jewish Congress and a former federal Liberal candidate, who is now senior vice-president of government and external relations for Gemini Power Corp., said the trip "feeds into a kind of… frenzy" in the Canadian Jewish community when it comes to Harper.

"The only thing that seems to matter right now for Canadian Jewish leadership is Israel, to the exclusion of many other policy matters that Harper has brought forward that are not in the best interests of our community, and we have just remained silent," he said, noting recent legislation that denies health care to refugees.

But Rabbi Scheim said the trip could have an impact on the peace process.

"Now [Harper] has an opening to use Canada's influence to lead Israel in a good direction and help create the environment where there could be increased dialogue," he said, noting that Harper also met with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas while he was in the region.

Both Rabbi Scheim and Farber agreed that many delegates were valuable to have on the trip – for example, the rabbi said his experience in Israel with Harper has allowed him to convey his insights to the community and his congregation – but they both said there were some questionable inclusions.

Farber said that in particular, the far-right Jewish Defence League should not have been represented because of what he called its homophobia and Islamophobia.

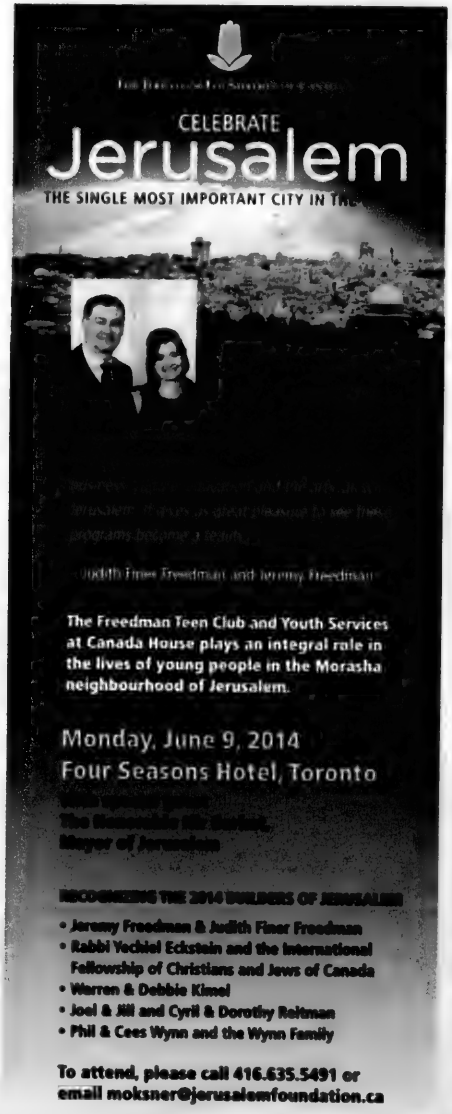
"They have shown their stripes in that respect," he said. "I don't know why anybody in politics would want to be associated with them."

JDL national director Meir Weinstein said going on the trip was "recognition of our contribution… in defence of the community," adding that the organization paid for the flight, but not the accommodations, of its lone representative. He also denied that his group is homophobic and islamophobic.

Weinstein said his group marched with the Jewish LGBT group Kulanu when it took a stand against an anti-Israel group's participation in Toronto's gay Pride parade, and regarding Islam, he said the JDL is "just trying to expose organizations that want Israel destroyed."

On the whole, Farber said the trip was worth the cost, even if it was a bit over-the-top in its display of support for Israel.

"On the one hand, we all understand the need for strong support and we love that a prime minister like Stephen Harper who has shown that support, but we also have to be visionary," he said. "We have to understand that not everything can be based on Harper's support of Israel."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• Jeremy Freedman & Judith Finer Freedman
• Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein and the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews of Canada
• Warren & Debbie Kimel
• Joel & Jill and Cyril & Dorothy Reitman
• Phil & Cees Wynn and the Wynn Family
To attend, please call 416.635.5491 or email moksner@jerusalemfoundation.ca

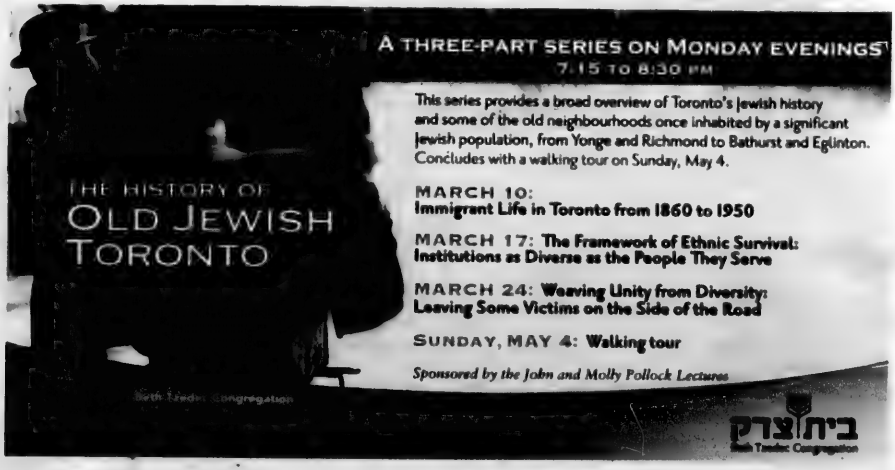
Limmud returns to Winnipeg

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Winnipeg Jewish community's fourth annual Limmud weekend (March 1-2) will feature a wide variety of speakers and topics, including Israel advocacy, Jewish history, religion, culture, art and dance. The list of speakers combines local members of the community with those from Toronto, New York and other cities.

"I'm really looking forward to hearing Craig Dershowitz," says Juliana Birek, one of the Limmud organizers.

To read full story, go to cjnews.com


A THREE-PART SERIES ON MONDAY EVENINGS
7:15 TO 8:30 PM
This series provides a broad overview of Toronto's Jewish history and some of the old neighbourhoods once inhabited by a significant Jewish population, from Yonge and Richmond to Bathurst and Eglinton. Concludes with a walking tour on Sunday, May 4.
THE HISTORY OF
OLD JEWISH
TORONTO
MARCH 10: Immigrant Life in Toronto from 1860 to 1950
MARCH 17: The Framework of Ethnic Survival: Institutions as Diverse as the People They Serve
MARCH 24: Weaving Unity from Diversity: Leaving Some Victims on the Side of the Road
SUNDAY, MAY 4: Walking tour
Sponsored by the John and Molly Pollock Lectures
בית צדק
Beth Tzedec Congregation

Mount Sinai gets $5M gift for new NICU

'Units are critical to saving babies lives,' says Newton Glassman

CJN Staff

Mount Sinai Hospital is set to open a newly constructed neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) this fall, thanks to a $5-million donation from the Newton Glassman Charitable Foundation.

Mount Sinai's NICU, the largest in the GTA, is one of three in Toronto that provides Level 3 care, the highest level of care for premature babies.

In recognition of the Glassman foundation's second major gift – in 2007, it helped purchase life-saving equipment such as ventilators, for the NICU – the unit will be called the Newton Glassman Charitable Foundation Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Glassman, a volunteer and member of Mount Sinai's board, is founder of Canada's second-largest private equity firm, The Catalyst Capital Group Inc.

He said that "neonatal intensive care units are extraordinary places and are critical to saving babies' lives. I am a strong supporter of this area in health care and [am] both honoured and inspired to support Mount Sinai's talented and high-performing team of clinicians."

The Glassman NICU, will have 58 individual suites, which replaces the existing open concept model.

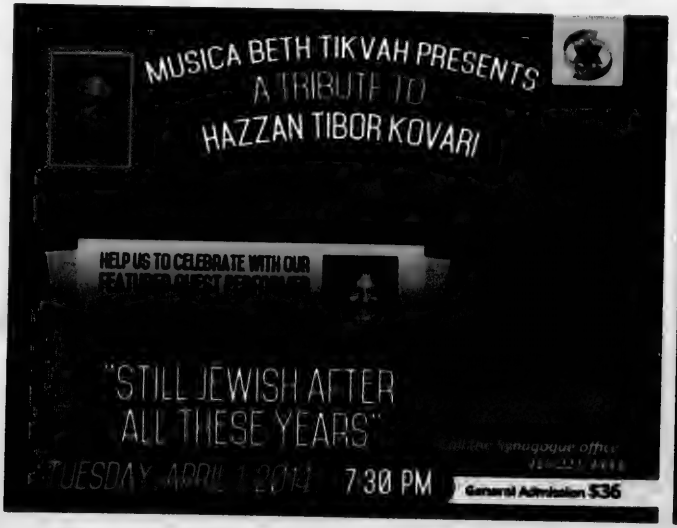
Other features include expanded space per infant, private rooms with parent sleep space, networked technology and electronic clinical documentation to ensure nurses have remote access to patients' vital information, enhanced infection control, retractable walls to accommodate families with multiple births, shared family space equipped with a kitchenette, dining area, a lounge and children's play area, and overnight guest rooms for out-of-town families.

Dr. Shoo Lee, pediatrician-in-chief, said there's been "a major shift in care for infants in neonatal intensive care units where families have become an equal part of the care team.

"This gift will help us facilitate the physical changes needed to maximize the benefits of this new model and empower parents with the environment they need to provide the best care for their infants."

Joseph Mapa, president and CEO of Mount Sinai, said "the clinical expertise and leadership in our neonatal intensive care unit is a crucial area for our hospital. This gift will allow Mount Sinai and flagship programs like women's and infants' health to continue to evolve and reflect changing patients needs and the latest models of health care."

Kristen Schulze holds her newborn Ryan in Mount Sinai Hospital's neonatal intensive care unit. Ryan is one of two twins who were born 12 weeks early.



Five Lev Tahor kids now live in foster care

Continued from page 1

The father lodged a complaint with youth protection that his kids were not being adequately cared for by the Lev Tahor families they were with.

Moscowicz, a marriage counsellor and social worker, came into the picture when a rabbinical council serving Outremont-area chassidic communities asked him to interview the couple to see if their troubled marriage was salvageable.

Today, the five children live in the Moscowiczs' comfortable house in Mile End, in the heart of a chassidic neighbourhood. The couple have six children of their own, with five still living at home. Their eldest teenaged daughters have been a great help.

How long they will be in foster care has not been determined, Moscowicz said.

Three of the children were seen by a visitor one day. They appeared healthy and happy, flourishing under the care of this gentle couple who clearly love children. One laughing toddler repeatedly came in to show her foster father a new bow in her hair.

Their father, who no longer belongs to Lev Tahor, lives in Montreal and visits his children almost daily, Moscowicz said. Their mother remains with Lev Tahor, which last November resettled in Chatham, Ont.

She has had health problems, Moscowicz said, and has little contact with the children.

Moscowicz's claims that the children were not cared for well within Lev Tahor were refuted by the group's spokesperson, Uriel Goldman.

Goldman told *The CJN* that Moscowicz is making assumptions based on hearsay.

"He never was in Lev Tahor, ever. He never came to meet with us," Goldman said.

Moscowicz is the descendant of a rabbinical dynasty of one of the smaller chassidic groups, and identifies today most closely with the Satmar and Belz communities. He wears the traditional earlocks and short pants. He was born and grew up in Montreal, and left for Israel where he married and lived for around 15 years before returning to Montreal about five years ago.

When the rabbinical court approached him last year he said, he knew little about Lev Tahor. "I heard people talking about them. It was very scary. But it was not my business, what could I do?" He was reluctant at first when the rabbis asked him to speak to the couple, whom he met separately.

Since fostering the children, Moscowicz has been contacted by former Lev Tahor members who have told him about life on the inside. He never visited their former Ste-Agathe enclave himself.

Moscowicz said he personally has met three women who were forced to marry while underage, and has heard reliable information about others.

Goldman denied that members are cowed by their leader. Goldman, who has been with Lev Tahor for more than 20 years, said he comes from a prominent Israeli family – his father was a surgeon – and served in the Israel Defence Forces.

"These are ridiculous allegations. Rabbi Helbrans is a straight guy. He says exactly what he thinks. You can ask him anything directly… about why you are doing this… Every single point is discussed.

"But we believe that if you practise Judaism, it has to be the right way. This is very reasonable."

As for the order by a Quebec court in November, upheld on Feb. 3 by an Ontario court, that 14 children from two Lev Tahor families should be placed in temporary foster care because of gross neglect, Goldman responded that the community was under investigation for two years and received "hundreds" of visits by police and child-welfare workers and "they found nothing… We were not charged with anything.

"It is very difficult to hide such a thing [abuse]. If small children are questioned a lot by a social worker, if there is a trauma like that, they will talk."

A few of the children in the Lev Tahor community. [*Paul Lungen photo*]

It would be "impossible," in any case, he added, because abuse is "against the Torah."

He said Lev Tahor wants to go to court and be cross-examined on these allegations. "Take us to court. Let's see if it's true or not."

Moscowicz said Lev Tahor believes, as is prescribed in the Zohar, that if at least one community of Jews in the world adheres "100 per cent" to Judaism then the Mashiach will come.

"For sure, the way they are acting is against the Torah, against everything it means for normal living," said Moscowicz. "But [Rabbi] Helbrans mixes in a lot of Judaism, and they pray so well and long, but it is all forced. By us, no one is forced to pray."

Moscowicz is worried about the 18-minute video Rabbi Helbrans released on Feb. 14, in which he accuses child-welfare workers, the courts and other authorities of persecuting Lev Tahor, going so far as to charge that they are the victims of attempted "genocide."

Moscowicz has not seen the video, only heard about it, but said, "We have to answer that video. We are not fighting with Quebec, and Quebec is not fighting with us. Youth protection is not against Lev Tahor. They are trying to help the children, and we have to be thankful."

Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs Quebec vice-president Luciano Del Negro said he is satisfied that the Quebec youth protection department has "acted with thoroughness and sensitivity in dealing with Lev Tahor.

"Youth protection has acted in a responsible manner. It didn't rush in… It did due diligence and ensured that any action taken was evidence-based," he said. "And not one, but two judges has found the evidence compelling…

"A great deal of thought and care went into determining how to act in the best interests of the children and meet their specific needs."

Few inner resources to help reconnect with our culture

Continued from page 1

However, it is difficult for Israelis to know where to begin in establishing their new Jewish identity. There are few inner resources to help us reconnect with our Jewish culture, heritage and pride. We are the desert generation. Learning the Jewish way of life in the Diaspora is not a natural instinct for many of us, and it is something we need to learn, to make an effort, and to understand, in order to appreciate it and recognize the immense beauty and value in our heritage. But we have to do it, if not for ourselves, then for the future generations, our kids and grandkids. If we do not make this effort, our children will grow up with a lack of Jewish identity or with a new identity that will be a reflection of their non-Jewish secular surroundings.

As this realization sinks in, people will all choose their own way to connect: sending their children to Jewish and/or Israeli schools, sending them to Jewish camps, attending or enrolling the kids in Judaism-related classes, celebrating Jewish holidays, supporting the Jewish community, volunteering or making a donation to a Jewish cause/organization, attending synagogues. But most of all, we will have to thaw out the misconceptions, antagonisms and ignorance that many of us, secular Israelis, have about Judaism and about our fellow Jews in the Diaspora.

We have to make sure we pass on the torch, as it has been passed to us and to our ancestors for thousands of years. If we don't show the way to our kids, if we don't act as role models, get involved in the community and show we care and are proud of our Jewish heritage, as well as of our Israeli heritage, our kids will never learn or care, will have no Jewish identity, and are highly likely to grow up outside Judaism and dissipate into the open arms of Canadian multicultural society.

If we value the Jewish future of our children, and if we value carrying on the amazing story of the Jewish People, then we need to act now, because if we don't, we will not be giving our children the best opportunity to retain that which we value – our Jewish identity. While this is perhaps easily kept in a Jewish society in Israel, it is not easily maintained in a secular Canada.

Are we, Israelis in the Diaspora, going to close the circle and re-learn how to become Jews, or are we going to gradually fade into Jewish non-existence? When we lived in Israel, we paid a high price for being Israelis through wars, military service, isolation and high taxes. Similarly, life as a Jew outside of Israel has its price – a price that I say is well worth paying for the sake of our kids, Israel and the Jewish People.

Sara Dobner is a member of the board of directors of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, a member of the advisory board of Kachol Lavan, and chair of Hamifgash, the Israeli identity program at the Schwartz/Reisman Jewish Community Centre in Vaughan, Ont.

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NOTICE OF AN ANNUAL GENERAL & SPECIAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

TAKE NOTICE that the annual general and special meeting of members of Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre (the "**Corporation**") will be held on Monday, the 24th day of March, 2014 at the hour of 8:00 p.m. (Toronto time) at 750 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Ontario for the purposes detailed in the agenda ***to be posted on the Corporation's website*** (the "**Agenda**").

Please note that:

a) **you are entitled to appoint a proxyholder (who may or not be a member of the Corporation) to attend and act as your representative at this annual general and special meeting of members (a form of proxy being attached as Schedule "H" to the Agenda);**

b) members of the Corporation may be nominated by written petition signed by not less than twenty-five (25) persons, who are members and eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting. The petitions must be accompanied by the written consent of the nominee and must be received by the Chairman of the Nominations Committee at least fifteen (15) days prior to the Annual General Meeting, after which time no further nominations

c) there will be a Directors meeting immediately after this annual general and special meeting of Members.

DATED at Toronto, the 19th day of February, 2014.

BY ORDER OF THE CHAIR

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

AUTHORS & POETS

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

...ive readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes.

They should not exceed 2,000 words. Selected submissions will appear in the Passover Supplement of The CJN on April 10 2014, in either our Montreal or our Toronto edition, or both. If you have a preference, please state it on your submission. Not all submissions can be published. We look for originality. Please don't send more than three entries.

E-mail submissions to:

cjnliterarysupplement@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is March 10, 2014.

We can only accept e-mail submissions.

Move over Shushan: 'other' Purims

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Other Purims? Most of us are familiar with the holiday that begins in just over two weeks. You know: Achashverosh, Vashti, Haman, Mordechai and Esther. Hanging, happiness and hamantashen. Well it turns out that aside from that tale, there are dozens of other Purims out there.

Why are these holidays named after Purim "and not Pesach or Chanukah, each of which likewise celebrates Jewish redemption from the designs of our enemies?" Rabbi Shlomo Jakobovits points out that Jews are not supposed to rejoice in the downfall of an enemy. We don't celebrate the death of the Egyptians and there is no mitzvah of feasting and revelry on Chanukah.

Purim is different. The Megillah tells us that Purim's villain, Haman, is a descendant of Amalek, the tribe said to confront Jews from generation to generation. Just as Jews are commanded to celebrate the defeat of Haman on Purim, communities or families who have defeated their own "Hamans" have proclaimed their own "Purims." **[http://bit.ly/othpurim1]**

These "Purims" transcend time and international borders, and present a fascinating glimpse into the oppression of the Jews – and their salvation:

Purim Vincent: In 1614, baker Vincent (Vintz) Fettmilch organized attacks on the Jews of Frankfurt-am-Main and forced them to leave their city. "After several months, the king of Germany learned that a flagrant injustice had been done to the Jews. He commanded that the baker be killed, his house destroyed, his body beheaded, quartered and hung on the gates of the city." The king called on the Jews to return to their homes with full honours. They proclaimed a celebration on the 20th of Adar. **[bit.ly/othpurim2]**

Purim of Sharif (Magistrate): "The city of Tripoli, which contained a large Jewish community, was threatened with extermination when the ruler of Tunis besieged the city. The leader had threatened to kill all the inhabitants of the city. With just one last fortress to conquer, a sudden epidemic spread among his soldiers and he was forced to withdraw with the remains of his army." The Jews of Tripoli instituted the 24th of Tevet as a Purim. **[bit.ly/othpurim3]**

Purim Hitler: Observed on the 20th of Kislev, the day the Jews of Casablanca were liberated from the Nazi invaders in 1942. The "Hitler megillah" proclaimed, "And the month... was turned for us from sorrow to rejoicing and the making of holiday and the giving of gifts to the poor. Cursed be Hitler, cursed be Mussolini." **[bit.ly/othpurim4]**

Sometimes "other" Purims follow deliverance from a looming natural disaster:

Purim of Ancona: Celebrated by Greek Jews on the 21st of Tevet to remember severe earthquakes that occurred in that city on that day (Dec. 29, 1690), threatening a great catastrophe. The feast is preceded by a fast, and special prayers are ordained for both days.

Purim di Fuoco ("Fire Purim"): Observed by the Jews of Padua on the 11th of Sivan, to commemorate the great conflagration in that city in 1795, which was extinguished through extraordinary efforts on the part of the vice-magistrate.

Looking for more Purims? After all, who can say no to a story with a happy ending? The *Jewish Encyclopedia* lists over two dozen other Purims for your perusal. **[bit.ly/othpurim5]**

highway@rogers.com

The example of a balanced life

Sephardi Window
Rabbi Ilan Acoca

I recently attended a Shabbaton in Seattle with some of my congregants.

One of the speakers was Rabbi Daniel Bouskila, the director of the Sephardic Educational Center, who gave an eloquent sermon on "Rav Yitzhak Nissim: The Somewhat Forgotten Sephardic Chief Rabbi."

Rabbi Bouskila spoke about the greatness of Rabbi Nissim, his scholarship, courage, simplicity and softness.

Rabbi Nissim was born in Baghdad in 1896, studied at the Jewish Religious Academy there, and became known for his scholarship at an early age. In 1925, he immigrated to Jerusalem. In 1926, he published his first major commentary, *Tzedaka U-Mishpat*. His home soon became a meeting place for scholars and community leaders.

Prior to his election as Sephardi chief rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Nissim did not hold any public position and was a businessman.

Chacham Nissim was elected chief rabbi in 1925 and soon became a key figure on the Chief Rabbinate Council. As Sephardi chief rabbi, he also served as president of Israel's Rabbinical High Court. Noted for his independence of thought, Rabbi Nissim sought to create a harmonious relationship among all sections of Israel's society, including its secular element. He frequently travelled to kibbutzim to discuss religion with kibbutz members.

At times, Rabbi Nissim showed extreme bravery.

His most famous such act was his refusal to meet Pope Paul VI during the papal visit to the Holy Land in January 1964, after the pope refused to meet the Jewish religious leadership.

His reason was that Pope Paul VI spent only 11 hours in Israel and avoided Israeli-controlled west Jerusalem, refusing to meet there with Rabbi Nissim. The rabbi, therefore, refused to attend the official welcome arranged in Megido.

Rabbi Nissim was highly criticized by many officials, who even publicly proclaimed that if he did not meet the pope, he would have to resign. However, Rabbi Nissim showed great courage and did not change his decision.

A few years later, Chacham Nissim attacked Pope Paul VI for his implied criticism of Israel's reprisal raid on Beirut Airport, and he accused the pope and the Vatican of conducting a "general campaign" against the Jewish religion and the Jewish People. The chief rabbi alleged that the pope was not moved by the lives lost in the terrorist bombing of the Machane Yehuda market place in Jerusalem a month earlier, "but he hurried to console Lebanon after the destruction of a few planes without loss of life." The rabbi thus again showed great leadership.

However, Rabbi Nissim also had the trait of Aaron the high priest, who was known to be loving and one who pursued peace.

One of his famous statements was that the rabbis of our generation should go down to the nation rather than having the people come to them.

What struck me the most about this illustrious leader was his ability to be like both Moses and Aaron.

Moses was known to be direct and blunt, while Aaron was the soft compromiser who desired nothing more than harmony within the nation.

Rabbi Nissim was a blend of both.

Let us all learn from Chacham Nissim about living a balanced life.

A new give-and-take with Israel

Class Act
Daniel Held

Once upon a time, Jews gave money to a fledgling state to ensure its survival. Blue-and-white JNF pushkes represented the hope of a struggling nation held together by young kids walking up and down New York subway cars in June 1967 collecting nickels and dimes. I have planted trees on Tu b'Shvat to help the Negev bloom, walked to raise money for immigrants and donated to build the educational and social welfare infrastructure of a country that is still a relative infant among the family of nations. Having seen it first hand, there's no question that our philanthropic dollars help build a country of which we should be proud.

But today is not 1948, 1967, 1973 or 1991. While we continue to support the growth of the periphery, the building of reservoirs and the security of cities under siege, we are also told the story of the start-up nation. Israel is a country that has played key roles in the development of the iPhone, laptops and SodaStream, a country that sells apps to Google and has discovered offshore gas that will fund a sovereign wealth fund worth billions.

Our relationship with Israel has changed, and Jewish education is the beneficiary.

I once watched a video of Golda Meir addressing an American audience asking for money. Today, I am participating in an online jam session in which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is asking stakeholders around the world to deliberate on how the State of Israel should invest in global Jewish education.

Let me take a step back.

Birthright Israel has been a game-changer in Jewish education. It's the first initiative that will reach 50 per cent market penetration – in the coming years, 50 per cent of Jews aged 18 to 26 will have visited Israel; it has changed the way we link Israel to Jewish identity; and, most strikingly, it marks the first time the State of Israel has invested strategically in Diaspora Jewish identity. Birthright remains a three-way partnership funded by local Jewish federations, a group of philanthropists, and the government of Israel.

Since its investment in Birthright, the State of Israel has taken other steps to support Jewish education. It supports long-term Israel programs through Masa, it has reformatted the types of educational emissaries it sends around the world – including shinshinim, who penetrate day schools, supplementary schools, Hillels, synagogues and summer camps in Toronto and elsewhere – and it has shifted the Jewish Agency's agenda to focus not only on aliyah but on Jewish identity.

Last summer, the government took this relationship a step farther when it announced the Prime Minister's Initiative, which will invest $300 million each year in Jewish education. This week, hundreds of educators and stakeholders are participating in an online jam session, discussing how these funds could be used to benefit both Israel and global Jewry.

The relationship between world Jewry and Israel used to be unidirectional. We offered money to support a fledgling state. At the time, that was needed. Today, by mutual necessity, it's symbiotic. Just as we continue to value and invest in the growth and development of the state, the State of Israel values and invests in the growth and vitality of world Jewry.

A sanctuary should be built by peace

From the Bimah
Rabbi Yael Splansky

It is a twisted irony that during the very week when we read Parshat Trumah, a synagogue was vandalized. When we read the Torah's description of how to build a holy place, the Tabernacle, another holy place, Kehillat Ra'anan, was defaced. Rabbi Tamar Kolberg and the members of her vibrant Reform Jewish community in Israel were shocked to find graffiti scrolled across the façade of their synagogue.

The preschool students, their parents and teachers were the first to see what was described as a "tattoo," the letters burned into the Jerusalem stone building. What was the message of the violators? It was not about occupation or settlements, but *sinat chinam*, senseless hatred of Jew against Jew.

It isn't the first time. Stones have been thrown to shatter the windows of the Reform and Conservative synagogues in the otherwise quiet and dignified community of Ra'anana. But the letters spray-painted on the walls this time are more dangerous. Scrawled were two source references, for this is the way one Jew talks to another Jew – through sacred texts. The way these texts were used like weapons, however, is an abomination, an affront to God. The first source reference was Psalm 139: 21-22: "Do I not hate them, O God, those who hate You? And am not I grieved by those that rise up against You? I hate them with perfect hatred. I count them as my enemies."

The second source reference points to Rambam's Laws of Repentance, Chapter III, 14: "None of them has a place in the World to Come, even though they are Jews. They are cut down and lost, doomed by the magnitude of their wickedness forever… infidels, unbelievers in Torah… sinners."

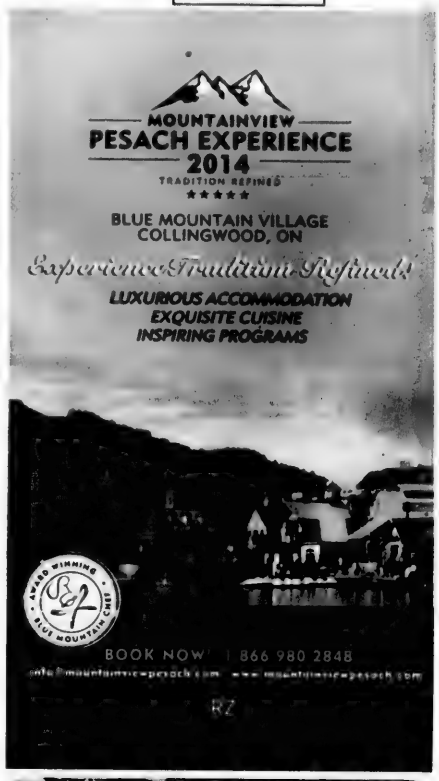
Misplaced and misguided, these slanderous words were assigned to Reform Jews who read from the same Torah, honour the same Shabbat, sing the same prayers to the same God.

The police say they have investigated, but no suspects have been identified. It seems the authorities tolerate those who show no tolerance for Liberal Judaism. And so the attacks continue.

Rabbi Gilad Kariv, the president of the Israeli Movement for Progressive Judaism, calls upon the Orthodox rabbis and leaders of Ra'anana to publicly denounce these unlawful acts of extremism, but he also calls upon the Israeli public to "wake up from its slumber and take revolutionary educational and social steps that will allow all of us to lead meaningful and significant Jewish lives, based on a worldview that stems from our great Torah legacy, for 'its ways are the ways of pleasantness and all her paths lead to peace.'" (Proverbs 3:17) The perpetrators of this hate crime may believe they are motivated by their devotion to God and Torah, but that's impossible. By definition, only actions sincerely devoted to God and Torah lead to peace. When a person defaces a synagogue, he is motivated by something altogether different.

The graffiti have been sandblasted away by now, but the memory must motivate us to self-correct an ugly trait that shows itself from time to time among the Jewish People – in Ra'anana, at the Kotel, in Toronto. Let the words of Parshat Trumah instruct us: "Make for Me a sanctuary," God says, "so that I may dwell among them." Some sanctuaries are built of mortar and brick, some are built with words. All are built and sustained by peace.

(For more, see Rabbi Samuel Lebens' article in Ha'aretz, *Feb. 4.)*



Torontonians help spread the light of Torah in new home

Revitalizing the(olive)oil business in Israel

Jennifer Tzivia MacLeod
Special to the CJN

Two Torontonians are taking charge to revitalize one of Israel's oldest agricultural areas.

Combining tzedakah and environmentalism, Nili Abrahams and Rabbi Shmuel Veffer, through their new organization, Shemen LaMeor, are harvesting olives that would otherwise be wasted, creating pure oil to raise money for yeshivas, schools and food programs for needy families in their community, Yavne'el, and throughout the Lower Galilee.

Abrahams said the phrase *shemen lameor*, from the Torah, means "oil that illuminates. The whole purpose is to use the oil to spread light... and light is Torah."

To highlight the importance of trees, the pair, along with local rabbis and other community members, unveiled the organization this past Tu b'Shvat. The organization will use the area's surplus olives and boutique kosher olive oil to build relationships within and beyond Israel.

They are also raising awareness about the increasingly dire situation in the region. The Lower Galilee, two hours from Jerusalem, had strong agricultural origins, which still attract many olim.

"People love the idea of connection with the land," says Abrahams, "of a safe haven for the children... a very simple lifestyle." Yet that agricultural way of life is threatened by many forces.

Twenty minutes from Tiberias, Yavne'el, home to 3,000 residents, "had an incredible heyday of agriculture: tobacco, date palms, olives, citrus," Abrahams says.

But the older generation of farmers can't maintain their fields. And, she says, "if farmers can't afford to keep up their farms... there is a significant number of Arabs waiting to buy up the land."

According to the latest Israeli Census Bureau statistics, for 2011, the Arab population in northern Israel (not including Haifa) is just over 53 per cent, while Jews make up just under 44 per cent.

The Israeli government and organizations such as Nefesh b'Nefesh have been battling to rebuild the Jewish presence in the region since the 1980s.

In December 2013, the World Zionist Organization's settlement division announced its intention to build two new towns for 100,000 Jewish residents. At the time, MK Hanna Swaid criticized the move as part of a "demographic war" that is meaningless without "infrastructure improvements and a reduction in the... employment gaps."

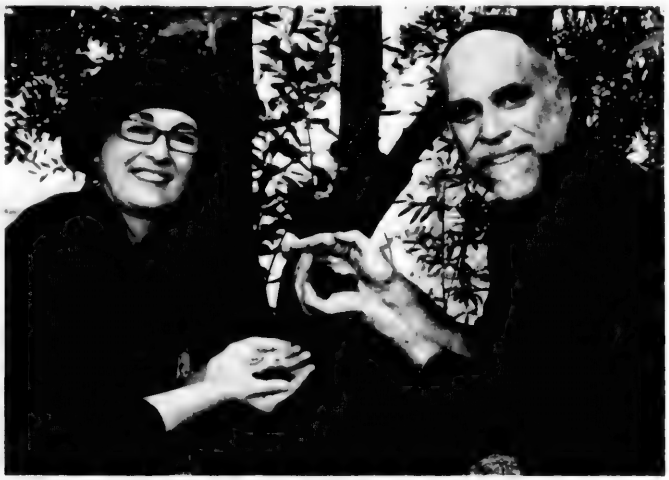
Idyllic in some ways, life in the Lower Galilee can be devastating for families. "Most of the men aren't home for the week, just for Shabbat. Some travel to Jerusalem, some travel to Bnei Brak... to work, and then come home for Shabbat," says Abrahams, who has run a bed and breakfast with her husband, Arnie, since making aliyah to the area 2 1/2 years ago.

Shemen LaMeor will create jobs and reinvigorate the region's agriculture while preserving its unique character. "Kids here know how to plant, herd sheep, ride horses," Abrahams says. "They really have a very good feel for the land; they know how to lead a simple life."

Rabbi Veffer, a graduate of the University of Waterloo and creator of the KosherLamp, which has changed late-night Shabbat reading for religious families around the world, was associate rabbi of The Village Shul Aish HaTorah Learning Centre in Toronto before returning to Israel nearly four years ago.

Abrahams says they both wanted to help out by tapping into local resources that would otherwise be wasted. "A lot of the olive trees are actually abandoned, not picked, nothing's done with them.

"The area is blessed with abundance. Everyone's got citrus and passion fruit and olives... We're reclaiming the land, reclaiming the olives."



Nili Abrahams and Rabbi Shmuel Veffer show off local olives and trees in the Yavne'el area. *[Shemen LaMeor photo]*

Rich in Jewish history, the area around Yavne'el is where, according to the Book of Judges, the warrior Deborah led her battle against Canaanite general Sisera. It's also the site of the Golani tree, the oak tree symbolizing the legendary IDF brigade. Nearby Tiberias is considered the fourth-holiest city in Judaism, where the Jerusalem Talmud was written and the great teacher Maimonides is buried.

Shemen LaMeor has built relationships with farmers to secure 1,500 dunam (1.5 square kilometres) of land to prepare for its first picking season this fall. They will compensate some farmers with a tax receipt, others with a percentage of the oil for personal use or resale.

Abrahams says the organization welcomes volunteers, seminary and yeshiva students, and other willing groups, who will donate their labour for a morning or afternoon and learn how olives are picked and processed into one of Israel's purest, most ancient bounties.

"We'll press the oil for them on the spot... it'll be a great part of their visit to the north."

Together, they hope to extend the Jewish world's appreciation for Israel in its entirety. "I see this as a way of going beyond Jerusalem," says Abrahams. "Every single part of Israel is vital... to our existence.

"The abundance here is God-given. We don't want to waste that... so we're using the abundance for *ohr*, to spread the light of Torah around the world."

For more information about Shemen LaMeor, visit shemenlameor.org.

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Jewish Agency steps in to aid Ukraine Jews

JTA

JERUSALEM — The Jewish Agency said it would offer immediate emergency assistance to the Jewish community of coup-ravaged Ukraine and help secure its institutions.

Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky's announcement on Saturday came hours after protests in the former Soviet republic forced President Viktor Yanukovych to flee Kiev and the parliament announced new presidential elections for late May. Dozens died in violent demonstrations leading to the coup.

Natan Sharansky

Some 200,000 Jews live in Ukraine, mostly in the capital of Kiev, according to the Jewish Agency.

The Jewish Agency will help Ukraine through its Emergency Assistance Fund for Jewish Communities, which enables Jewish communities at risk to strengthen security measures.

Sharansky said in a statement that Ukraine is "one of the most vibrant Jewish communities in the world, with dozens of active Jewish organizations and institutions. Recent events have shown that we must strengthen these institutions' security measures. We have a moral responsibility to ensure the safety and security of Ukraine's Jews."

He told Jewish Agency leaders on Saturday night that the organization is in "constant contact" with the Jewish leadership in Ukraine and is following events there closely.

Rabbi Moshe Reuven Azman, a Chabad rabbi in Ukraine, told *Ma'ariv* that he advised his congregation to leave Kiev and the country, if possible.

To aid the Jews of Kiev and other Jewish Ukrainian communities, relief efforts, including the delivery of food and other urgent necessities, have been expanded by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, an overseas partner of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Montreal's Federation CJA.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto has launched the Jewish Ukraine Crisis Fund, with funds raised being allocated to the JDC and the Jewish Agency for Israel.

To contribute, visit ujadonations.com/Ukraine, or call 416-631-5705.

Kiev, through blood and fire…go to cjnews.com

Oldest known Shoah survivor dies at 110

JTA

LONDON — Alice Herz-Sommer, the 110-year-old Holocaust survivor and concert pianist whose life was the subject of an Oscar-nominated documentary, has died.

Herz-Sommer, who was believed to be the oldest Holocaust survivor and was still playing the piano, died Sunday morning in London.

The Lady in Number 6: Music Saved My Life, the 38-minute film directed by Montrealer Malcolm Clarke about her life, is up for best short documentary at the Academy Awards to be handed out next month.

The film showed her indomitable optimism, cheerfulness and vitality despite all the upheavals and horrors she faced in life.

"I know there is bad in the world, but I look for the good," she told *JTA* in a brief telephone interview recently, and "music is my life, music is God."

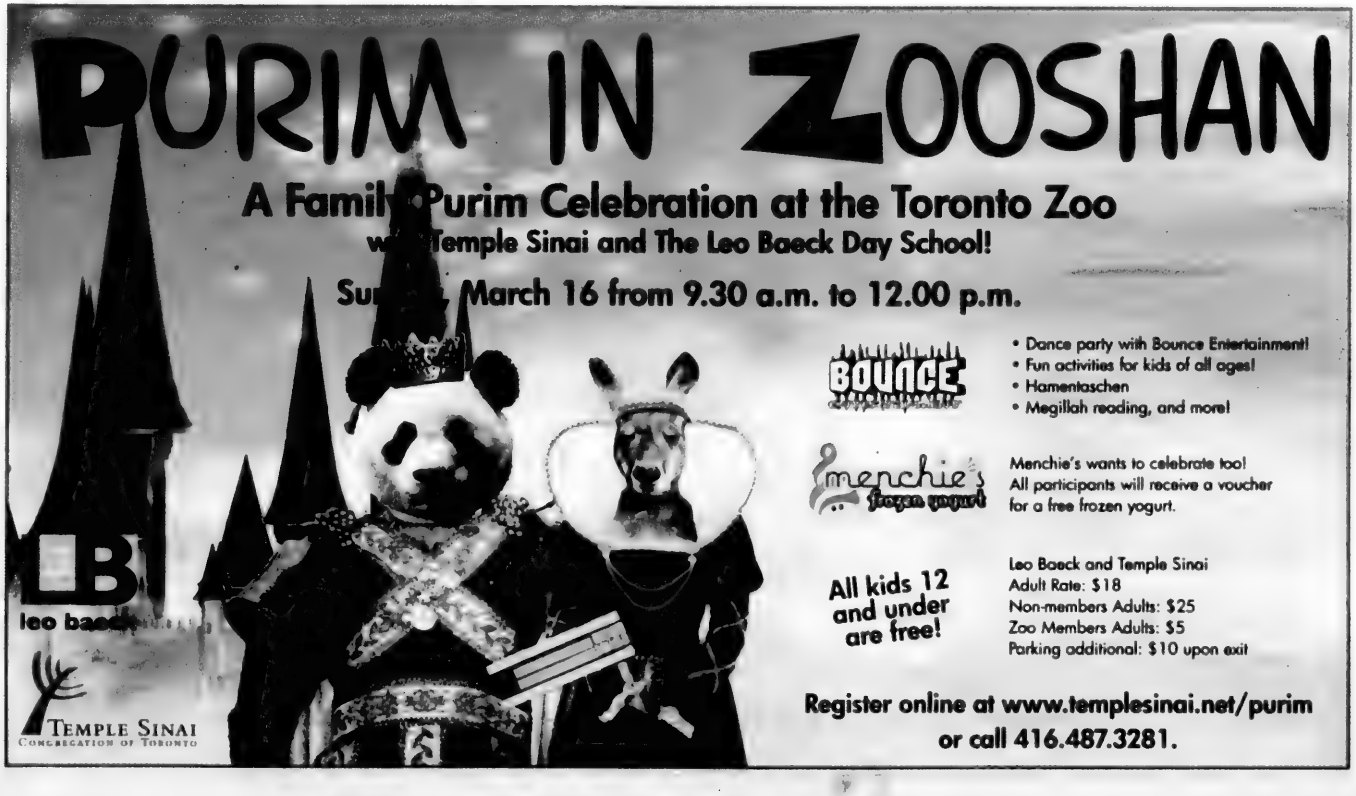
Alice Herz-Sommer *[YouTube screenshot]*

Trained as a pianist from childhood, Herz-Sommer made her concert debut as a teenager, then married and had a son.

In 1943, however, Herz-Sommer and her husband, Leopold, and their six-year old son Raphael (Rafi), were transported to the Nazi model concentration camp Theresienstadt. Her husband died in the Nazi camp, but Herz-Sommer became a member of the camp orchestra and gave more than 100 recitals while protecting her son.

Liberated in 1945, Herz-Sommer and her son returned to Prague but four years later left for Israel. There she taught at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and performed in concerts frequently attended by Golda Meir, while her son became a concert cellist.

After 37 years in Israel, she followed her son to London in 1986. She remained in London even after her son died 15 years later at the age of 65.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Israel will help fund Diaspora Jewish education: Liberman

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Investing in Jewish education in the Diaspora is the best way to address the "demographic catastrophe" facing North American Jews, and Israel wants to help, Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman said last week.

In a speech to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations last week in Jerusalem, Liberman cited "Jewish continuity" as the most pressing issue affecting world Jewry and pledged that starting with its next budget, the Israeli government would invest $365 million annually – an amount to be matched by federations in the Diaspora – to improve the accessibility and affordability of Jewish education.

"For many years, Israeli officials have called on our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora… to donate your time, energies and funds to Israel," he said.

"However, I turn to you today and say that, while we are enormously and forever grateful for your assistance, we believe it is now time to concentrate on the challenges facing your own communities, especially those emanating from the dangerous trends in the Jewish community demonstrated in the recent survey."

Reacting to the Pew survey on American Jewry that documented an intermarriage rate as high as 58 per cent and found that 31 per cent of American Jews said they didn't feel attached to Israel, Liberman said he believes "that the antidote to this rising assimilation, intermarriage and disengagement is education.

"Today, unfortunately, Jewish children are being kept from the Jewish classrooms because of the exorbitant and prohibitive costs of Jewish education in the U.S. It cannot be, it should not be, that a Jewish child will not be able to receive a good Jewish education because of financial reasons."

He added that if this trend continues, "we will lose another six million Jews in a generation or two."

The commitment from the Israeli government, in partnership with Jewish federations in North America who are expected to match Israel's investment, "cannot become just another small project and needs to be the central point of partnership between us," Liberman said.

"This must become the most pressing issue on the global Jewish agenda. From my point of view, this is more pressing than any other issue, including the Palestinian negotiations or the Iranian nuclear threat."

Avigdor Liberman speaks during a session of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, held in Jerusalem on Feb. 18. *[Flash90 photo]*

Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said this paradigm shift that has the Israeli government investing in the Diaspora has been brewing for more than a decade.

"It is something I predicted would happen as the State of Israel matured and recognized its duty to the Diaspora – that if it invests in the Diaspora, it's really investing in itself," Sokolsky said.

"When you think about it, from 1948 on, the first 60 years was about building the State of Israel, and, now it's about building the people of Israel. In that endeavour, Israel can take the lead. Birthright was the first example of that. It was a groundbreaker in terms of the government of Israel investing hard-earned Israeli tax dollars into Jewish identity in the Diaspora. It was unheard of before then."

Despite Liberman's suggestion that Diaspora Jewish communities ought to focus their fundraising allocations on continuity efforts, Sokolsky said he doesn't believe Liberman was implying that funding for Israel is no longer necessary.

"I didn't read it that way at all," Sokolsky said, adding that Liberman's statements won't affect the amount of money the federation donates to Israeli causes, which stands at about 20 per cent of its annual campaign funds, or about $12 million a year.

UIA Federations Canada president and CEO Linda Kislowicz said the idea is that federations will continue to support Israel as they traditionally have in the past.

"But Israel has a role to play financially and otherwise in helping to strengthen Diaspora communities because we are one global Jewish People," Kislowicz said.

Sokolsky said he's hopeful that Liberman's education proposal could be in the works within the next three or four years.

"I think it will be realized. I think this is the first of many announcements, but it's going to take time," Sokolsky said, adding that federation would jump at the opportunity to be a part of this international Jewish education network.

"Our federation gives more than any other Jewish federation to Jewish education, so we have no problem matching what a fair share for Toronto would be. We put in $12 million a year to Jewish education already – $10 million of that is in subsidies for Jewish education. That's more than New York, Chicago, Miami, Baltimore, Boston and Los Angeles combined. No one comes close to what we put in. So we're happy to meet that challenge."

But, he added, "$700 million [a year] is probably not going to be enough to significantly lower the cost of Jewish education, but it would sure help."

What's most important about Liberman's announcement is that the Israeli government understands "that there is a strong and compelling need to invest strategically and financially in strengthening the education of Diaspora Jews and that is a wonderful thing," Kislowicz said.

"I think the message is that we need to be investing more aggressively… in strengthening Jewish education… and making Jewish education more affordable and more accessible to families and young people because… that's the foundation," she said.

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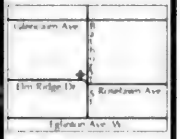

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Artistic director fired, season shut down

It's lights out at Winnipeg Jewish Theatre

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — In what can appropriately be described as a dramatic move, the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre (WJT) announced last week that it has fired artistic director Michael Nathanson and is cancelling *Shiksa*, by local playwright Cairn Moore, which was to be its final production of the current season.

Nathanson has headed the 26-year-old company for the past seven years.

Michael Nathanson

The Feb. 18 moves came as a result of declining attendance and finances. In a statement posted on its website, the board said that it's "examining our financial position and considering how we may proceed forward. We apologize to our patrons, supporters, donors and to all of the artists and theatre practitioners who have helped us grow over the years for this abrupt end to our season. We look forward to returning to the stage in the future."

The WJT board is not commenting on Nathanson's firing, which reportedly is the subject of litigation. He did not respond to *The CJN*'s calls for comment.

WJT board president Judith Putter was hopeful that the shutdown is temporary. "The theatre is a precarious business," she said. "We hope we will be able to bounce back. We are working hard at finding a solution."

In a short report on the situation in the local *Jewish Post and News*, editor Bernie Bellan noted that "there was a fair bit of discontent from long-time theatregoers over the diminution of Jewish content. Season ticket sales especially had declined drastically in recent years."

The WJT was in its 26th season. When it was founded by music teacher Bev Aronovitch and a group of friends and supporters in 1987, it was the first new Jewish theatre in Canada in many decades. Its mandate was to present professional theatre of high artistic quality that reflects the Jewish experience of the past, present and future and to encourage the creation of new Canadian plays of Jewish interest.

The WJT started as a non-profit community theatre producing two plays a year. In 1992-93, WJT became a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres, operating under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Theatre Agreement negotiated with the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

In both the 1998-99 and 2000-01 seasons, attendance surpassed 6,000 tickets sold. Box office revenue surpassed $100,000 for the first time in 2000-01.

Nathanson was hired as artistic director for the 2006-07 season, succeeding longtime artistic director Kayla Gordon who left to pursue other ventures in the theatre world. A former Winnipegger, Nathanson had been living in the United States, where he was trying to make it as a playwright.

He came aboard at an earlier low point in the WJT's financial health. Over his first four seasons, the WJT enjoyed an artistic revitalization. Productions of *Death of a Salesman* in January 2008 and *Lenin's Embalmers* in October 2010 were the two best-attended shows of the past decade.

"Our shows enjoyed rave reviews and, despite competing with theatres whose budgets are between six times to 26 times as large, have been hailed as being as good as, if not the best, theatrical productions in Winnipeg," Nathanson told *The CJN* in 2012.

WJT was also the first theatre in Winnipeg in the past decade to have presented a new play – Nathanson's *Talk* – which was subsequently named a finalist for the Governor General's Award in Drama in October 2009. (*Talk* has since been staged by Toronto's Harold Green Jewish Theatre and at the National Arts Centre Festival in Ottawa and in Israel.

In the spring of 2012, Nathanson and the WJT staged the ambitious and costly *Angels in America: Millenium Approaches*. While the production received much critical praise, it lost money – as did *Perestroika*, which kicked off the theatre's 25th season the following fall.

Gordon, Nathanson's predecessor, said the WJT's precarious financial situation is not unusual. She was the WJT's artistic director for 11 years.

"Every couple of years, the board would say that we lacked the funds to stage a second or third show," she said. "But we always found a way to survive.

"It happens with other Jewish theatres as well. Such is life in small theatre with small audiences."

She said she hopes the current shutdown will be a temporary hurdle and that the theatre will be able to carry on.

Tibetan refugees get help in B.C.

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — Sometime in the next few months two Tibetans will arrive in Vancouver from Arunachal Pradesh, in the far northeast of India.

When they arrive, a group from Vancouver's Congregation Or Shalom will be waiting for them, to aid with their resettlement in this country. The group, which calls itself the Momo Minyan, was formed in June 2013 with the purpose of helping these Tibetans create a new life in British Columbia. In February, they completed and filed the sponsorship papers. Now, they wait until the newcomers arrive.

"It means receiving them at the airport, finding a place for them to stay, ensuring they get registered for health benefits, helping them learn the language and find a job, and assisting them as they integrate socially," said David Berson, a member of the Minyan.

It promises to be no small undertaking.

"The Tibetans are amazing people, but they're very reserved and shy in their mannerisms," Berson said. "There's going to be big cultural differences."

Back in 2010, at the urging of the Dalai Lama, Prime Minister Stephen Harper agreed to allow 1,000 displaced Tibetans to resettle in Canada. To make the transition possible, though, each one required sponsorship by a Canadian group or individual. Vicki Robinson, a facilitator for the Momo Minyan, said Or Shalom is the first synagogue in Canada to sponsor Tibetans under this program. The Minyan has been working with the Canadian Tibetan Society and the United Church of Canada to get the applications completed.

"The United Church has a lot of experience in resettlement, working with the Canadian Immigration Committee and getting all the permits lined up," Berson said. "It makes you feel good, as a member of the Jewish community, to be partnering with interfaith communities also involved in this."

The group will be responsible for the Tibetans' entire integration package, including finding and paying for an apartment, paying for health insurance and food. "Until we know who we're absorbing, it's difficult to know what kind of work will be appropriate," he said. The refugees come from poverty stricken villages, but may be quite educated nonetheless.

The Minyan has begun fundraising in the Or Shalom community and will extend its efforts to the wider community when more is known about the particular immigrants they are sponsoring. The Canadian government estimates sponsorship cost at $12,000 per person per year but with the cost of living in Vancouver, that won't be enough, Berson said.

"It's guiding our efforts in terms of fundraising, but we think we'll need more than that. The government is very nicely providing them with landed immigrant status, but not any other aid, per se, in the process."

Members of the Momo Minyan united in a mutual agreement to participate in this humanitarian effort, one that resonated with many in the synagogue, Berson said. "The opportunity for us to be able to extend our hospitality to another group that has suffered exile and have a 'diaspora' is probably one element in why I got involved."

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Alec Bukhman	Feb 6/14	7905 Bayview Avenue	Oscar Grubert	Feb 11/14	81 Lower Village Gate
Norman Green	Feb 5/14	262 Ridley Blvd.	Sara Alperin	Feb 12/14	
Edna Shaul	Feb 6/14	54 Old Colony Road	Iouri Goutchkov	Feb 12/14	6830 Bathurst Street
Sidney Bregman	Feb 9/14	40 Rosehill Avenue	Mia Ritter	Feb 11/14	429 Walmer Road
Louis White	Feb 10/14	3000 Yonge Street	Pia Baker	Feb 14/14	3705 Bathurst Street
Lou Shaffer	Feb 8/14	55 Skymark Avenue	Dr. Joel Spector	Feb 13/14	350 Lynnwood Avenue
Joe Vinegar	Feb 10/14	2 Neptune Drive	Allen Halberstadt	Feb 14/14	50 Maxwell Court
Hannah Malka Nudama	Feb 11/14	3560 Bathurst Street	Rose Zippan	Feb 13/14	10 Torresdale Avenue

A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
HEBREW DASIC

Uri Goldberg	Feb 8/14	275 Woodbridge Avenue
Ken Kronis	Feb 12/14	105 Avenue N.W.

Party service encourages donations to charities

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

When Bonnie Levine's daughter, Jenna, was about to turn seven last fall, Levine wanted to make organizing the upcoming party easy, and she wanted to impart a lesson on the importance of doing good.

Levine had just become the first chief ambassador for Quebec and Eastern Canada for ECHOage, an online birthday party service that encourages donations to charities.

ECHOage was founded in 2008 by Torontonians Alison Smith and Debbie Zinman, a former Montrealer, mothers who were looking for a way to avoid the endless shopping for birthday gifts, while instilling in their kids the value of philanthropy. But they didn't want to take away the fun of the occasion by insisting that children forgo all gifts for the sake of charitable giving.

ECHOage (www.echoage.com) offers a similar service to that of other electronic invitation sites, providing cards and managing RSVPs, but with an important difference.

No presents are brought to an ECHOage party. Instead, monetary gifts are made through the website's secure system. The birthday child and the parents must commit to donating half of the total collected to one of the dozens of registered Canadian not-for-profit organizations that have endorsed ECHOage (others are also considered if they meet certain criteria, such as benefiting children or families).

The other half of the money is kept by the birthday girl or boy.

The charities benefit not only from the contributions, but also from exposure on the ECHOage site, which also offers marketing tools to help them reach supporters, Levine said.

Donors receive tax receipts for gifts of at least $15, although some charities issue them for less.

The party hosts pay a 4.9 per cent processing fee on the half that goes to charity. Other revenue for ECHOage is derived from charities paying a premium for better placement, for example, Levine said.

In her daughter's case, the 30 or so girls at her party gave a total of over $600. Jenna, who attends Akiva School in Montreal, turned over 50 per cent to the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation and used the rest to buy a bicycle.

Levine notes that, in this way, children gain not only an awareness of needs in the community, but also experience in handling money. She adds that the ECHOage parties are environmentally friendly, eliminating the paper that would otherwise be used for invitations and wrapping. It also eliminates the inevitable waste of getting presents the child does not want, she said.

Over its five-year history, use of the ECHOage site has raised nearly $2.5 million for more than 250 charities in Canada and the United States, Levine said.

The service is well established in Toronto, Western Canada and many American cities, she said, and, although it has only been promoted in Montreal for a few months, already 100 such parties have been held in the city.

Quite a few Jewish community and Israel-based causes are partners, and more from Montreal are being added as Levine spreads the word.

Among them are at least five Toronto Jewish day schools and Jewish Family & Child; Mazon Canada; Save a Child's Heart; Na'amat Canada; Kadimah, Ramah, B'nai Brith and Harry Bronfman Y Camps; Ve'ahavta; Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation; Forever Chai Foundation of Canada; Kfar Yeladim David; One Family; and Montreal's Mada Community Centre.

In December, ECHOage expanded its service to include bar/bat mitzvahs and events for adults, whether birthdays, anniversaries or retirement parties. With grown-up parties, anywhere from 50 to 100 per cent of the gifts collected may be directed to the selected charity.

Being an ECHOage ambassador has been an ideal way for Levine, who also has a four-year-old daughter, to re-enter the work force, combining her interests in business and community.

Bonnie Levine

She holds a bachelor of commerce degree from McGill University and an MBA from HEC Montréal, and worked as a management consultant in Chicago for five years before returning to her native city.

Levine points out that her daughter and her daughter's friend, also in Grade 2 and celebrating a seventh birthday, were not passive recipients. They both worked to raise money for their favourite causes and to buy something they really wanted.

"This is the power of ECHOage – putting kids in the driver's seat and empowering them to play a more significant role in giving back. What better way than on the occasion of their birthday to say to the world that they want to see things happen in a better way and to do something meaningful," she said.

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New approaches to the Psalms

Views & Reviews
Martin Lockshin

A New Psalm: The Psalms as Literature
Rabbi Benjamin Segal
Gefen Publishing House
and
Joy, Despair and Hope: Reading Psalms
Rabbi Edward Feld
Cascade Books

For believers, prayer may be the most basic religious activity. Moses Maimonides once described an initiative that would be doomed to failure by saying that it would be as difficult as trying to tell religious people that they are not allowed to pray. No one, he suggested, would listen.

Prayer in Judaism, goes back even to the days when animal sacrifices were offered in the Temple in Jerusalem. The biblical book of Psalms is the oldest collection of Jewish prayers, containing some that are almost 3,000 years old. Even today, much of the Jewish prayer book consists of excerpts from Psalms.

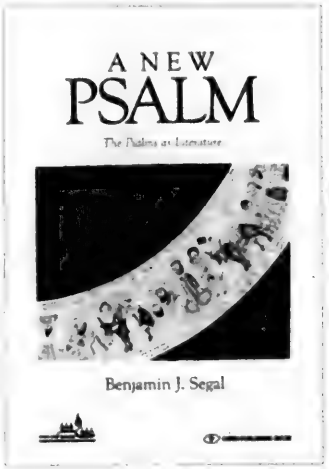
While the Torah (the five books of Moses) consists of God's communication to human beings, Psalms consists of human communication to God. No wonder Jews over the centuries turned to the book of Psalms for inspiration in times of joy or trouble. Finding the right words for addressing God is not easy, but using the hallowed words of the Psalmist helps.

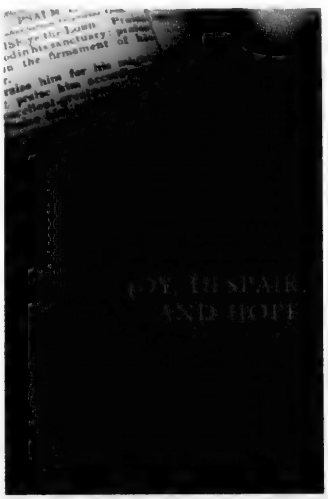
Many people, including some who live observant lives, have difficulty with prayer. The whole idea of talking to God, whether using our own words or traditional ones, and expecting God to hear (much less respond) is foreign to the modern mindset.

Two new books try to make the book of Psalms more accessible: *A New Psalm: The Psalms as Literature*, by Rabbi Benjamin Segal, and *Joy, Despair and Hope: Reading Psalms*, by Rabbi Edward Feld. Both authors are Conservative rabbis. They take different approaches, but both strive to make Psalms more relevant to contemporary readers.

Rabbi Segal's book is more complete. Just short of 700 pages, it provides the Hebrew text and an English translation for each one of the 150 chapters of Psalms, explaining the text in literary terms. He draws heavily on the scholarship of Jewish and Christian writers but fits them into a Jewish framework.

Rabbi Feld's much slimmer volume (151 pages) is harder to categorize. He discusses only 14 psalms at any length. And while he does deal with literary issues, the focus of his book is on making the psalms relevant to people who have difficulty with prayer and whose belief itself may be somewhat shaky. He writes very openly about his own struggles of faith. "The forgiving God is not close at hand to me. I know the judgmental universe but not the forgiving one." But he takes solace from the book of Psalms: "It is the knowledge that even the biblical poet waits – longs for and hopes – that allows my sense of God's absence to have religious legitimacy."





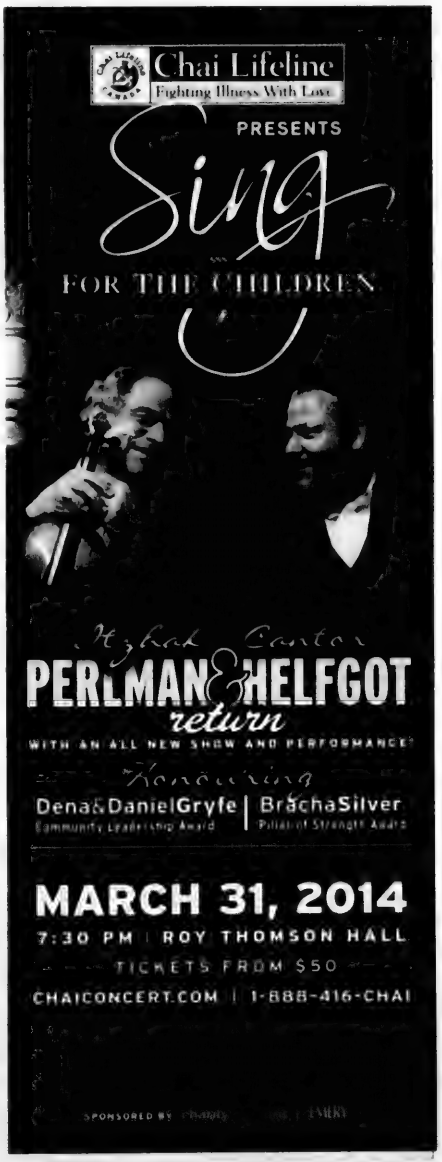
Despite the traditional claim that I mentioned above – that the Torah constitutes God talking to us, while in Psalms we talk to God – both authors emphasize that the distinction may be overstated.

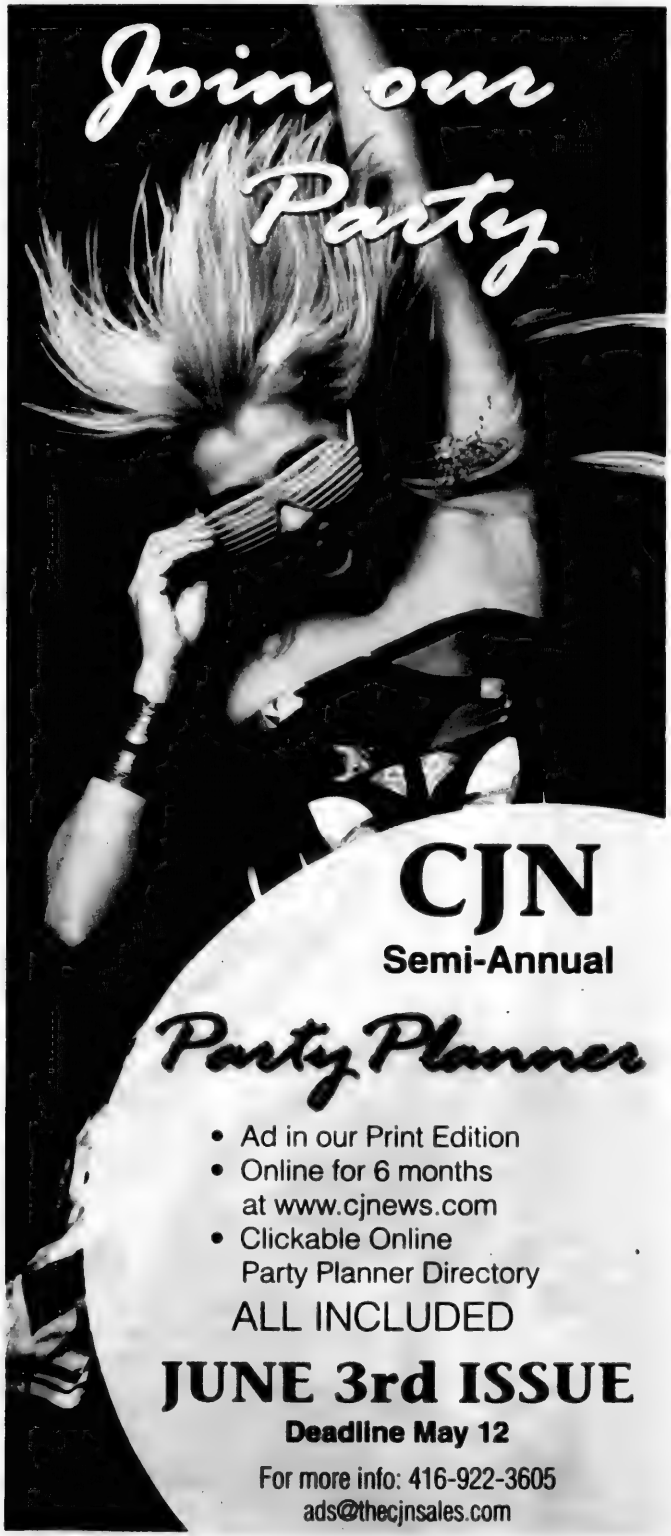
The voice of God often appears in Psalms. For example, in Psalm 91, the speaker appears to be in need of protection from "the terror of the night, the flight of an arrow by daylight, the plague stalking in the dark, the scourge that may ravage at noon." The psalm finishes with a change of voice, when God, without being introduced, starts to speak: "Because he desired Me, I will rescue him/ I will raise him up for he knows My Name/ When he calls on Me, I will answer him/ I will be with him in distress." In other words, the book of Psalms can also "speak" to those who are uncomfortable with addressing God, since many psalms, like this one, climax in God addressing us.

Curiously, the two authors have very different readings of the last line of that psalm. Rabbi Segal translates it as "With length of days I will sate him and cause him to see My salvation," explaining that God is requesting patience from and trying to reduce the expectations of the supplicant who wanted to be protected. God is accordingly saying that salvation will be seen only in the fullness of time. Rabbi Segal writes that "Psalm 91 suggests a more nuanced faith... a critique of naiveté," a critique of the belief that we can expect God's protection from immediate danger.

Rabbi Feld, on the other hand, senses a more positive turn in the last verse of Psalm 91, which he translates as, "I will sate him with a full life and show him My salvation." In this understanding, God is promising even more than what was requested. The prayer was just for protection, but "God promises something that had not been mentioned or even alluded to earlier: the fullness of days, time. It is the fullness of time that is the ultimate reward... Only God's voice is able to assure the positive: length of days, peacefulness and bounty... The voice of God takes us to a place only God can reassure us about – the future... In imagining that future, the Psalmist offers the ultimate reassurance of prayer: the future contains hope, blessing will come."

Those who have no problems pouring out their voices in sincere prayer will presumably not need these books. But more skeptical Jews would find something of benefit in each of these thoughtful books.





EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

BOOK SPOTLIGHTS YIDDISH WOMEN WRITERS

Editor **Frieda Forman** and translators **Sylvia Lustgarten** and **Sam Blatt** are slated to give "dramatic readings" at an upcoming book launch for *The Exile Book of Yiddish Women Writers*, a book (published in 2013) that features stories by 13 Yiddish women writers about their youth in Europe, Canada and America.

"We see women's lives open up in a way that we've never seen before," said editor Forman about the book's various short stories, novel excerpts, memoirs and personal essays, all written originally in Yiddish.

Recurrent themes include family life during a period of tumultuous change, participation in social and political movements, sexual awakening and the longing for independence, education and creative expression.

Marking International Women's Day, the launch is sponsored by the United Jewish People's Order, Toronto. Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave., Sunday March 2, 1-p.m. Free admission. 416-789-5502.

• • •

Friends of Yiddish: Janie Respitz performs *Itzik Manger and His Megillah*, a one-woman show hosted by the Friends of Yiddish for its "Purim Freylekhs." Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. (between Sheppard and Finch). Sunday March 9, 2 p.m. Refreshments, door prizes. FOY Members free, guests $10. RSVP by March 5 to 416-458-1440 or yiddish18@yahoo.ca

• • •

Names in the News: Perhaps you caught the first episode of the new cable-TV series *24 Hour Rental* that began airing last week on Super Channel. It's "a bizarre dark comedy, a satire poking fun at all the violence and crazy things that go on on TV and movies," according to **Ari Posner**, who composes the background music for the show.

Originally from Winnipeg, the Juno-award-winning composer moved to Toronto in 1989 to study music at York University. He has been here ever since, creating scores for countless films and TV shows. Recently he and writing partner **Amin Bhatia** have been scoring the hit police drama *Flashpoint*.

His most challenging assignment? It might have been *My Awkward Sexual Adventure*, a romantic comedy that screened at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival: "It had a lot of off-colour scenes in it, so figuring out a way to do music for it was often very tricky." But in general, "It's often whatever you're facing at the moment. Any new project is a blank slate. You're very often scratching your head at the beginning and saying 'How am I going to do this?'"

Posner and his wife have "lots of family roots" in Toronto, so he says he's not considering a move to Los Angeles. However, several years ago he and Bhatia were nominated for an Emmy Award and went to the ceremony. "I got a taste of the scene there – it was very tempting." www.arimusic.com

• • •

Names in the News II: Rap artist **D-Sisive's** latest music video *Friend of Mine* was directed by **Brilin Bernstein** and **Daniel AM Rosenberg**, both of whom grew up in the Leslie and Lawrence area of Toronto. Seasoned videographers, Bernstein and Rosenberg have both been nominated for a Juno Award in the Video of the Year category. The Junos are slated for Winnipeg, March 24 to 30.

• • •

Arts in Brief

Between Stages presents *Tough Jews*, by **Michael Ross Albert**, a dramatic staged reading of a play about a family of Jewish bootleggers in Toronto's Kensington Market of old. Directed by **David Ferry**, with **Claire Armstrong, Ben Clost, Natasha Greenblatt, Luke Humphrey, Tanja Jacobs, Adam Pettle** and **Jordan Pettle**. $10 at the door. Miles Nadal JCC, Saturday March 1, 7 p.m.

Critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** continues his series on film director **Steven Spielberg** with a look at *Catch Me If You Can, The Sugarland Express, Munich* and *The Adventures of Tin Tin*. $11.25, $6 for students. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday March 3, 7 to 9 p.m.

Klezmer Purim Celebration with the **Yiddish Swingtet Duo** (**Jonno Lightstone** and **Jordan Klapman**) as well as hamantashen. $4. An Adult 55+ Culture Education Community presentation. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday March 6, 2 p.m. (doors open 1:30 p.m.) Pre-register by Feb 28, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• • •

At the Galleries: *Sisters in Resistance*, an exhibition of oil paintings by **Harry Teifenbach**, celebrates women resistance fighters of World War II. Miles Nadal JCC Gallery, Feb. 28 to March 24. **Sara Grinate**, the subject of one of the paintings, will attend the reception, March 13, 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Jordan Klapman is one of the two members of the Yiddish Swingtet Duo.

The Jewish contribution

Visiting Tampa Bay's historic legacy

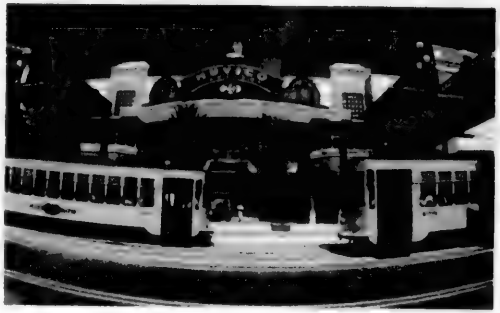
Maureen Littlejohn
Special to The CJN

Most snowbirds heading to Tampa Bay are looking for sun and a little poolside lounging, but for culture and history buffs, there's another fascinating activity that's easy to do – search out the area's Jewish roots.

In the city's historic district of Ybor City those roots are deep. "There were at least 90 different businesses owned by Jewish families. The biggest wave of Jewish immigrants came in the 1880s, and there was also a large boom in the 1910s. Some of the families are still in the Tampa Bay area," says Liz McCoy, curator of programs and education at the Ybor City Museum Society.

The best way to start your exploration is at the Jewish Roots of Ybor exhibit at the Ybor City Museum (until the end of 2014) on Ninth Avenue. Photos of families, founding groups, homes and businesses give visitors a fascinating glimpse into Tampa's Jewish community at the turn of the last century. Meeting in their homes, Ybor City Jews formed Congregation Schaarai Zedek in 1894.

In 1903 a split between Reform and Orthodox members resulted in the formation of the Orthodox Rodeph Sholom. Although the synagogues of both congregations are now in South Tampa and the old Jewish businesses have also left, the retail buildings remain. Ask at the museum for a map and audio unit for a self-guided tour, or sign up for a two-hour guided tour for $18.



The historic TECO Line streetcar and, at right, an archival photo of Max Argintar's menswear store which opened in 1908. It was the last of the Jewish-owned businesses to shut its doors in the district.

Walking the quaint brick streets, it's easy to get a feel for the way things used to be. The buildings still are dressed with decorative wrought iron balconies, and even though many have become nightclubs and restaurants, you just need to scan the top of the structures to see the original family name and year spelled out in contrasting concrete. Usually, Jewish families built their own retail outlets with living quarters on the upper floor. There are also historic plaques to help you find your way around.

Ybor City was stoked into existence by stogies. In the 1880s, Vicente Martinez-Ybor, a prominent Spanish-born cigar manufacturer, moved his cigar-making operation from Key West to some scrubland just northeast of Tampa. Other factory-owners followed and almost overnight, immigrants from Spain, Cuba, Germany and Italy arrived for jobs in the cigar trade. With this growth came opportunities for merchants.

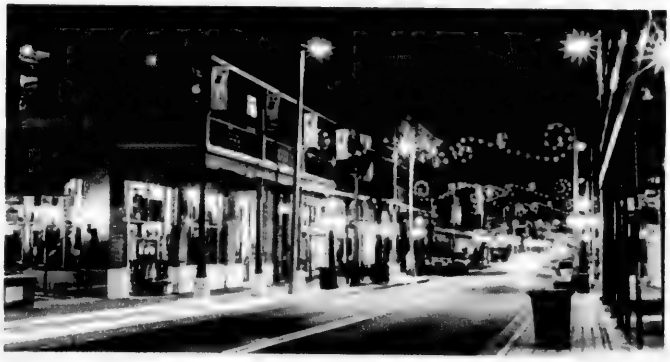
Many Romanian Jews escaped from marginalizing laws in their home country and flocked to Ybor City where they started businesses specializing in everything from hats to housewares to clothing to groceries. Successful families included the Kaunitzs, the Argintars, Simovitzs, Kasriels, Wohls, Buchmans and Bobos.

"The Kaunitz family was the first Jewish retailer in the 1890s with the El Sombrero Blanco dry goods store. It was called El Sombrero Blanco because Isidore Kaunitz was known for wearing a white cowboy-style hat. He was very supportive to other Jewish immigrants, giving them jobs and helping them get loans to start up their own businesses," says McCoy.

Another bustling business was the Blue Ribbon Supermarket, owned by the Bobo family. "The matriarch, Sahla Bobo, took over the store in the 1950s. She had eight children, including boys, but she was in charge. She was a real feminist trailblazer and kept the store open until the 1990s," says McCoy.

Max Argintar's menswear store, which opened in 1908, was the last of the Jewish-owned businesses to shut its doors in the district in 2004.

Continued on page 34



The historic district of Ybor City *(Robert La Follette photo)*

CJN Giveaways

PERLMAN & HELFGOT return

2 LUCKY READERS will win 1 PAIR of tickets to
Chai Lifeline's ***"SING FOR THE CHILDREN"***
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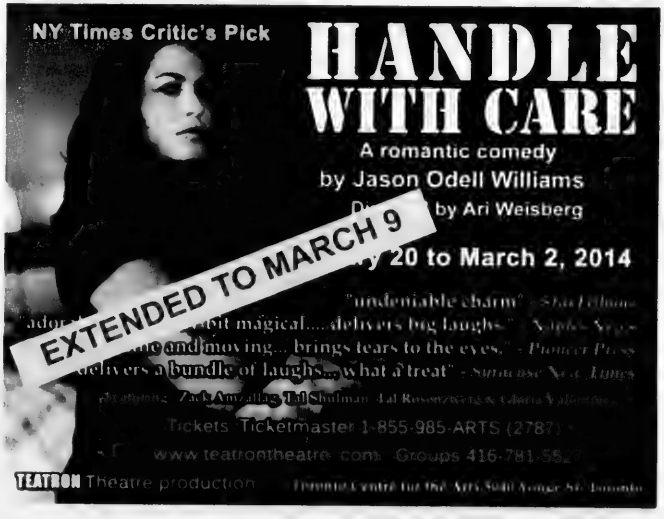
To be eligible to win click on "Contests" at www.cjnews.com and email us your name, address and daytime phone number or mail/fax us the information. All entries received by 3 p.m. on **Monday, March 17th** are eligible. The winning entries will be randomly selected at The CJN offices on **Tuesday, March 18th.** The winners will be notified the same day. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. One entry per person.

The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with contestants.

Email your information to "contest@thecjn.ca" Re: **"SING" Contest**, or mail to:
The Canadian Jewish News 1750 Steeles Ave. W. Suite 218, Concord, Ontario, L4K 2L7 or fax to: 416-391-0949.

Employees and family members of The CJN, Canadian Primedia, Chai Lifeline are not eligible to enter.



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Jaffa Road ready to hit the road

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Toronto quintet Jaffa Road, known for songs that blend many of the world's most vibrant musical cultures, is planning to go on a world tour this summer, says founder Aaron Lightstone.

The tour will focus on compositions from the group's newest album, *Where the Light Gets In*, which received a Juno nomination and won the group the Canadian Folk Music Award for world music group of the year in 2013.

"We're hoping to get opportunities in Europe, Israel and the United States," says Lightstone, who plays oud, guitar and synthesizer for the group.

Lightstone is currently working out the dates and locations with an American touring company. The global exposure would allow the group to spread its influence beyond its niche audience in Canada.

"It's always exciting to have the opportunity to bring the music to new audiences," says Aviva Chernick, the group's entrancing lead singer, who is also currently working on a solo project.

Jaffa Road's music is a fusion of many musical cultures including Jewish, Arabic and Indian, alongside rock, pop, jazz and electronica. The group also brings traditional songs and prayers to a modern musical context.

Among the songs on *Where the Light Gets In* is a modern spin on the Jewish prayer *Sim Shalom*, and *Avre Los Ojos*, an updated version of a Turkish protest song originally recorded in 1907.

The mix of styles coming together fits a band from a multicultural centre like Toronto, Lightstone says.

Jaffa Road, from left, Aaron Lightstone, Chris Gartner, Aviva Chernick, Jeff Wilson and Sundar Viswanathan

"It's the natural sounds that we hear around us," he says. "It's only natural that curious musicians are going to start experimenting with blending them together."

Jaffa Road hopes to do some concerts in Canada leading up to the tour, Lightstone says.

Jaffa Road will perform at Temple Holy Blossom in Toronto in honour of Yom Ha'atzmaut on Monday, May 5. Some members of the group will join Chernick at a concert at Temple Sinai in June, which will feature a mix of her originals and Jaffa Road tunes.

The band also hopes to play in Yukon at the Dawson City Music Festival in July. Lightstone says the group has really enjoyed bringing its world-beat textures to northern, remote communities.

The five members of Jaffa Road are busy with their own side projects, which include teaching, music therapy and other musical endeavours, until the spring.

Chernick says that as a result, it's been hard to squeeze in time with her band-mates to practice.

"We usually get together only when we have something to play for," she says.

"That is the reality of being a musician in our society. It is rarely possible to do just that one project. They're multifaceted people with lots going on, but that also means it's a treat when we get to be together."

As for their victory at the Canadian Folk Music Awards, Chernick says the win was very unexpected.

"To get that acknowledgment and that recognition... even just to be nominated was very exciting," Lightstone says. "To actually win is just a really nice validation from our community of musical peers."

The Canadian Jewish news

The CJN is hiring

The CJN is actively seeking a dynamic reporter to join our team in Toronto. Interested applicants should be well-versed in the Canadian Jewish community and possess a strong writing voice. Experience working in a newsroom, as well as blogging, social media and website-management skills are considered assets.

Send your resumé and writing samples to *cjninfo@gmail.com*.

Jewish community numbers 30,000

Continued from page 33

While you're in Ybor City, hop on the historic TECO Line Streetcar right behind the museum. The bright yellow car chugs by Channelside's cruise terminal, dry dock and aquarium and then passes downtown landmarks including the hockey arena, stadium and art museum. The downtown area known as South Tampa has gone through a major transformation in the past years.

"There are 30,000 Jews living in Tampa and 46 per cent now live in South Tampa due to an urban revival," says Jack Ross, executive director of the Tampa Jewish Community Center. In order to service this population the JCC plans to transform Fort Homer Hesterly Armory, a 1930s architectural gem, into the area's beating heart.

The 10-acre property was an encampment for Teddy Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" at the outbreak of the Spanish American War and the Armory, dedicated the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked, has staged shows for performers including Elvis Presley and James Brown. Martin Luther King spoke there, as did John F. Kennedy in 1963, four days before his assassination. In 2012 the Tampa Jewish Community Centre signed a 99-year lease with an option to buy the 75,000 sq. ft. building.

Now it is set to become the Jewish Community Center South Campus. Originally located in South Tampa, the JCC relocated to a 21-acre North Campus when people were moving to the suburbs in the 1960s. Now there is enough demand for two separate locations.

"We've given great consideration to the conservation of this historic landmark, which we will revive and restore," says Ross. The city plans to relocate its fine arts centre within the complex, and the Tampa General Hospital plans to sublet space for a health and wellness centre.

"The South Campus will have the usual education and fitness components, but it's also going to be a premiere event centre," says Ross, adding, "almost half of our $20 million budget has been raised." The biggest pledges came from Bryan Glazer, co-chair of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, who committed $4 million, and Tampa Bay Lightning owner Jeff Vinik's family, which pledged $1.5 million. Ross hopes to see the doors open in 2016.

From Ybor City's roots to South Tampa's urban revival, Jewish spirit has contributed significantly to Tampa Bay making it a destination with so much more to see than sun and sand

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

'PURPOSE COACH' HELPS WORKERS FIND THEIR 'WHY'

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

All working Canadians know what they do for a living, and most know how they do it. However, other than generating profit for the company they work for, not all of them find meaning in their work or know the true reason behind it.

Stephen Shedletzky, a "purpose coach" from Toronto, is motivated to inspire other Canadians to find their "why," the reason that drives them to live a peaceful and fulfilled life, and apply it to their work.

The "why" behind Shedletzky's coaching work is to help create a world where most people wake up every day excited to go to work and come home in the evening fulfilled by the job they've done.

A Gallup poll found that 70 per cent of all professionals in the United States aren't "highly engaged," meaning they don't enjoy what they do or find meaning in their work.

"That's terrible," Shedletzky told *The CJN*. "We spend 98,000 hours, on average, working in our lifetime. I feel that we ought to enjoy it. But the current reality is most people are cracking the whip as opposed to working together to figure out what's the cause of this organization beyond just profit."

Shedletzky, 26, speaks with ordinary people to help them find happiness and purpose in the work they do. He also makes presentations to dozens of companies each year, hoping to inspire and make workers think about the things that bring their lives meaning.

Since many people are disengaged, they don't think it's possible to aspire to anything great, Shedletzky says. Many of his group talks are about helping people operate at their best, which often comes from caring for others and working as a team.

"It's all about purpose and community," he explains. "The value of networking is not how many people can you meet. It's about how many people you can introduce to others."

Stephen Shedletzky

In 2011, Shedletzky founded InspirAction, an organization designed to inspire people to lead with purpose. He also works as a freelance consultant for Simon Sinek, the best-selling author who popularized the "Start With Why" concept that Shedletzky works with. Sinek's TED Talk about the concept is currently the second-most-watched talk in the conference's history.

Like Sinek, who is one of his mentors, Shedletzky is a poised, confident speaker, which makes it surprising to discover that he had a stutter as a boy and a fear of public speaking for many years.

"I never saw myself as a kid that could actually go up and entertain people or engage people," he says.

As a student at the University of Western Ontario, Shedletzky took a class called "Advanced Presentation Skills," taught by professor Denis Shackel. After showing his class Martin Luther King Jr.'s iconic "I Have a Dream" speech, Shackel told his students to prepare and deliver a speech with the same rousing passion as King on any topic of their choice.

The next class, Shedletzky stood up in front of his peers to talk about growing up with a stutter and his journey with the Speech & Stuttering Institute to overcome a fear of public speaking.

"[That class] was the first time in my life that I finally spoke about something that was more important than me," he says. "I finally had a message, something where I could show up to serve others. And it was the most alive and fulfilling experience that I had had in my life."

Public speaking isn't just something Shedletzky overcame with training and commitment. It's now one of his greatest strengths.

"[Shackel] taught me that everyone ought to do the things that light us up," he says. "Each person's definition of success ought to be their own definition."

Shedletzky can also relate to the life of a bored, cubicle drone, as he had a dreary two-year stint working in the corporate consulting world. Much of his day-to-day work was focused on helping companies maximize profits rather than helping their employees become more enriched and motivated.

He describes this workplace life as "a toxic environment where people walk around with cortisol in their veins and they're slowly dying… and I was."

In this search for meaning, Shedletzky found happiness as a motivational coach. He trained with the Coaching Training Institute (CTI) beginning in June 2011, shortly before he started InspirAction and working with Sinek's team. Shedletzky says he hopes to work as a purpose coach and continue to inspire people for the rest of his life.

InspirAction™

One of the ways to create happiness is to volunteer, Shedletzky says. By helping a cause and doing something in line with one's strengths, people don't only get energy, but they make personal connections and friends that make them feel more fulfilled.

Another way he became inspired was speaking with his grandfather, whom he refers to as Zaide Ben.

Ben Shedletzky was a successful butcher who survived the Shoah. During the war, he lived in a ghetto, hid in the Polish countryside and fought against the Nazis. Still healthy at age 97, Ben remains a role model to his grandson.

"My zaide is great because he inspired me with the message that we ought to work together to serve others and look out for people in our tribe," Shedletzky says.

"What we know about human beings is that if we're faced with hardship, it's those who co-operate, who work together, that survive and thrive."

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

What's New

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of March 13 is March 3. The deadline for the issue of March 20 is March 10. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Saturday, March 1

ORCHESTRA OF EXILES

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto shows the film *Orchestra of Exiles* with live classical music, 8:30 p.m. Tickets, $18/$25. www.bayt.ca or 905-886-3810.

CRASH COURSE IN HISTORY

Judy Hazan discusses "The difference between exile and Diaspora," 9:30 a.m., Lodzer Centre Congregation, 12 Heaton St.

WOMEN'S SHABBAT

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow is the guest speaker at Beth Tikvah Synagogue's women's Shabbat.

Sunday, March 2

FAREWELL BABYLON

Iraqi writer **Naim Kattan,** author of *Farewell to Babylon* discusses the history of the Jews of Iraq and the community's destruction, Congregation Darchei Noam. Doors open at 7 p.m., program begins at 7:30 p.m. $5/$10.

HEBREW CLASSES

Beth Emeth Synagogue offers a free Hebrew reading course for those who can slowly read Hebrew and want practice reading, singing and understanding prayers. Six sessions, starts today. Call 416-633-3838 to register.

IT'S ABOUT PURIM

Seymour Epstein discusses a "radical reinterpretation of Esther," 10 a.m., Temple Har Zion. $3/$6.

YIDDISH WOMEN WRITERS

A book launch for *The Exile Book of Yiddish Women Writers,* edited by **Frieda Forman,** will be held at 1 p.m., at the Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave.

NEW JERUSALEM

Director **Mitchell Cushman** and actor **David Eisner** discuss the play *New Jerusalem,* 10:15 a.m., Temple Sinai.

PURIM FESTIVAL

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a family Purim carnival, 10 a.m., St. Andrew's Junior High School, 131 Fenn Ave. 416-385-3910 or email roby@oraynu.org.

An adult Purim party will be held **March 8**, 7:30 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr.

Monday, March 3

CLUB FOR VISION IMPAIRED

Rhonda Silver performs at a pre-Purim supper for the Jewish Club for the Vision Impaired, 7 p.m., Bernard Betel Centre. Non-members $10. RSVP **Bess** 905-508-2892.

Tuesday, March 4

BOOK CLUB

Michelle Gewurtz reviews *The Hare with the Amber Eyes,* 8 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Tuesdays with Larry discusses the story of director **Sarah Polley** and her search to find her biological father, 2 p.m. $5.

TOASTMASTERS

Improve your public speaking skills with the Toastmasters, noon, Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. RSVP lipalippers@gmail.com.

WOMEN'S TORAH STUDY

Stuart Hytman leads women's Torah study at the Village Shul, 8 p.m. Call **Gail Sussman** 416-787-9886, or email torahtext613@gmail.com.

Wednesday, March 5

CORRUPTION IN ISRAEL

Yonah Jeremy Bob, legal correspondent for the *Jerusalem Post,* discusses "A first-hand account of the Olmert, Liberman and chief rabbi trials and an analysis of public corruption in Israel," 8 p.m., Baycrest Terrace, 55 Ameer Ave. Sponsored by the Toronto Partnership Minyan.

USER-FRIENDLY JUDAISM

Rabbi Miriam Margles leads a 3-part series on "User-Friendly Judaism," Eastminster Parlour, 310 Danforth Ave. Sponsored by the Danforth Jewish Circle. RSVP info@djctoronto.com.

JOB FAIR

JVS Toronto invites job seekers to a Home Depot recruitment event, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., 540 Finch Ave. W. Pre-register at hmartins@jvstoronto.org.

Thursday, March 6

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Debby Feldman of JF&CS discusses "Domestic violence and abuse in the Jewish community," 8 p.m. Temple Har Zion.

Continued on page 37

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Upcoming Events

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

Volunteers who speak Russian, Yiddish, Hungarian, German, Polish, Cantonese or Romanian are needed to speak with clients at Baycrest. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2572, or email volunteer@baycrest.org.

Reena is looking for a friendly visitor to spend time with a Jewish man who is currently in Baycrest Hospital. Call **Mille Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112 or email mchadwick@reena.org.

The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women is seeking volunteer legal support workers to help women who have experienced abuse. Training is provided. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

PURIM AND PASSOVER

Bracha Feder leads 3 study sessions on Purim and Passover, starting **March 11**, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $10 for non-members.

JEWISH TORONTO HISTORY

Jack Lipinsky discusses "The History of Jewish Toronto," in 3 sessions, 7:15 p.m., Beth Tzedec. March 10, "Immigrant Life in Toronto, 1860-1950."

PREWAR NEWS CULTURE

Mordechai Ben-Dat discusses "Reflections on the News Culture prior to World War II," **March 10**, 7:30 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

MORASHA CLASSES

Yehudit Shier Weisberg teaches a course on "Jewish Prayer: A Gift for Living," starting **March 26**, Beth Emeth Synagogue. To register, call, 416-789-7400.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 6-week bereavement group for men and women who have lost a spouse, starting April 24. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10 for more information.

WINE AND CHEESE PARTY

Beth David Synagogue hosts a wine-and-cheese reception, **March 11**, 7:30 p.m. Sample kosher wines for Passover and visit gift and craft boutiques. Tickets $10/$15. Call 416-633-5500, ext. 28, or visit www.beth-david.com.

PURIM FUN

Friends of Yiddish presents a one-woman show, *Itzik Manger and his Megilleh*, featuring **Janie Respitz**, 2 p.m., **March 9**, Beth Tikvah Synagogue. RSVP 416-458-1440 or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

The Toronto Partnership Minyan will hold a Megillah reading with both men and women reading, followed by a festive celebration, 8:45 p.m., **March 15**, Toronto Heschel School, 819 Sheppard Ave. W. Email torontopartnershipminyan@gmail.com.

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents *The Megillah According to Disney*, **March 15**, after Megillah reading at 8:15 p.m.; **March 16** at 1:30 p.m. Call 416-633-3838 for tickets.

Temple Sinai holds a Purim party, **March 15**, 7 p.m. For tickets, call 416-487-3281. **March 16**, Temple Sinai and Leo Baeck Day School celebrate Purim at the Toronto Zoo, 9:30 a.m.-noon.

Temple Har Zion's Purim shpiel and Megillah reading start **March 15**, 7 p.m.

Danforth Jewish Circle holds its Purim Learning and Celebration, **March 16**, 2-4 p.m., 310 Danforth Ave.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women under 50 who have lost a spouse in the last few years, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A multi-session group for women. Starts March 3, 7 p.m.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. March 4, 6:30 p.m. Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St.

Beyond the Chupah: Becoming A Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group, starts March 12, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Synagogue.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2-10. Starts March 18, 7 p.m.

High-Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents in a high-conflict situation, not for individuals in an abusive situation. March 20, 6:30 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+ Culture, Education, Community, Miles Nadal JCC. The Yiddish Swingtet performs Klezmer music for Purim, March 6. Doors open 1:30 p.m., show starts at 2 p.m. RSVP by Feb. 28. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. March 4, **Avrum Rosensweig**, CEO of Ve'ahavta, discusses "The Jewish People: A Light unto the Nations," 10 a.m.; March 5, Information and Active Living Fair, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; March 6, **Iris Edelman** discusses "Love Yourself-Heal Yourself," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine March 26 (register in advance). Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the 2014/2015 school year for the daycare and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Sisters in Resistance, paintings by **Harry Tiefenbach** of women resistance fighters from World War II is at the gallery Feb. 28- March 24. A reception will be held March 13, 6 p.m. **Sara Grinate,** the subject of one of the paintings, will attend.

A play reading of *Tough Jews* by **Michael Ross Albert,** will be held March 1, 7 p.m.

Purim Carnival, March 2, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Shlomo Schwartzberg discusses the work of director **Steven Spielberg,** 7 p.m. March 3, "Family Matters."

Habonim Dror-Camp Gesher meets Sundays for Grades 2-8, 1:30-3 p.m. Call 416-633-2511 or email shaliach.gesher@gmail.com.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays until March 18, 7 p.m. or Wednesdays to March 26, 11 a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call 416-898-1818, ext. 574

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

Social club for singles 50+ meets March 1, 7:30 p.m. Live music starts at 8 p.m. Tickets $15-$23.

Social club for singles 35-50 meets March 8, 7:30 p.m. Enjoy a movie and social time.

To register for programs, call **Andrea,** ext. 3006, or email adaiam@srcentre.ca.

מזל טוב

Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

During Heart Month, Aedden Rothman, age 4, looks through a heart-design centrepiece. He is a pupil at Bialik Hebrew Day School, Himel branch.

Mazel tov on your bat mitzvah Samantha Taylor, daughter of Fara & Michael Forman. We are so proud of you and we love you very much!

The wedding of Nicole Greenspan, daughter of Vanessa & Stan, to Nir Gam Ze LaTova, son of Hezzy & Rachel, took place in Tel Aviv, Dec. 1.

Victoria Fichtenbaum & Seth Klerer look forward to their upcoming wedding July 6. Proud parents are Ellen & Ian Fichtenbaum and Marsha & Shawn Klerer.

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on **"Family Moments"**

Happy 90th birthday Mom on Feb. 18. Love, Carol and Wendy.

Community has lost much more than a mashgiach

Kosher Living
Richard Rabkin

A few years ago, I took my wife out for dinner to the Park Hyatt's Anona restaurant for our wedding anniversary. About halfway through our meal, I saw a dapper man visiting each table, engaging the patrons in conversation. At first, I wondered if he was employed by the Park Hyatt, and then I thought that perhaps he was just a popular member of the Jewish community.

When he arrived at our table, I soon realized that he was both. He was the Park Hyatt's COR mashgiach, and he was Rabbi Leiby (Larry) Newman, beloved member of the Toronto Jewish community. Sadly, both COR and the Toronto Jewish community are mourning the loss of our beloved Leiby after his tragic and sudden passing.

Leiby Newman began working for COR approximately five years ago when we were looking to fill the role of a senior event mashgiach. We define an "event" as a kosher function taking place at a non-kosher venue such as a hotel, a museum, a golf course or the like.

An event mashgiach requires a special skill set because of the unique kashrut challenges inherent in creating kosher environments in non-kosher settings. He or she needs to have a strong knowledge of Halachah, the confidence to enforce the rules, a talent for problem solving, and perhaps most importantly, the ability to relate to people of different backgrounds and gain their respect. Rabbi Leiby Newman had all of these attributes. And more.

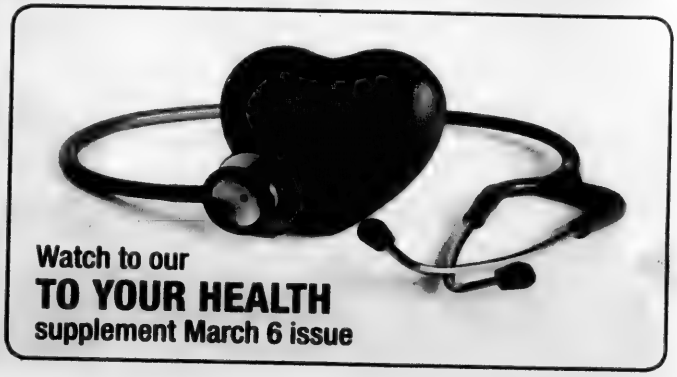
At Leiby's shivah, one of the caterers related a telling story. He was once catering an event where Leiby was serving as the mashgiach. A good mashgiach usually has a sense of when something is amiss, and Leiby had that sixth sense in spades. He decided to check one of the ovens, and sure enough, meat and fish had mistakenly been placed in the oven, cooking together at the same time. This is not permitted by Jewish law, as anyone setting a table for a Shabbat meal will tell you when they put out a fish plate and cutlery along with a meat plate and cutlery.

The natural instinct of most people would have been to sound the alarm and take the fish and meat dishes out of the oven immediately. Not Leiby. First, he pulled aside the caterer and discussed the problem with him. Then, he quietly took out the food and wrapped it up for the non-Jewish wait staff to take home later. Finally, he discreetly spoke to the non-Jewish chef who had made the honest mistake, and explained to him the prohibition of cooking meat and fish together. Not only was Leiby a good mashgiach, he was also a mensch.

As if COR wasn't fortunate enough to get one standout mashgiach when we hired Leiby, we actually got two. But in the second case, it was really a mashgichah – Leiby's wife, Mindy. As Rabbi Daniel Korobkin of the BAYT pointed out at Leiby's funeral, Leiby and Mindy were the perfect team. To their friends, it was either Leiby and Mindy or Mindy and Leiby because they were always together. And at many COR events that required two mashgichim, it was no different. Leiby and Mindy were like the dynamic duo of kashrut.

For Leiby, being a mashgiach was more than just a job – it was a calling. He received his rabbinical ordination at a young age, but didn't practise as a rabbi during his professional career. Perhaps it is for that reason that when the opportunity to work at COR came up, he jumped at the chance because he wanted to give back to the Jewish people in a spiritual way. To ensure that Jewish people were eating kosher food – to Leiby there was nothing nobler than that.

Both COR and the larger Toronto Jewish community have lost a great man that we will not be able to replace. May Leiby find peace in his eternal resting place.



Chocolate makes the world go around

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

Chocolate has made people blissfully happy for hundreds of years. I would wager you never met a good piece of chocolate that you did not like. It has a creamy, sensual texture and a deeply gratifying taste.

In addition, chocolate triggers an overall euphoric experience. That's why it is considered to be a romantic food. Giving a gift of chocolate can be interpreted as an expression of passion. Why does chocolate create such magic? Chocolate contains a chemical called phenylethylamine, which is an endorphin. This chemical has been linked to those dizzying feelings associated with romance.

These feelings can include a greatly elevated mood, sense of excitement, attraction and pleasure, and can result in your falling in love. Even if you happen not to be in a relationship or when no one understands you, chocolate is always there.

When it comes to chocolate and the heart, the emphasis should be on dark chocolate. Dark chocolate has some potential heart-healthy advantages beyond that of happiness and love. Dark chocolate is rich in a group of antioxidants called flavanols. In small amounts, this ingredient is said to lower blood pressure, increase vascular health overall, improve LDL cholesterol and could improve cognitive function. So go ahead! Treat yourself with these amazing chocolate desserts. Even if you think that chocolate doesn't make the world go around, it certainly makes the ride more worthwhile!

BAILEY'S IRISH CREAM CHOCOLATE TRIFLE

This rich and delicious layered dessert is a bit of heaven. I recently prepared it for my grandson's first birthday party and I already have "orders" from family to make it again. This trifle is even better when prepared the day before serving.

1 Bailey's Irish cream chocolate cake, prepared ahead (recipe follows)
1 recipe of Bailey's Irish cream chocolate mousse (recipe follows)
500 ml whipping cream 35 per cent milk fat
1/4 cup Bailey's Irish Cream
8-10 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped finely. Reserve 1/4 cup of chocolate for the garnish.

Trifle Assembly

Whip cream to stiff peaks and then combine in the liqueur.

With a sharp knife or dental floss, slice the cake horizontally into three sections, then cut each section into 8 pie wedge-shaped pieces. Place the 8 sections of the cake on the bottom of a large clear glass bowl or trifle dish

Cover with one third of the mousse, one third of the whipped cream and one third of the chopped chocolate. Repeat with cake wedges, mousse, whipped cream and chopped chocolate two more times or until the bowl is full to the top. Garnish with the remaining chocolate.

To wrap, insert 6 wooden skewers into the trifle around the edge of the bowl. Drape two pieces of plastic wrap in different directions over the skewers and then use other pieces of plastic wrap around the skewers and around the dish. Keep refrigerated.

BAILEY'S IRISH CREAM CHOCOLATE CAKE

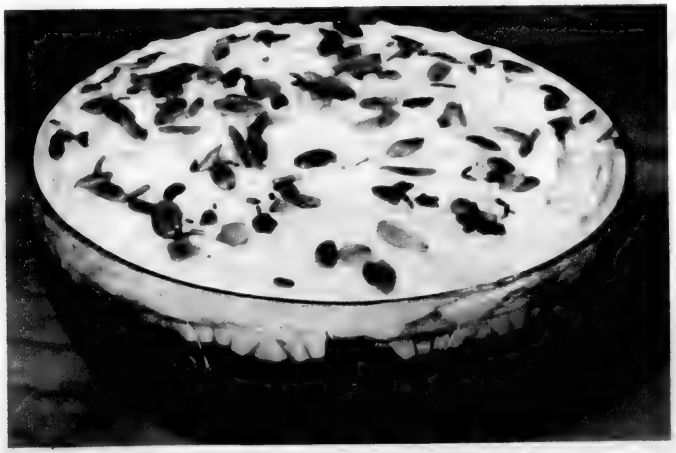
1 cup sugar
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter or margarine
2 eggs
1 1/4 cups skim milk
1/4 cup Bailey's Irish Cream liqueur, or other liqueur
1 tsp. baking soda
2 cups flour
3 squares unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled

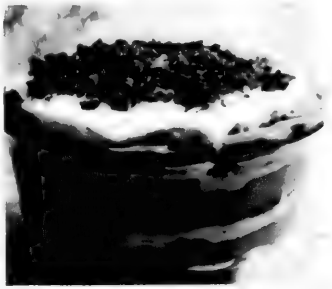
Preheat oven to 350.Using a food processor, cream together the sugars and butter. Add in the eggs, milk and liqueur. Pulse in baking soda and flour. Finally add the cooled chocolate and pulse until there are no streaks in the batter. Prepare a 9-inch spring form pan with a circle of parchment paper on the bottom and spray with canola oil. Pour in batter and bake for 40 to 50 minutes or until a test with a toothpick in the centre of the cake comes out clean. Cool and remove from spring form pan.

BAILEY'S IRISH CREAM CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

500 ml whipping cream, 35 per cent
1/4 cup Bailey's Irish Cream Liqueur, or other liqueur
2 boxes (113 grams each) instant pudding mix, chocolate flavour
3 cups skim milk

In a large bowl, using a hand held mixer or stand mixer, whip the cream until it stands in soft peaks. Add in the liqueur and whip until combined. In a separate bowl, using the same beaters, mix together the pudding mix and the milk. Whip the mixture for two minutes, scraping down the sides of the bowl occasionally. Fold the whipped cream into the pudding mixture a bit at a time until all combined and without any streaks.





CRISPY CRUNCH CHOCOLATE BAR COOKIES

These double chocolate cookies are so amazing you will wish you knew how to make them years ago.

50 g dark chocolate (1/2 of 100 g bar)
1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
1/2 cup dark brown sugar
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1 large egg
1 tsp. vanilla extract
3 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup all-purpose flour
3 1/2 bars (100 grams each bar) *assorted chocolate bars, coarsely chopped

In a small microwave-safe dish, melt the 50 grams of chopped chocolate on medium for 30 seconds. Stir. Microwave 15 to 30 seconds more or until chocolate is softened. Stir until smooth and let cool.

In food processor, blend butter until creamy. Add brown and granulated sugar and continue blending until mixture is light and fluffy. Combine in the egg and vanilla, then add in the cooled chocolate.

Add cocoa, baking soda, salt and flour using gentle pulses until combined.

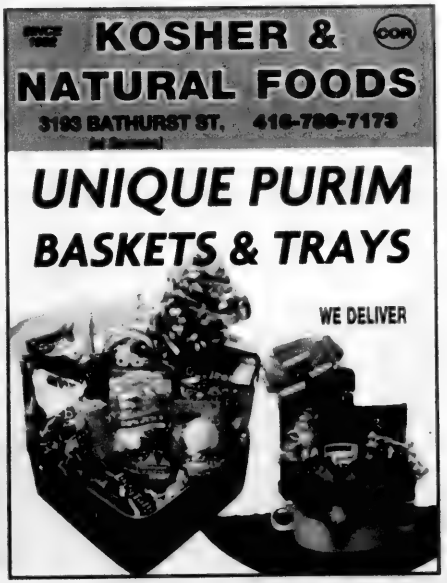
Mix in chopped chocolate. Remove to a bowl, then cover and refrigerate until firm, about 4 hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 350. Cover three baking sheets with parchment paper.

Using a mini ice cream scoop or your hands, shape dough into 1 inch balls and place about 2 inches apart on prepared baking sheets. Cookies will spread out during baking.

Bake 12 to 14 minutes. Place baking sheets on wire racks to cool. Do not remove cookies from the parchment paper until they are cool.

*Note: chocolate bars can be the same dark chocolate as in the batter, or you can mix them up, for example, using one milk chocolate, one with peanuts or raisins or one white chocolate. Every batch can produce totally different cookies.



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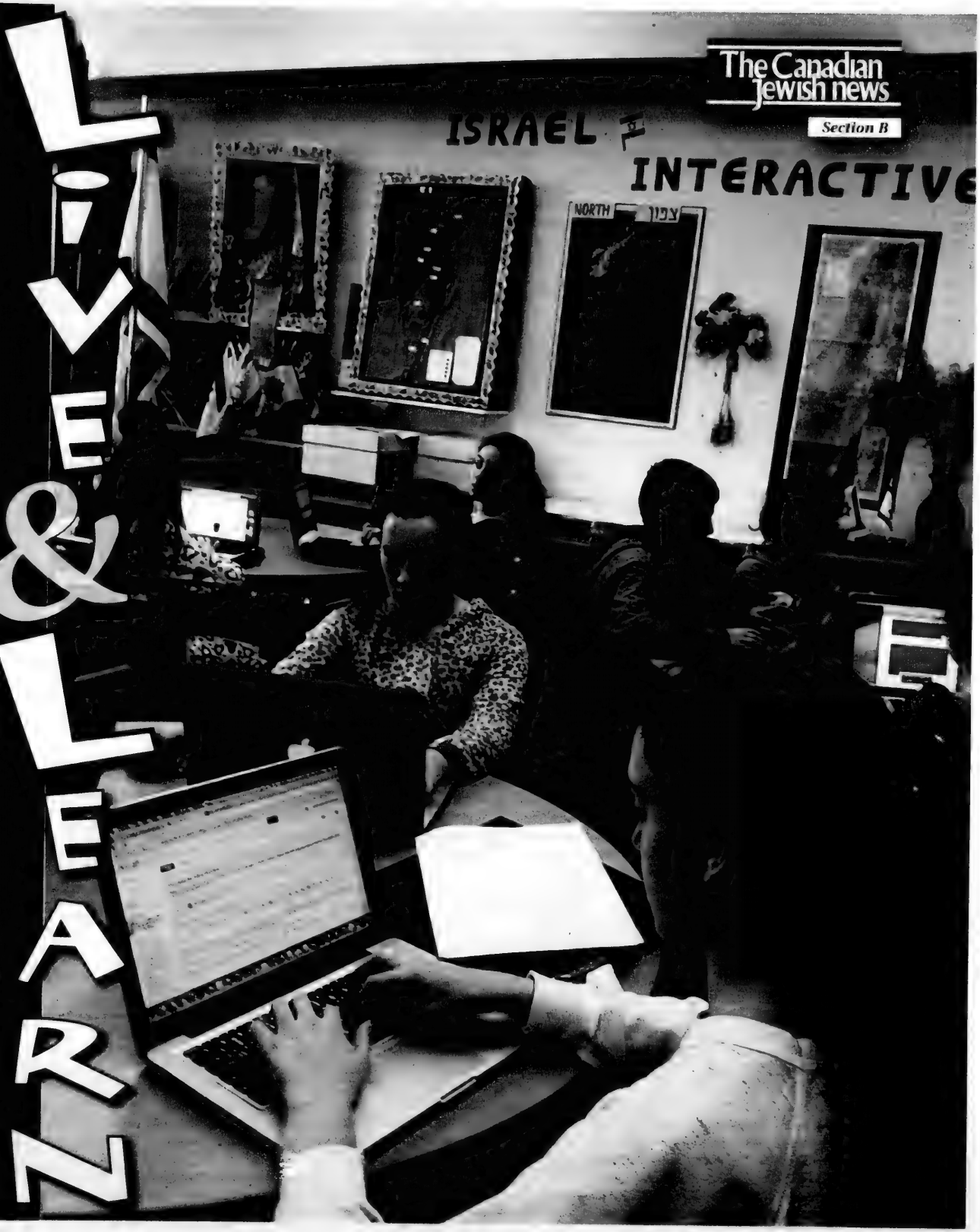
The Canadian Jewish news

Section B

LIVE & LEARN



Bialik students connect with Israeli peers

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A program at Bialik Hebrew Day School that connects Grade 6 students with their Israeli counterparts helps them form meaningful relationships with their peers in the Holy Land, said Nurith Sela, director of Bialik's Israel Interactive Centre.

"It's a collaborative learning project where they learn here and in Eilat about the same things, and they share their learning using the Internet," she explained. "You're not learning about the world, you're learning with the world."

The way it works is Bialik teachers and the teachers at Etzion Gaver School in Eilat all run discussions with students in which they try to impart the message of being responsible citizens of the world – an idea based on Jewish values.

"We are guests here [on Earth] and we should take care of it not just for us but for generations to come," Sela said.

The students have to identify problems in the world that demonstrate environmental irresponsibility and propose solutions for those issues, she explained.

"Then, they have to come up with a message they'd like to share with the world based on what they learned as a Jewish value."

The Israeli and Canadian students work together to brainstorm possible solutions. Each Bialik student is partnered with an Israeli student, with whom they interact throughout a five-week period.

Each one discusses local environmental concerns so that the students can determine which issues are strictly local, and which have a more global effect. For example, Sela said, some of the Eilat students might talk about polluting the sea, which might not come up if the Bialik students only discussed amongst themselves.

When posting online, students are limited to discussing the lessons and related issues. Sela emphasized that the online discussion forum is focused on learning, but if the students want to be in touch they send each other letters through snail mail.

The Canadian students write in English, while the Israelis write in Hebrew. In order to ensure they understand each other, the students might include translations of some of the more difficult words.

The program to connect Bialik students with Israelis began in 2011, with a school in Jerusalem, during which Grade 3 students here and in Israel corresponded with each other throughout the school year.

A year later, Bialik expanded the program to work with students in Eilat as well.

Bialik Hebrew Day School students correspond with students from Etzion Gaver School in Eilat on a collaborative learning project.

Sela said that the Eilat school was added to the program partly because Toronto is one of Eilat's sister cities, but also because the school has a heavy focus on environmental studies.

"We are a green school so it works well with us," Sela said. Bialik has been certified an Ontario EcoSchool, meaning it uses and teaches practices that are environmentally friendly.

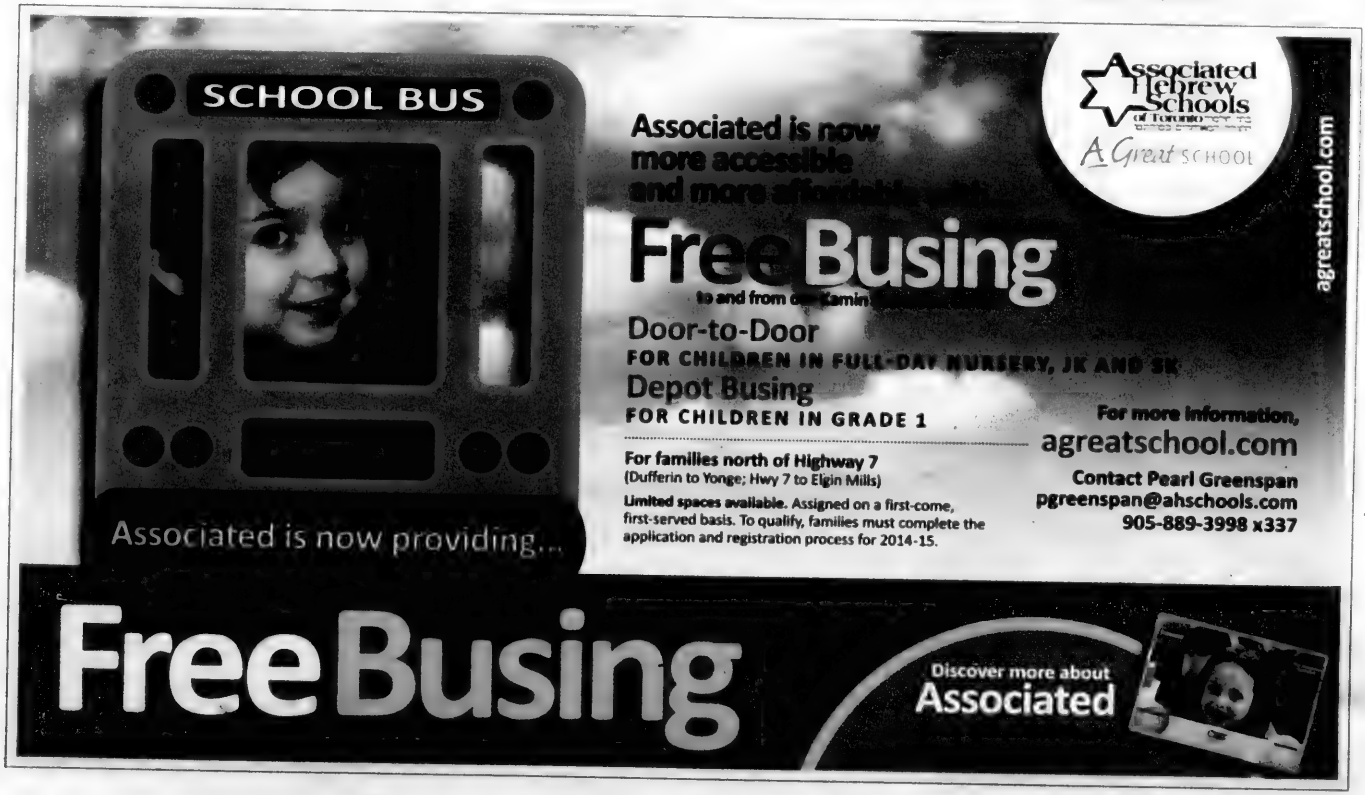
Beyond looking at global vs. local issues, partnering up the students means they're able to make a friend across the ocean. In Israel, they get to learn about Jews living in the Diaspora, while the Canadians form closer ties to Israel, now that they have a friend there.

The last program ran in November 2012, coinciding with Operation Pillar of Defence, the eight-day Israeli military operation in Gaza, so the Canadian students mailed letters of support.

"They were thrilled," Sela said, adding that most of the kids come from a lower socioeconomic status, so some of them have never left Eilat, let alone left the country. "It's a fantastic opportunity for them to connect with other Jewish people in the world."

This year, however, they arranged the program to run alongside Tu b'Shvat, marking the Jewish New Year for trees, so that it would integrate well into the curriculum.

"It's not just a project, it's a wonderful relationship between that school and our school," Sela said. "I have a great feeling it'll develop more and more."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An Open Call to Open Hillel

Isaac Kates Rose
Special to The CJN

"Never. Not in a million years," said my friend, an educator working for Hillel of Greater Toronto, as he folded his arms.

"Breaking the Silence would never be welcome in this Hillel. We'd never allow it."

I could not follow his logic. Ten feet from where we stood were several Israel Defence Forces (IDF) veteran combatants who had been invited to my campus to share their experiences with students. Yet Breaking the Silence, an organization of IDF soldiers who seek to "expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the occupied territories" by sharing their experiences, is beyond the pale.

"People just won't get it," he explained. Those five words speak volumes to the reality of Hillel today, and are testament to the deep need for Hillel to respond to the brave leadership of the Open Hillel movement, which seeks to make Hillel more inclusive of all viewpoints.

It is a sign of a dynamic community that these debates are ongoing, that the walls of the oft-invoked "big tent" are flapping from the ruckus within. It demonstrates that my peers and I hold a stake in determining the future of that tent, and reminds me that the suggestions I have are rooted in a deep conviction that the tent can handle this plurality of opinions.

Indeed, the many voices in which we speak are not merely our greatest strength, they are what keep the tent aloft. As such, I am always appreciative of the mutual respect, active listening, and compassion that govern those conversations, even conversations where the two of us disagree vehemently.

Isaac Kates Rose

There is perhaps no subset of people more eager to question than Jewish university students.

Hillel, the sage, was the greatest exemplar of never turning away from a question. The Talmud tells us that Hillel implored the inquisitive "heathen" to "ask all the questions you have to ask." Even after the visitor has bombarded Hillel with banal questions about round-headed Babylonians, Hillel's ire is not provoked, and his commitment to discussion is unshaken.

What then do those Jewish students make of their eponymous home on campus deeming certain questions off-limits, unacceptable, and constituting a barring of doors?

Because of a refusal to engage with certain questions, the opportunity to question ourselves is lost. When it comes to the growth that emerges in conversation, even around difficult topics like Israeli policy, my friend, the Hillel educator, is right: "People just won't get it."

If we place a value on our future leaders carving out space for a relationship with Israel in their Jewish identity, then we must ask of ourselves, what kind of relationship are we really seeking? One that is personal, that has been cultivated in communication, with the entirety of a person's experiences, interactions, and ideals?

One that is dynamic and evolves in real time, never settles into comfortable passivity, but instead seeks to engage with and overcome challenges? One that, responding to those challenges, is responsible, and is built on a steadfast dedication to actualizing the truth of one's Jewishness and consistently conscious of the myriad other voices to which it is connected?

Building relationships with Israel that exist tucked away in a corner of a young Jewish person's self – untouched, sequestered – does a disservice to our tradition.

Ultimately, if the deepening and fulfillment of one's distinct Jewish identity is one of Hillel's goals, then Hillel must declare publicly and proudly that there is not one correct relationship to Israel because there can not be one correct Jewish identity. All Jewish identities must always be welcome to participate in this great conversation of our people.

I dream of a Hillel that on Israel/Palestine, and on all topics, models the kind of courageous conversations that campus and indeed all communities need – a Hillel that is a leader in combating all forms of discrimination and oppression, that champions a broad discourse, and ensures a plurality of voices while always noting which are absent.

My dreams for Israel are the same. For the sake of my generation of Jewish dreamers, I urge my Hillel to reaffirm its unwavering dedication to the community whose strength is its courageous conversations. I urge my Hillel to open.

Isaac Kates Rose is a University of Toronto Jewish studies student. He is also the Hashomer Hatzair national youth director.

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Israeli educator promotes Jewish studies in a cultural way

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Ariel Picard, director of education for the Be'eri program at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Israel, was in Toronto last month to speak with various Jewish community leaders and educators about the program's goal to teach Jewish values and culture in the Israeli secular school system.

Rabbi Picard, who was ordained by the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, has a doctorate in philosophy from Bar-Ilan University and conducts research in contemporary Jewish law, spoke with *The CJN* about his five years as the director of the Be'eri program and how its strategy can be applied to Toronto's Hebrew day school system.

"The program started eight years ago, and the program is introducing Jewish studies and culture in non-religious Israeli schools," Picard explained.

"We work with these schools, because for many, many years, they had very little Jewish education in the schools, and that was wrong, because Israeli kids were growing up being ignorant of any Jewish knowledge. Of course, they know Hebrew and they know Bible a little bit, but it wasn't deep and important in their lives."

Picard said the program is changing that now, as it has become part of the Israeli Ministry of Education's official curriculum.

"We work with 125 schools across the country... It's a holistic program. You have the books, the curriculum, the teacher training, and we have facilitators, a team of 25 scholars; men and women, who in the past were teachers in schools in Israel, but also knowledgeable about Judaism. They come to visit the schools every two or three weeks and work with the teachers."

Rabbi Ariel Picard, director of education for the Be'eri program.

Integrating the Be'eri program into the established education system did not meet with any resistance, he said, because the facilitators of the program offer Jewish studies in a cultural way.

"It's not religious studies. It's Jewish studies. It's not the same. It's not about the rules and practice, although this is part of it," Picard explained.

Continued on page B5

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Shift the focus to Jewish values

Continued from page B4

"It's more about values and relevant issues, relevant for day-to-day life, in family relationships, relationships between individuals and a group, environmental issues, social justice – all these kinds of relevant issues and dilemmas that people are facing. We are teaching them through Jewish texts."

Since the program has been so successful in Israel, Picard believes it can work just as well in the Diaspora.

"In North America, or Toronto, every Jewish school has its own agenda, and there is not a lot of contact between the schools… [But] the model, not only the technical model, but the ideology of the Be'eri program can be used also in Toronto," he said.

"Not everyone is interested in the religious part of Judaism, but the cultural part, the value system of Judaism, is interesting and meaningful to everybody, because it is a language and a culture you can use to confront, discuss, to argue on things that are important to you and the community you live in. Shifting the focus to this is an important thing to do in North America."

Picard said while North American Jewish communities can benefit from the Be'eri program, he thinks Israeli educators and leaders can learn from the Diaspora.

"There is a lot that we, Israelis, can learn from your communities. Every time I come here, I'm so impressed by your communities… by the energy, by the vibrant, dynamic communities in North America," he said.

"The sense of community responsibility is very strong here, and we in Israel have something to learn from it, because it's a Jewish state, but on the way to a Jewish state, we forgot the community."

Picard added that although he recognizes that each community and the Jewish schools within each community have their own identities and ideologies, "it would be wrong just to ignore that we are one, big Jewish community and the differences are smaller than what we have in common, especially in the realm of Jewish education.

"What I see here in schools in North America is that each school introduces its own curriculum and is writing the book from the beginning. There is not enough sharing, of discussing common issues," he said.

Acknowledging the differences between Israel's public school system and Toronto's private Jewish day school system, Picard said he understands that it's more of a challenge for Jewish educators and administrators here to collaborate.

"But I think it is vital. We all stood at Sinai to get the Torah. So we have the same Torah. Maybe we have different interpretations – that's fine. But there is so much in common, and especially in education, that can be shared between us," he said.

"If a school will share its curriculum and its methodology, and will share common interests, will have dialogue about the challenge of Jewish education, I think that could be very good for the community."

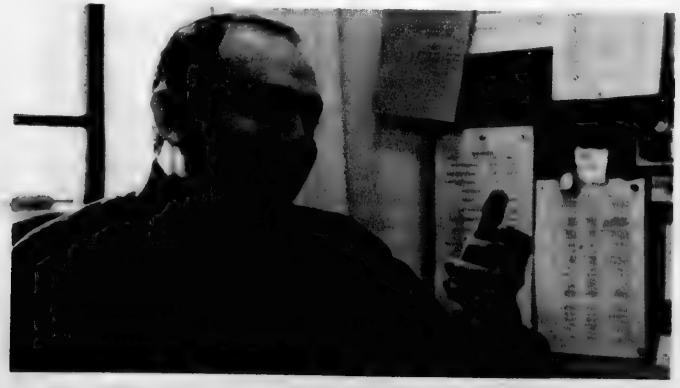
When it comes to enticing Israeli-Canadians to become more engaged in Jewish life and the Jewish day school system, Picard gave an example of a successful program in Israel that he believes could be just as successful here.

"In five different towns, we hold a contest, a song contest. The process involves a well-known Israeli singer and a scholar from the Hartman Institute. They take a group of high school kids from that city, and in the process of three months, they are learning together Jewish sources, and from those sources, the kids write songs and music," he said.

"These kids found that they can use Judaism as inspiration for their own creativity and that can be done here as well."

Picard said that if Israeli kids can see that Jewish texts can be a source of creativity or the basis for discussions on topics that are relevant to their everyday lives, they may be more open to learning about Jewish values.

"If you're not interested in the synagogue life or in rituals, you have to do something that is really important for you, and that's culture, or values, or relevant issues which are part of our lives. I think this is a message that can work very smoothly with Israeli kids here in North America, in the same way that it works in Israel."



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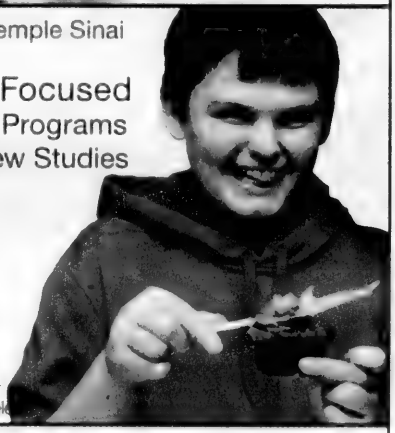

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Tax credits reduce day school tuition pain

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

For middle class families struggling to make a choice about whether to invest in Jewish day school, the five-figure price tag is often the source of their hesitation.

As Gail Baker, the outgoing head of school for the Toronto Heschel School recently told *The CJN*, "People are selecting to not even come through the doors and when you ask them, it's, 'No, I'd love to, but it's just to expensive.' They won't even start to entertain that possibility.'"

The tuition fees – upward of $11,000 per child, per year (assuming a family doesn't qualify for a tuition subsidy) – can be intimidating. But what many people often forget is that once you factor tax credits into the equation, the actual cost of a day school education can drop by as much as 40 per cent.

Andrea Benaim, 32, a chartered accountant, said there are three tax breaks that families can potentially take advantage of if they enrol their children in Jewish day school.

"There's a donation credit, child care expense credit if they're attending nursery or daycare, and in some cases, medical expenses would apply," Benaim said.

The donation credit is for the religious portion of the curriculum at day schools that are registered as charities. Benaim said the tax credit comes from both the federal and provincial governments.

"Let's say your kid is going to a private Jewish school and you get a donation receipt for $10,000. Let's assume that's the full amount that you pay for tuition, and you're getting a donation receipt for the full amount. The federal side is a 15 per cent credit on the first $200 of your donation and 29 per cent over and above $200, up to 75 per cent of your net income," she said.

"So that's $30 [on the first $200], and then on the remaining $9,800, you get 29 per cent, which results in a credit of $2,842. There's the provincial side also. You get 5.05 per cent on the first $200, and then 11.16 per cent anything over and above $200. If you work with the same example, you get a credit of $1,103.

"Putting both of those together, if your tuition is $10,000, you're getting back about $4,000. So that would result in just over $6,000 that you're actually paying."

Jewish day schools in Toronto operate differently from one another, allowing some to issue donation receipts for 100 per cent of the tuition paid, while others can only issue receipts for a portion of the fees. The amount depends on a number of factors, including the portion of their curricula devoted to religious studies and the amount of private donations they get to cover the operating costs for the secular parts of their curricula.

Mayeer Pearl, a chartered accountant who heads Associated Hebrew Schools' admissions and tuitions committee, said the donation receipt percentage at Associated, which has been around 65 per cent over the past few years, is calculated by the school's auditors.

He said Associated parents with children enrolled in grades 1 to 8 paying full tuition – around $14,000 – can expect to get 30 per cent back.

The donation receipts for junior and senior kindergarten tuition, which runs about $13,000, is around 80 per cent. That means parents paying full tuition can expect a refund of more than $4,000.

"Unfortunately, it's a huge up-front expense," Pearl said, but the donation receipt "will provide a refund to you on your income tax return or a reduction in your tax return by approximately 30 per cent… of the tuition that you're paying."

Andrea Benaim

However, parents who get subsidies from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto won't get as much of a refund, he said.

"If you're a subsidized parent, your tuition receipt is reduced by the amount of your subsidy," Pearl explained.

"If your tuition is $14,000 and you're paying $10,000, your donation receipt is going to be reduced by $4,000. We have to take that part off first, because someone else is paying that on your behalf, whether it's the school or federation," he said.

"If you're a subsidized parent that gets a $10,000 subsidy, you'd pay the school $4,000 and you wouldn't get a donation receipt at all."

Benaim said for parents who are paying for nursery or day care, whether at a private Jewish institution or not, a donation receipt would not be issued, but parents are able to claim daycare fees as a child care expense.

"If you're paying for nursery or daycare, that would be a deduction from your net income," she said.

"Typically, the fees that you're paying for daycare would go against your net income. That would put you in a different tax bracket," likely resulting in a refund.

"Sometimes Jewish day school tuition can be claimed as a medical expense if it's a medical necessity for a child. For example, if you have a child enrolled in pre-school at Zareinu, a Jewish school that has medical equipment and offers medical care and personnel to look after the kids, in that case you'd get a medical expense credit," Benaim explained.

"You just have to make sure to ask for those receipts so you have them."

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Children at the Thomas and Marjorie Schwartz Preschool Centre and the Libbie Cowan Childcare Centre at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre took part recently in their third annual Hop, Skip and Jump event. The fitness fundraiser garnered $3,500 for financial assistance to eligible individuals and families.

HEARTY DESIGN:

Aedden Rothman, 4, is pictured with a heart design centrepiece made in class for "Heart Month," a Heart and Stroke Foundation awareness campaign. Aedden is a pupil at Bialik Hebrew Day School's north campus. ***[Mollie Rothman photo]***

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Students seeing skilled trades as viable career option

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

A few months ago, Canada's Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander was the guest at an event at the Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

The minister was asked questions on a broad range of topics, including job prospects for young people. To the astonishment of many, the minister suggested directing young people to a trade. Something like welding.

As the audience looked at their friends with a what's-he-talking-about look on their faces, Alexander pointed out that a welder right out of school can expect to earn $150,000 per year. An experienced welder, a master of his craft, can top out closer to $500,000, he said.

Which brings to mind a conversation with a plumber who attended our former residence to do some work in the bathroom. Chatting with the personable fellow, he pointed out that when he works an emergency service on Christmas Day, he can take home $1,000. For just one – admittedly very long – day.

So what's this business about university as the default position for Jewish families and their precious progeny?

Putting a youngster through university can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Will that cost, along with the foregone earning years spent racking up that debt, ever be recouped? Is there not a financial case to be made for a different post-secondary education, something related to the trades?

The conundrum can be illustrated with a joke that has made the rounds, a variation of which goes like this: "What do you say to a sociology major?" Answer: "Make mine a double skinny, vanilla bean latte."

For all too many university grads, the B in BA (bachelor of arts) will come to stand for barista. That's another joke about a third joke – the career value of some degrees.

Preparing children to succeed is the responsibility of parents everywhere, and so a question that increasingly is being asked is this: is a university education – a multi-year investment of tens of thousands of dollars – worth the price, especially when a shorter, less costly education can lead to employment in a number of fields, that pay well but may not be as glamorous or prestigious as a white collar job.

"There is a huge increase in the number of jobs in the trades," said Deborah Childs, director of youth programming services for JVS Toronto (Jewish Vocational Services). "Statistics show that there's going to be a huge need for skilled trades people."

An experienced, professional welder can expect to earn upward of $150,000 a year, says Canada's Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander.

Nevertheless, she continued, "there's definitely resistance from parents" about directing their children to skilled trades. "People are so resistant. There's a stereotype that going to university will get you a better job. That's not the case any more."

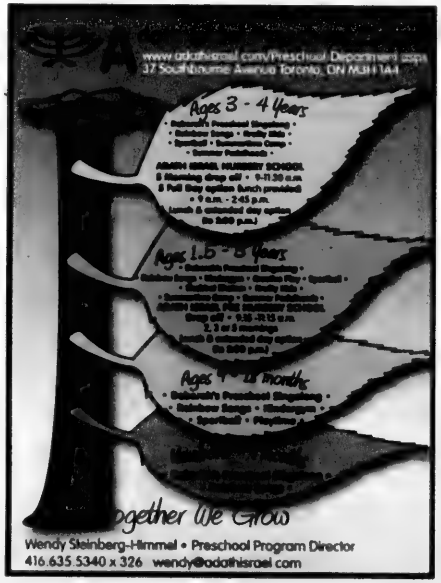
A bachelor's degree "is like having a Grade 12 education at this point." It might only be good enough to get you a job at Starbucks, she added.

At the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel campus, few kids go on to a trade. "If it's right for the student, that's definitely something they should consider," said Richard Stoll, head of guidance at the school. "Here, very few kids go on to colleges or trades. That's just not the dynamic here [nor] the philosophy of the parents."

Margaret Klompas, head of guidance at TanenbaumCHAT's Wallenberg campus, said "we don't offer courses that teach the trades because most of the students here are bound for college or university.

"However, if they do show an interest, we try to encourage them and give them any help we can."

Continued on page B9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UJA Federation

'Job market is very good in skilled trades,' Skills Canada CEO says

Continued from page B8

Shayla Morrison, vice-principal at Robbins Hebrew Academy (RHA), said students at the school are encouraged to "follow their passions, (do) what they want to do."

"It might be in property management, in tech, running a hotel," she said. "You want to encourage them to do what they want."

At RHA, she continued, "we're giving them the basics, nurturing them and getting them ready for the 21st century."

The school stresses critical thinking and working in collaboration. Ultimately, "they have to find their niche and be happy. You want to make money, but do something that's a passion," she said.

According to Childs, reality is biting young people when they enter the marketplace searching for jobs. An interesting trend is that students are enrolling in community colleges after completing three or four years in university. That number is now at 30 per cent, said Stoll.

There is work in the building trades, Childs said, and JVS helps its clients gain work experience through an apprenticeship program with a local union, followed by placement with an employer.

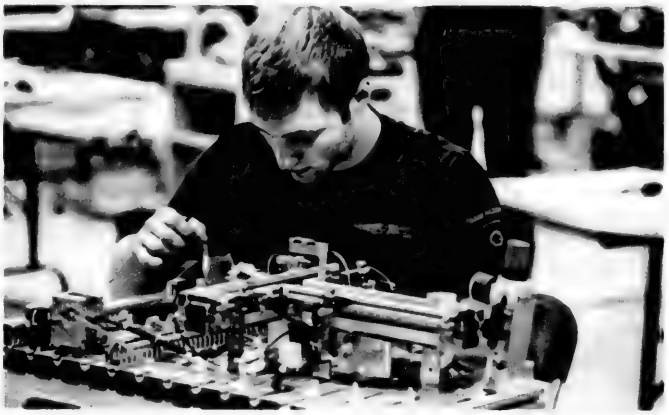
"The job market is very good in the skilled trades area," said Shaun Thorson, CEO of Skills Canada, a not-for-profit organization that promotes careers in skilled trades. "There are a lot of opportunities in Western Canada in the energy industry. A lot of people in the skilled trades are reaching retirement age and we need replacements."

Citing data from Statistics Canada, Thorson said,"On average, skilled trades people who are certified make 10 per cent more than the average salary."

"My best advice for students is to consider all your options." There's nothing wrong with a university education but programs at community colleges coupled with apprenticeships "can be appealing."

"Earn while you can," he added.

Careers in the electrical, plumbing, and welding fields, even cooks and bakers all have apprenticeship programs that combine work experience with classroom learning. As much as 80 to 85 per cent of the training is on the job. That way, they get paid for 10 months, and follow it up with two months in a classroom, Thorson said.



Shaun Thorson, CEO of Skills Canada, says careers in electrical, plumbing and welding have apprenticeship programs that combine classroom learning with work experience.

With the changing job market "there has been significant growth in the skilled trades over the last 15 years, with the number of people enrolling in technical schools increasing significantly, he said.

In Western Canada, there's demand for steamfitters and power system engineers. In the GTA, auto services are in demand as are aircraft maintenance mechanics.

These are the kinds of occupations that require good maths skills and knowledge of science, he continued.

It appears public attitudes are playing catchup to the new economic realities. A 2004 study that asked students how they viewed jobs in the skilled trades reported that 29 per cent felt it was something they would consider. In 2012, 40 per cent "now would consider a career in the skilled trades," Thorson said.

"A lot of young people have a very limited view of the workforce opportunity, so they have to expand that," he added.

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New Jewish education exec aims to bring more students into the day school system

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

Daniel Held began as executive director of the Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education, UJA Federation in January. Serving more than 70 day and supplementary schools in Toronto, the centre and its leaders are often the focus of the community's concerns over the quality of Jewish education and especially tuition costs.

Held, who is just 31, comes to the board with a background in teaching, research, writing and consulting work. He's a product of the city's Jewish day school system as a graduate of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. He's a PhD candidate in Jewish education at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

The CJN interviewed Held recently at his office.

What is current enrolment in Toronto's Jewish education system?

There are about 16,000 [students] in the formal education system. This includes both day and supplementary schools. Of course, there are others who received Jewish education from non-formal settings – camps, youth movements, synagogues, [Canada] Israel Experience, March of the Living, etc. Of the 16,000, about 11,000 are in Jewish day schools and 5,000 in supplementary schools. We estimate there to be about 35,000 Jewish school-aged kids in the GTA. This means that about 46 per cent of kids are currently engaged in formal Jewish education. That's a phenomenal penetration rate.

The [actual] number of kids who have received a formal Jewish education is higher, as there is attrition at various points. So a 16-year-old who went to day school from kindergarten to grade eight, but is [now] in a public high school, would be counted in the 35,000, but not the 16,000.

How viable is the system financially? Is there a point at which financial viability is imperiled because of enrolment?

There are two challenges we need to be thinking about: One is financial sustainability and the other is affordability. They are inter-related but to some degree separate. Our day schools right now in Toronto are doing very well in terms of both. That doesn't mean there aren't challenges and doesn't mean families don't feel the pinch. I'm not overly concerned about sustainability. I think schools are looking very hard at their numbers and are doing a good job

Daniel Held

about being accountable to themselves, the parents and their boards. They are looking at both the cost and revenue sides, as they should be.

One of the things we should be doing: We have huge amounts of money in tuition subventions, like scholarships. One piece of the total work we do in terms of financial sustainability and affordability [is] we are empowering schools to think creatively. So we're working with Robbins Hebrew Academy to create the iCAP Program, which will cap tuition at 15 per cent of [parents' gross] household income. It's a matter of helping schools think creatively and be innovative. And it offers stability in terms of parents' planning. [The RHA iCAP program will begin in September 2014].

If it works, will iCAP be extended to other schools?

The idea is to learn from the experiment. It certainly could be. I'm not convinced it's a panacea but it's a step in the right direction. And I think we need to look at multiple different experiments and possibilities.

What percentage of children in the system are subsidized and how does that affect financial viability?

About 2,300 students receive subsidies through the UJA Federation system. This is about 25 per cent of students in funded schools. This number has been relatively stable for the last 10 years. Federation invests about $10 million annually in day school subsidies. This is a staggeringly large amount compared to other communities. We also know that the subsidies impact not only the families who receive [them], but they help moderate the fees for the whole system. The difference between what [subsidized parents] are paying and the school fees is split between federation and the school. So both are putting in money for those kids.

Continued on page B12

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Two Jewish mothers opt for supplementary Hebrew school rather than private school

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

It wasn't a decision they took lightly, but in the end, two Thornhill mothers have decided to opt for public school rather than Jewish day school for their children.

Brenda Honigman, a stay-at-home mother whose two sons are 7 and 9, said that when her boys were in junior and senior kindergarten, the oldest was at Associated Hebrew Schools, and the youngest was at public school.

"I kept comparing, kept changing my mind back and forth. They were both happy, they were both learning, and they each had Jewish friends," Honigman said.

"It just didn't make sense financially, though, for us to spend so much money for them to learn Hebrew every day. I wanted them to concentrate on English."

She said she and her husband, Arnie Deltoff, enrolled their sons in a part-time program at Beit Rayim Hebrew School at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan.

"They go twice a week, and they're learning Hebrew prayers, all about the holidays and Shabbat, and they recently had a siddur ceremony. We realize that they're not getting as much as they would in day school, but they're learning, and they're getting Jewish content. We're happy with our decision," she said.

Honigman said that when she grew up in Winnipeg, she attended the I. L. Peretz Folk School, a Jewish private school that will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in May.

"I loved it, and it was a challenge to think of public school for my sons, but it's different times, and I'm content."

She added that most of the Beit Rayim teachers also work at some of the Jewish day schools in the Toronto area, "so we're getting the same teachers."

Shayla Gunter-Goldstein, a freelance writer and editor whose two sons are 4 and 8, also has them enrolled in public school. The youngest is in junior kindergarten at her local school, and the oldest is in Grade 3 in French immersion, which she feels is "almost like a private school. Learning French is a tremendous advantage in this country."

She said that she and her husband, Jack, wanted the boys to learn conversational Hebrew, "but that isn't really taught in the day schools."

They started their son at Kachol Lavan Centre: the School for Hebrew and Israel Studies, a supplementary school that offers conversational Hebrew. "It caters to Israelis, though, and a lot of programs were in Hebrew. It didn't really work for him."

She also has the two boys at Beit Rayim now, "and they're not getting as much [conversational Hebrew] as we would like, but they are learning. We realize that we will have to give them special lessons to learn Hebrew."

She said that although the financial aspect is a huge one in choosing between Jewish day school and public school, "for us, it wasn't everything.

"We both went to public school. I grew up in Hamilton, and always had non-Jewish friends. I went to a Hebrew [supplementary] school and Jewish camps, but was friends with the neighbourhood kids."

These days, she said, most people don't know their neighbours because everyone goes to different schools.

"We want to be part of the neighbourhood. It's important to us for our kids to lead a multicultural life. We want them to be friends with everyone, and know that everyone is the same. That's how we feel about the people in our lives. [Being] multicultural is part of who we are."

She added that her boys have many Jewish friends, and they keep a kosher home, "but we're happy when they get to decorate a friend's Christmas tree."

Most importantly, the two mothers agree, their sons are growing up with Yiddishkeit in the house.

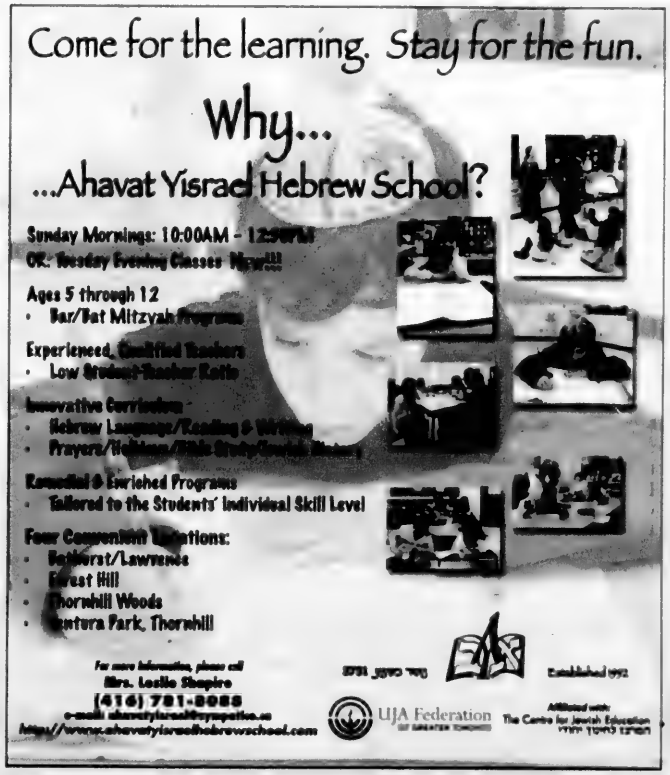
"We go to synagogue, we have Shabbat dinner, and I sing a lot of Yiddish songs around the house," said Gunter-Goldstein.

"If you have a Jewish spirit, and a Jewish house, your children grow up knowing they're Jewish."

Her family is planning a trip to Israel, and her oldest son is getting very excited, she said.

"He learned about a lot of Israeli sites at [Beit Rayim] Hebrew school and he wants to see them. He is beginning to get a strong Israeli identity."

Shayla Gunter-Goldstein (left) and Brenda Honigman are two Jewish mothers who decided Jewish day school wasn't worth the money



iPads are replacing Smart Boards in some day schools

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Jewish day schools are going through an evolutionary process with the integration of technology into the classrooms.

The trend has been growing for years, with some schools adopting new devices earlier than others, and teachers are recognizing that the technology is completely changing how teachers teach.

This year, in Montreal, Bialik High School bought iPads for all students in grades 7 to 9, in addition to equipping every classroom with a Smart Board or projectors, as well as Apple TV.

"It's much more dynamic," said Lee Zentner, a teacher at Bialik who spearheaded the integration of iPads into the curriculum for the high school, explaining that kids often create presentations on their iPads and use Apple TV to project it in front of the classroom. "The old 'chalk and talk' is old school now."

Ted Liss, computer, designs and science teacher at Toronto's Leo Baeck Day School's south campus, said the teachers use Apple TV on a regular basis, projecting whatever is on their computers to the front of the classroom. In that sense, it replaces the Smart Board, which itself was a touch-sensitive interactive replacement for the blackboard.

Zentner said moving from Smart Boards to iPads means he's able to teach the class from anywhere in the room.

"Teachers in general... we're used to being at the front. 'I'm at the front, all eyes on me.' But truthfully, overall, we're moving away from that," he said. "Kids are learning way quicker than we ever imagined. To have the whole Internet to themselves, they could research everything we're talking about."

The Toronto Heschel School's curriculum consultant and incoming head of school, Greg Beiles, said he's a little bit wary about bringing technology into the classroom too quickly.

Continued on page B13

Students at Toronto's Leo Baeck Day School's south campus are taught how to use the Internet properly.

Need to focus on middle income families, Held says

Continued from page B10

Recently, you wrote in The CJN about five challenges facing the Jewish system: Controlling costs, determining and reaching capacity, communal collaboration, middle income initiatives and endowment building. Can you elaborate?

In North America, between 70 and 80 per cent of the average day school budget goes to human resources – teachers and administrators. One of the things I need to be doing over the next few months is learning the Toronto numbers better. The initiatives that we've seen across North America have focused on that 70 to 80 per cent. There have been a few things, like collective purchasing, which will draw down the costs of goods and services a school buys. So we're seeing things like blended learning schools that use technology and allow schools to have higher student-teacher ratios.

[According to one North American study], day schools are operating at 70 percent of capacity, which really means that there's a 30 per cent inefficiency in the average classroom. One of the things I need to delve into more is where we are in Toronto, which will be very different between schools. For every student added to a class, even at a discounted tuition rate, they're bringing in more revenue because the major cost of the class is fixed: It's the teacher. So other costs are marginal when you think about the revenue you bring in, even at a discounted rate.

Capacity is also difficult to determine. We talk about physical capacity, operational capacity, the number of students in a class. So it's difficult to say what capacity is. But if we can move our schools toward capacity, then it means we are going to budget for the educational value because we believe day schools are really good for our kids.

Communal collaboration takes place on both the revenue and cost side. On the cost side we see things like collective purchasing, schools that have shared spaces and resources. On the revenue side we've seen communal funds and endowments.

One of the focuses that we need to place emphasis on is middle income families. That's really the goal of the RHA pilot. We've seen two modes of middle income initiatives in North America. One is flat grants and the other is based on the flexible tuition model. It has to be a real focus of our attention. Middle income families feel the challenges.

None of these are a panacea and none is a solution to sustainability and financial affordability. But they're all steps toward them. The challenge with endowments is that the sums are just massive. Let's say you have 11,000 students in day schools. Let's say you want to reduce day school tuition by $5,000 a year. That's $55 million a year. The numbers are staggering.

All five of these conversations need to be happening in parallel. No one has a silver bullet. We need to think creatively and learn from best practices.

You also wrote that "significantly moving the needle in the costs and funding of day schools will require substantive changes both in the ways we deliver education and in the ways we fund the costs of this education." What are some of those changes?

If we are going to drastically reduce costs, that's going to come down to drastically changing the way we deliver education. We've seen blended learning schools in the States which reduce tuition to somewhere around $5,000 a student. They changed the model of education. They changed the student-teacher ratio and the way they deliver education. The changes in the delivery of education have brought changes to the financial situation.

I actually think that the 15 percent model is a significant change in how we think about day school tuition – and a big move away from saying "this is the price," to thinking about parents' ability to pay.

Every conversation I have with day school lay leaders and heads of school touches on these questions. We're all thinking about them and addressing them.

So much of my role is convening conversations and making myself accessible. One of things I am going to do is to make sure that every week, I have time set aside to have these conversations. It's on my calendar, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., every Tuesday.

Regarding tuition, there are a lot angry, weary parents out there. What can you say to them to make them breath a little easier?

I hear these questions all the time, and I empathize with the costs of day school education and the burden it puts on parents and families. It's a great concern that I and the system need to be thinking about. I don't have the silver bullet. I think federation is investing more than any other federation – more than $10 million a year in just tuition subvention. I see us convening the conversations about tuition and thinking creatively about financial sustainability and affordability. I bring a texture and knowledge to it: My experience as a teacher and as a parent. My daughter is in JCC daycare and will soon be starting in the day school system. No one has the silver bullet. But I think this can bring a richness [to] the conversation and a knowledge base to Toronto.

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GIVING OF THE TABLETS:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, centre right, and Likud MK and Deputy Knesset Speaker Ofir Akunis, centre left, presented tablet computers to 94 children in Lod earlier this month as part of a government initiative to provide educational opportunities for underprivileged children. At the ceremony, Netanyahu said the initiative is part of the government's plan to minimize educational, geographical and socioeconomic gaps in Israeli society.

(Israel Sun photo)

'Technology is not a pedagogy,' Heschel head says

Continued from page B12

"Technology is not pedagogy," he said. "A computer is kind of like pencil, a tool… [It's] not an educational philosophy, and it can also get in the way of learning."

He said you couldn't say a school is great because they have computers in every classroom, because that's just like pointing out that there are chairs in every classroom.

While kids have the sum of all human knowledge at their fingertips when connected to the Internet, it can pose problems. Beiles pointed out that much of the content available online isn't vetted the same way it would be if it were going into a textbook, and most of what you encounter online is "garbage."

Liss said it's up to the school to start teaching the kids how to research.

"I think we're passing on our knowledge less and less all the time, but we still have to help guide them," he said. For example, he ran a class in which the kids researched famous people. The kids would search the person on Google, and come up with millions of results.

He sees a major problem in the Internet's inability to tell whether the researcher is an eight-year-old kid or a 28-year-old adult.

"They can't just go hog-wild and Google everything because they get frustrated easily," he said. "There's all the information in the entire world presented to you, and you have to sort through it all."

That's a skill the kids have to learn even if they are digital natives, said Jennifer Nyman, a teacher at Bialik's elementary division, Jewish People's and Peretz Schools.

"They come in and say they know how to use an iPad but really, they don't," she said. "They have to learn which apps are useful and how to actually use them."

But for kids with organizational issues, the technology could be a blessing. Liss said he's particularly noticed a change in how some students keep their notes.

"[With computers,] they don't lose their papers," he said.

The benefits don't stop there, Zentner said. Having the technology increases his ability to teach every kind of learner, whether they're visual, aural or kinesthetic learners. For example, he recently downloaded a biology app to show how the human body processes blood.

"A few kids started saying, 'Now I know what you mean,'" he said. "Before, if I was trying to draw [the process], I might get a few visionary learners, but now I'm [reaching] more [students]."

They also can move at their own pace, said Beiles, though he added that technology is useful only when it teaches them something they could not otherwise learn without the devices.

"Most teachers don't know how to use Smart Boards and just use it as a glorified blackboard. In that case blackboards are better," he said.

He also emphasized the importance of students doing things with their hands. "I think we lose a lot of learning when all kids are doing with their hands is clicking."

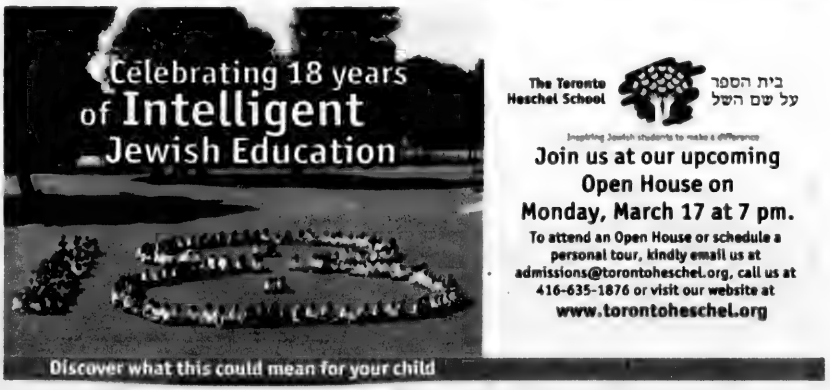
But perhaps the technology leads the changes to the curriculum even if you don't notice it happening, Zentner said.

"They're learning a lot more of everything and a little less detail so they can cover more areas," he said.

That said, Beiles said he doesn't think kids without so much technology in the classroom will fall behind, since devices change rapidly as new technology is developed.

"Just because they're using an iPad today doesn't mean that'll help them," he said. That said, "computers are the big tool of the day – we wouldn't deprive our kids of that – but a school needs to be able to ground itself in deep educational philosophy."

Jennifer Nyman, a teacher at Montreal's Bialik High School, says students need to learn which apps are useful and how to use them.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Don't miss our March 6th "To Your Health" Section

School offers options for learning disabled

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Ensuring that your child receives the best education possible is one of the greatest challenges a parent can face, especially if your child is coping with a learning disability.

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Merle Langbord Levine, who founded the North York-area school in 1995, has been working as an educator since 1959, and specializing in the field of special education since 1969.

MLA is an exclusive private school that educates students from grades 2 to 12 who don't respond well to mainstream education techniques.

"Many elementary and secondary school-aged children struggle to realize their full potential within the mainstream or special education classroom because they have differences or difficulties in how they learn or pay attention," Levine said.

Earlier in her teaching career, Levine worked with struggling students at Associated Hebrew Schools and United Synagogue Day School, (which is now Robbins Hebrew Academy).

"These were bright kids, but they were disorganized. They couldn't put things together," she recalled.

Recently, Levine has been working with students with complex learning difficulties including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Asperger Syndrome, non-verbal learning disabilities, auditory processing difficulties and mood disorders. These children are struggling in school both academically and socially.

According to Statistics Canada, more than three per cent of Canadian children have a learning disability – a term that refers to a variety of disorders that may affect a person's ability to listen, speak, read, write, understand and retain information.

According to the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, students with learning disabilities may be of above-average intelligence but still struggle to keep up with their peers in class.

A 2012 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, said that the awareness of ASD has come into the public eye over the past 20 years, attracting attention due to its rapid growth rate in North America. In the United States, about one in 88 children are diagnosed with ASD. From 2007 to 2012, the number of children diagnosed with ASD jumped by 78 per cent.

The National Epidemiologic Database for the Study of Autism in Canada, also released a study in 2012, and it found increases in autism diagnoses in Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador and southeastern Ontario that ranged from 39 to 204 per cent.

At MLA, the idea is to help students coping with these disadvantages to improve their core academic skills, think critically, question, evaluate information, draw conclusions and reintegrate into the mainstream school system.

"Our students are typically behind their grade academically in some or most of their subjects. They may also be ahead of their grades in some other subject areas. They generally have an uneven learning profile. But many of our students (95 per cent) go on to succeed in post-secondary education," Levine said.

The students who enroll at MLA utilize the program to catch up academically.

"The idea is to come in for two or three years and get caught up. The bulk of our kids are between grades 4 or 5 and high school," said Levine, adding that the program is not geared towards students with severe emotional or behavioural problems.

She said that social skills training has been a growing trend in educational settings, and that the development of social literacy is essential to growth and development, which leads to students' learning and achievement.

With a multi-disciplinary approach to learning, MLA's 40 students work one-on-one, or in a small group setting.

"We are a remedial school. The school is precisely for kids who are out of sync with the system or behind it."

Levine said one of the most rewarding aspects of her 45-year career working with students in special education is that most do end up at post-secondary school.

"The majority of our kids go on to university. As well, there are my original students – now well into their 40s – who still keep in touch. A few are even sending their children to me, as some experience similar difficulties. To witness the change in these kids is just unbelievable."

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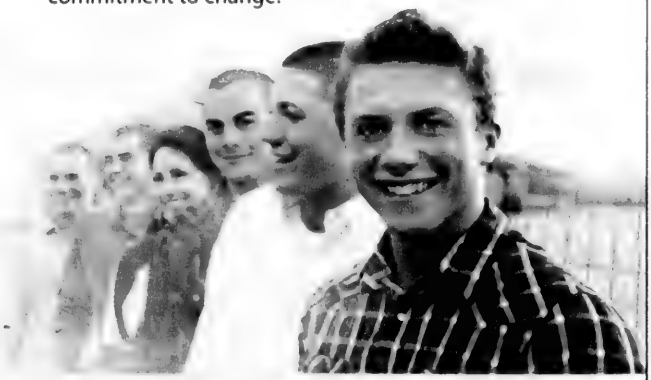

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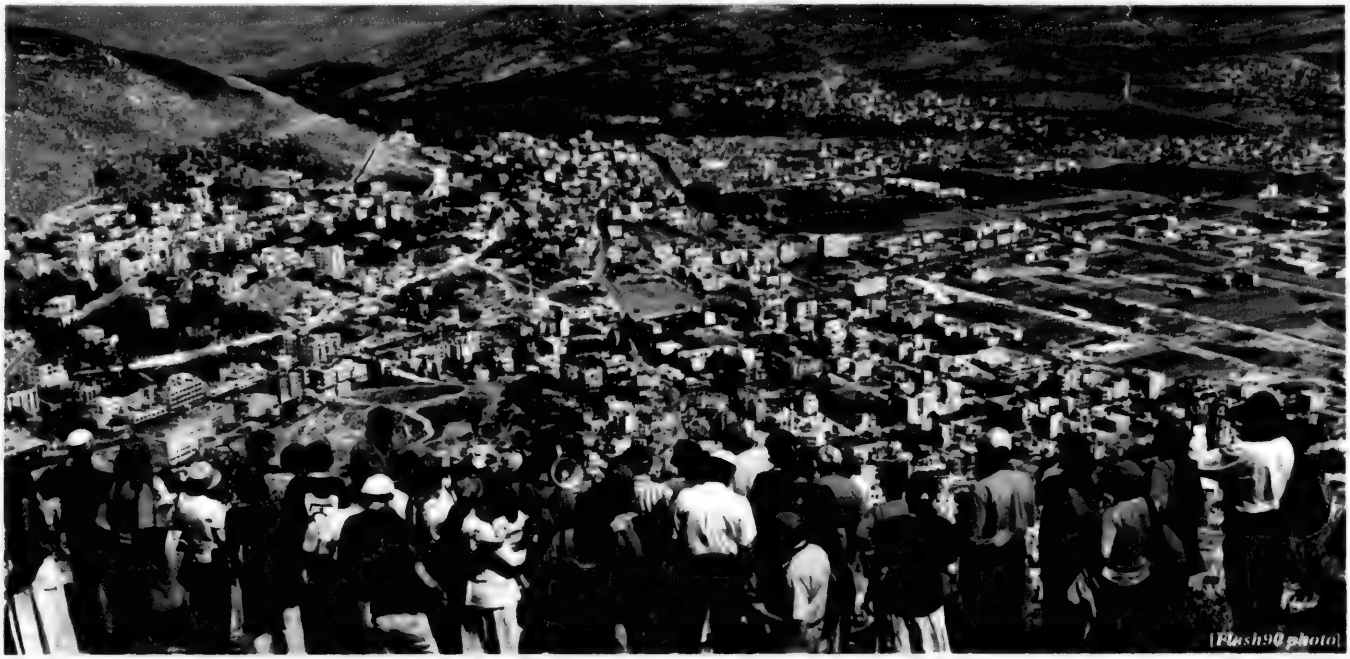

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Ari Shavit's Promised Land

Author tackles Israel's existential dilemmas in controversial book

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Ari Shavit is a columnist for the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, and author of *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel.*

In the book, which spent several weeks on the *New York Times'* bestseller list, he traces the history of Israel through the eyes of its people, and addresses the existential issues it faces.

In an interview with *The CJN*, Shavit outlines the premise of his book: to rewrite Israel's narrative, to look at the larger picture of its existence and to see it, with all its flaws, as one of the great successes of the 20th century.

A former Peace Now activist, Shavit came to realize over a 20-year span that "there are some serious flaws in the banal, dogmatic peace concept." Instead, he developed a more complex approach in which Israel's occupation of disputed territories would have to be addressed, whether peace resulted or not.

He outlines his own "Plan B," an alternative plan if diplomatic efforts fail. He also touches on the origins of the conflict and on domestic Israeli issues such as the significance of the mass marches during the summer of 2011, in which thousands of Israelis took to the streets to demand a new deal from the government.

For more on Shavit, please turn to page 25.

Vayikra
Candlelighting: 5:56
Havdalah: 7:00
Greater Toronto Area

Oncology spa and boutique coming to Toronto
To Your Health — Section B

Crimea's sole rabbi speaks out — please see page 28

CANADA

Famed Sculptor Dies

TORONTO — World-renowned Canadian sculptor Sorel Etrog, whose works include a major installation at the Canada Pavilion at Expo 67 and many public sculptures in Toronto, died Feb. 26 in Toronto at age 80. The Romanian-born Etrog survived World War II and moved to Israel with his family in 1950. He studied art at Tel Aviv's Institute of Painting and Sculpture, which led to his first show in 1958. That won him a scholarship to the Brooklyn Museum, and in 1958, the Guggenheim Museum bought one of his sculptures. In New York, he met Toronto collector Samuel Zacks, who became his champion. Etrog, who was also an accomplished poet and writer, became a Canadian citizen in 1963.

Minister Apologizes

TORONTO — Ontario Tourism, Culture and Sport Minister Michael Chan apologized for saying Prime Minister Stephen Harper has favoured the Jewish community over other groups and may have been motivated by votes and a desire to improve fundraising. In a Feb. 27 statement, Chan said he personally apologized to Jewish leaders and extended his "sincere apology to the entire community." Chan made the remarks to a Chinese-language newspaper ahead of a Feb. 13 provincial byelection in Thornhill. He was urging voters to support fellow Liberal Sandra Yeung Racco over Tory Gila Martow, the eventual winner. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs said it accepted Chan's apology, *Sun Media* reported.

WORLD

Canadian Buys Condo

TEL AVIV — An unnamed Jewish-Canadian real estate developer has bought a seaside penthouse condominium in Tel Aviv's 10 Herbert Samuel development for $35 million (110 million shekels). The 7,500-square-foot unit, which is still under construction, is on the 20th and 21st floors and has 3,300 square feet of balcony space. The building has 40 units, 36 of which have been sold. A 4,300-square-foot unit on the 19th floor sold in July 2013 for $15 million.

Report Questions Rabbi's Refugee Claim

TORONTO — The refugee application of Lev Tahor founder Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans may have been based on false testimony, a CBC *Fifth Estate* investigation suggests.

Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans

The report, which aired Feb. 28, said Rabbi Helbrans' 1996 claim was based in part on testimony from Uriel Goldman, now a spokesperson for the controversial ultra-Orthodox sect.

Goldman said that as a young intelligence officer, he was told by the Israel Defence Forces to spy on the rabbi when he was still in Israel and ended up joining the sect, but the IDF told the *Fifth Estate* it had no record of Goldman serving in IDF intelligence.

Also included in the rabbi's refugee claim was a video of Shai Fima, a 13-year-old boy whom the rabbi was convicted of kidnapping in the United States in 1994. Rabbi Helbrans served two years for the crime and was deported to Israel upon his release in 1996. He claimed refugee status in Canada that same year, saying he faced persecution in Israel due to his anti-Zionist beliefs.

In a video submitted to Rabbi Helbrans' 2003 refugee hearing, Fima said the conviction was a misunderstanding and sought to clear the rabbi's name. Fima now says that video was a lie and that he was paid $5,000 for it. Rabbi Helbrans told CBC that Fima was lying. He has previously claimed that Fima was brought to him for bar mitzvah training and ran away on his own from his parents.

Goldman told the *Fifth Estate* the sect paid for Fima's travels, but nothing else. He also said it's no surprise the IDF wouldn't comment on sensitive military operations.

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Day schools urge parents to 'choose Jewish'

Event geared to those deciding where to enrol their kids

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

More than 100 people gathered last week to hear from a panel of Jewish educators, parents, current students and alumni about the benefits of a Jewish day school education for their children.

The "Why Choose Jewish" forum, held Feb. 25 at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, came on the heels of a successful marketing campaign that saw nine Toronto Jewish day schools – Associated Hebrew Schools, TanenbaumCHAT, the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, Bialik Hebrew Day School, Zareinu Education Centre, Leo Baeck Day School, the Toronto Heschel School, Robbins Hebrew Academy and the Montessori Jewish Day School – partner to promote the message that a Jewish education, at any Jewish day school, is the best choice.

The event, which targeted parents who are in the process of deciding where to send their kids to school, was moderated by Josh Elkin, former executive director of the U.S.-based Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education.

Among the five panelists was Nicholas Stein, a father of two children who attend the Montessori Jewish Day School.

Stein, who sits on Montessori's board and is involved in the Choose Jewish initiative, said it was time Jewish day schools in the city came together for a common purpose.

"It's unprecedented, and sends a positive message that at the end of the day, we have a very vibrant Jewish community in the city," Stein told *The CJN*.

The purpose of the event was to give parents who may be considering Jewish day schools a glimpse into what they offer.

Daniel Held

"The idea behind this panel was to get a broad range of points of views from current students, from graduates from parents and alumni, to really give people a sense of the different reasons for making this choice," he said.

When it came to down to making the decision for his children, "it wasn't always a given," Stein said.

"I didn't attend day school myself. I attended public school in Toronto. But I felt like it was really important to me that my children see their Jewish education, both the religious part and the Hebrew part, as being just as important as math and science and English. I felt that putting them in an environment where they would learn all of these subjects side by side, it would just send a really strong message to them that these were things that should be valued. I think that was a big consideration for me."

Stein wishes he could have had a Jewish day school education.

Continued on page 14

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U.S. should press Syria on chemical weapons disposal

CTV News reported last week that, according to UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres, "if current trends continue" Syrians will soon overtake Afghans as the world's biggest refugee population, exceeding four million by year's end.

The number of refugees increases as the slaughter inside Syria continues unabated: during last month's Geneva II talks aimed at stopping the fighting, which failed miserably, nearly 1,900 Syrians were killed.

According to Reports

BY PAUL MICHAELS

The *Washington Post* was scathing about America's investment in the talks, mainly for being outplayed by the Russians, who are backing Assad.

As in the Feb. 22 *Post* editorial: "The Assad regime made no pretense of taking seriously the nominal purpose of the Geneva talks, which was to agree on a ceasefire, the opening of corridors for humanitarian aid and a transitional government acceptable to both the government and the opposition. Nor did Russia pressure its ally to go along with that agenda."

On Feb. 17, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry lashed out at Russia for the talks' failure: "The [Assad] regime stonewalled, they did nothing except continue to drop barrel bombs on their own people and continue to destroy their own country. And I regret to say they're doing so with increased support from Iran, from Hezbollah and from Russia."

In the meantime, supported by Russia, Iran continues aggressively arming Assad's regime. *Reuters* reported Feb. 21: "As Syria's war nears the start of its fourth year, Iran has stepped up support on the ground for President Bashar Assad, providing elite teams to gather intelligence and train troops." Iran also backs thousands of Hezbollah fighters who've been in the vanguard of Assad's onslaught.

In the Feb. 26 *New York Times*, Michael Ignatieff argued that it's time for the United States to use force "to deny Mr. Assad air superiority…[to] prevent his forces from using barrel bombs, cluster munitions and phosphorus weapons on civilian targets," and "to leverage diplomacy in Syria" as the United States had done in Bosnia.

Although not oblivious to the Americans' deep reluctance to be embroiled in yet another Mideast conflict and risk a confrontation with the Russians, in Ignatieff's view, doing nothing is worse: "American inaction has strengthened Russia, Hezbollah and Iran. It has turned Syria into the next front in the war with Islamic extremism. And it has put in jeopardy the stability of Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey and risks leaving a failed state next door to Israel."

Ignatieff also acknowledges that unilateral American military action outside a United Nations mandate (given the inevitable Russian Security Council veto) would render its operation illegal, albeit, in his estimation, still necessary.

In a Feb. 21 paper for the Washington Institute, Syrian expert Andrew Tabler proposed a possible way around the illegality issue. Syria is currently in violation of its commitments to destroy or dispose of its chemical weapons under the terms of UN Security Council Resolution 2118 (Sept. 27, 2013). According to Tabler, "The [Assad] regime is dragging its feet on disposing of its chemical weapons, with only 11 per cent of only the first shipment transferred out of the country so far. And on Jan. 30, U.S. authorities reported that the regime has 'revised' its initial declarations… refusing to destroy its 12 declared weapons sites."

Significantly, Security Council resolution 2118 contains a Chapter VII enforcement clause mandating sanctions and the use of force in cases of non-compliance. "Pushing now on 2118 would create a useful dilemma, forcing Moscow to reveal whether it is unable or simply unwilling to goad the Assad regime into eliminating its [chemical weapons] program and negotiating a political transition. This approach would also prepare the American public for a possible military showdown with Assad this summer over his refusal to dispose of chemical agents," Tabler argued.

Even if no such mandated force is deployed against Assad, many critics of what they claim is American passivity would be encouraged to see the United States vigorously pressure the Russians (and Assad) under the terms of this Security Council resolution. That might be as good a place to start as any.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

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Save A Child's Heart, an Israeli-based initiative that helps pediatric cardiac patients in developing countries, welcomed Canadian singing duo Splash N' Boots to the stage at St. Michael's College School Feb. 23, for the fifth annual Sing Your Heart Out children's concert in Toronto. This year's event raised $52,000 and will cover the cost of five life-saving cardiac surgeries for underprivileged children from around the world. To date the annual event has raised close to $170,000.

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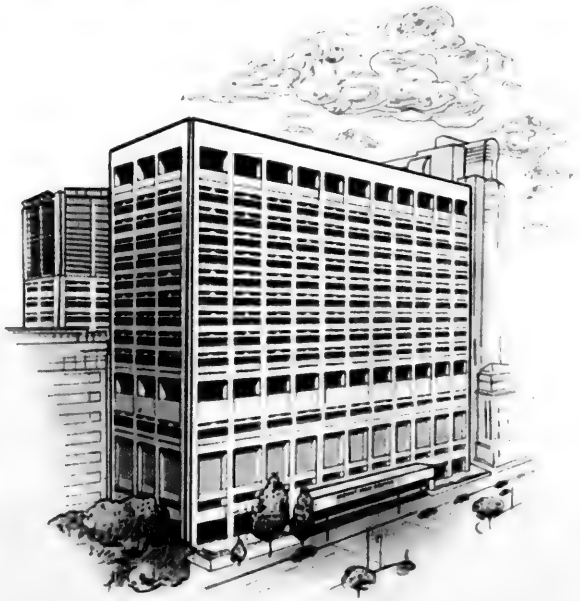

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The bottom line on IAW

Israeli Apartheid Week is marking its 10-year anniversary this week across Canada, and as IAW organizers and supporters look back on their movement's first decade, there's no doubt it has fundamentally shifted the Israel conversation on campuses across this country and the world. (This year, IAW events are being held in 87 cities worldwide, and the "week" will last from Feb. 24 to March 28.) Tagging along, the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) crusade has grown stronger than it ever was before Israeli Apartheid Week came on the scene. All told, in just 10 years, IAW has become a powerful force, in academia and beyond.

Israeli Apartheid Week 2014 actually kicked off a few days ahead of schedule in these parts, in Windsor, Ont. Vandals broke into the office of Jake De Jong, the vice-president of academic affairs for the University of Windsor Student Alliance, overnight last Wednesday. When he arrived at work Thursday morning, De Jong found the "Support Our Troops" flag hanging in his office had been spray-painted with a Star of David and the word "Zionist." Two days later, University of Windsor undergraduates approved a BDS strategy in a referendum – a first for Canada. De Jong, by the way, had been critical of the referendum question ahead of the vote.

A day before the break-in, 3,700 kilometres away in sunny California, the University of California, Los Angeles' student council debated whether to adopt a BDS-style resolution at a marathon nine-hour session during U.S. Israeli Apartheid Week. In the end, the council rejected divestment from Caterpillar, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard, Cemex and Cement Roadstone Holdings (companies that BDS proponents argue are employed by the IDF in its effort to flout Palestinian human rights) in a 7-5 vote. And one blubbering student became online fodder after her highly emotional reaction to the result was caught on camera (though in her defence, if I had just sat through a nine-hour Israel-vs.-Palestinian blow-up, I'd probably have been sobbing uncontrollably, too).

Two campuses, two very different outcomes for IAW/BDS. Makes you wonder what the next 10 years will hold for Israeli Apartheid Week: Will there be more "victories" and violence as in Windsor, or more setbacks and silliness like at UCLA?

Time will tell, but as IAW turns 10, one thing is becoming abundantly clear: pro-Israel students are getting better at fighting back. The #rethink2014 initiative, a social media strategy dreamed up by third-year King's College London student Hannah Brady, 20, is a major breakthrough for opponents of IAW/BDS that has put Israeli Apartheid Week on the defensive. The clever campaign – which asks people to tweet an ending to the phrase "I oppose Israeli Apartheid Week because…" – is scoring points against IAW in a region where it has traditionally held sway: online.

For the record, here's my contribution to #rethink2014: "I oppose Israeli Apartheid Week because if it's not, at the core, really just about Jew-hatred, then it's pretty damn close – and, either way, it's an exercise in intellectual dishonesty."

It doesn't matter where you go to school, or what country or continent you live in/on – when it comes to Israeli Apartheid Week, that's the bottom line.

yoni

Dry Bones

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Adler responds to media coverage

I was disappointed to see the media coverage last week about the private welcome reception I co-hosted for some members of the Canadian delegation in Israel during Prime Minister Stephen Harper's recent visit. The national media story based on an unnamed source regrettably attempts to pit one supporter of Israel against another supporter. I co-hosted this event, outside of the official program for the historic visit to Israel, and there was no taxpayer money involved.

Our government's recent trip to Israel was incredibly emotional. During my speech at this welcome reception, I even broke down as I spoke about my father, the only survivor from his family after the Holocaust, who always wanted to visit Israel but never made it before he passed.

This was a very exciting, but very difficult trip for me. I was pleased to be accompanied by so many prominent members of the Jewish community, including a number of rabbis from York Centre, who were a comfort and support during this trip.

Mark Adler
MP York Centre

Thank you for promoting empathy

Children start off life as caring, loving, empathetic beings, and they only lose those traits because the adults in their community see to it. Children are told to "grow a thick skin" and are chastised by adults when they display a loving and caring attitude to our non-human brethren. While we might not tell them outright that their empathy is wrong, we certainly let them know that their lives would be better without that amount of caring for others. And that is wrong on every single level imaginable.

Therefore, I find it very sad that people accuse your writer of convincing her son to be a loving, caring, compassionate individual ("My son, the activist," *The CJN*, Feb. 27). Many thanks to the writer for promoting empathy in her son. Children like him are going to have to change the world, if we're going to survive.

Vanessa Sarges
Toronto

Home-schooling is not enough

Raquel Kaplan Goldberg is correct in suggesting that Jewish home-schooling is not enough ("Raising our kids to be knowledgeable Jews," *The CJN*, Feb. 20). *The CJN*'s editor, Yoni Goldstein, can certainly teach his children the Jewish values of respect for human dignity, justice, and tikkun olam, but that will not distinguish them from their Christian schoolmates. It will only mean that they will easily fit in with the better part of the Christian community.

As Goldberg suggests, home-schooling will not enable children to have a broad foundation, instruction book or reference guide for not only Jewish problems and a Jewish lifestyle, but for secular problems as well. It will not enable them to immerse themselves in the Jewish community and have that as their community and source of morality.

Canadian Christians live by very similar moral codes as Canadian Jews. To maintain Jewish values, we must give our children all the wonderful tools and morals of Judaism. For that, a good knowledge of Torah and ritual is required.

Jonathan Usher
Toronto

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John Kirbizakis
Montreal

Dr. Jacob Tink, left, and John Kirbizakis

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The forgotten talmudic story about the birth of Christianity

Shraga Bar-On

At the beginning of the 20th century, in an almost prophetic act, Samuel Hirszenberg painted *The Wandering Jew* as a bearded old man running horrified past corpses lying in a forest of crosses. Did the artist, one of the founders of Bezalel Art College in Jerusalem, think that it was an unavoidable curse and that the Jews were destined to flee in such terror?

Israel's founding prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, liked to pose for photos with visitors near that picture, which now hangs in the Israel Museum. He surely assumed that the wandering Jew finally had found shelter from the horrifying Crusades against the Jewish people. Indeed, the Jews have found more than shelters; rather they have found homelands in Israel and in North America, changing the relationships between Jews and Christians.

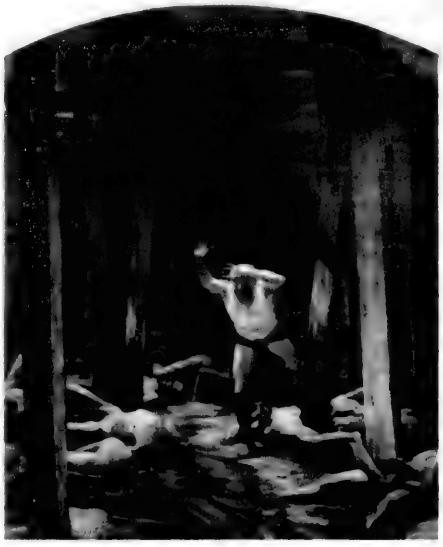
From the founding of Christianity through the middle of the 20th century, except for brief periods of tolerance, animosity reigned between the two religions. Because Christianity was based on the negation of Judaism, the conflict had been viewed for 2,000 years as a zero-sum game.

In this regard, it is interesting to note the following unique talmudic story, once censored from traditional versions of the Talmud, which proposes a different story about the birth of Christianity:

Our rabbis have taught: "Always let the left hand thrust away and the right hand draw near… Not like Rabbi Joshua ben Perahiah who thrust Jesus away with both his hands…

"What was the incident with Rabbi Joshua ben Perahiah? When King Jannaeus put the rabbis to death, Simeon ben Shetah was hidden by his sister, while Rabbi Joshua ben Perahiah fled to Alexandria in Egypt.

"When there was peace, Simeon ben Shetah sent [this message to him]: 'From me, Jerusalem, the Holy city, to thee Alexandria in Egypt. O my sister, my husband dwelleth in thy midst and I abide desolate'. [Rabbi Joshua] arose and came back and found himself in a certain inn where they paid him great respect. He said: 'How beautiful is this 'aksania'! Jesus said to him, 'My master, her eyes are narrow!' He replied to him, 'Wicked person! Is it with such thoughts that thou occupiest thyself!' He sent forth 400 horns and excommunicated him. [Jesus] came before him on many occasions, saying 'Receive me', but he refused to notice him. One day while [Rabbi Joshua] was reciting the *Shema*, Jesus came before him. His intention was to receive him and he made a sign to him with his hand, but Jesus thought he was repelling him. So he went and set up a brick and worshipped it. [Rabbi Joshua] said to him, 'Repent'; but he answered him, 'Thus have I received from thee that whoever sinned and caused others to sin is deprived of the power of doing penitence.'"



The Wandering Jew by Samuel Hirszenberg

This is a late adaptation of a non-historical story that originally was not about Jesus at all. According to the story, Jesus was a faithful disciple of Joshua ben Perahiah (who had actually lived 100 years earlier). Dating the birth of Christianity to the period of the Hasmonean King Jannaeus shows that the sages were not interested in historic details, but rather in the values they wished to convey.

The cause of the rift between Judaism and Christianity according to this humanistic story is not the competition on claims of truth, but rather human relations gone awry. The blame is not put on Jesus for leaving the right path, but rather on his rabbi, Joshua ben Perahiah. It may be that Jesus' attitude to the hostess symbolizes a discrediting of the Land of Israel, the Torah, or the common Jewish People, but it is regarded as a mistake of a foolish disciple. His rabbi's anger, however, is regarded as disproportional.

Paradoxically, defending the honour of one person led to serious injury to another. Ironically, at the critical moment when the rabbi is finally ready to accept his disciple's attempts at being forgiven and taken back into the community, his simple gesture is misunderstood.

We can easily imagine Joshua ben Perahiah closing his eyes in the middle of the *Shema* prayer, concentrating on receiving the Kingdom of Heaven (which Jesus frequently preached for), covering his eyes with one hand, reaching his second hand forward as if to say, "Wait a moment," and Jesus was hurt and despaired, thinking he was expelled again.

The interactions are then reversed: the rabbi goes to his disciple and asks him to repent, but it is too late. The disciple now brings up the lesson he learned from his rabbi: "Whoever sinned and caused others to sin is deprived of the power of doing penitence."

The lesson our sages wished to teach us through this story is that sometimes rebellion against home and against religion, and even establishing a competing religion, is not the consequence of a new understanding that contradicts former truths and beliefs, but rather one of personal disappointment and a sense of alienation.

Sometimes, an overreaction to a mistake, instead of correcting it, may worsen the situation. "Whoever sinned and caused others to sin is deprived of the power of doing penitence." This was aimed at deterring sin, but it only blocked the possibility of atonement.

The sages said: "Always let the left hand thrust away and the right hand draw near, not like Joshua ben Perahiah who thrust Jesus away with both his hands." According to the story, he didn't thrust Jesus away with both hands; it was only a misunderstood gesture. But this was exactly a case of thrusting with both hands. In a distressing situation like this, Rabbi Joshua should not have covered his eyes with one hand. Instead of anticipating the Kingdom of Heaven, he should have opened his eyes, seen the human being standing before him and accepted him.

The separation between the two monotheistic religions is a *fait accompli*. Now it's time for us to use this story to learn how to handle relationships among people of different religions. Concentrating on human relations and enjoying the fact that the public space can contain them all, like the Holiday of Holidays in Haifa or the streets of Canadian cities during Christmas season, can heal historical injuries and overcome the trampling of human dignity caused by the struggle for religious truth.

Shraga Bar-On is a research fellow, lecturer at Shalom Hartman Institute who is spending the academic year in the United States.

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Ours must be a big, broad and open tent

Gil Troy
in Montreal

History teaches that hatred distorts, perverts and diminishes the hater and the hated. For millennia, the Jewish People have been targeted by an irrational, overwhelming force, what historian Robert Wistrich calls the world's "longest hatred." Tragically, as this anti-Semitism became illegitimate following the Holocaust, it morphed into anti-Zionism and anti-Israelism, what now may be considered the world's "trendiest hatred."

This hip hatred, also known as the delegitimization movement, has emerged as a major obstacle to peace. The systematic anti-Zionist campaign, fuelled by Arab money and now embraced by radical leftists, makes many Jews fear for their lives, abhor compromise, and reduce the world to a reductionist, dualistic with-us-or-against-us paradigm. As victims of this unreasonable evil, Jews must continue denouncing our detractors, while being wary not to be warped by the fight.

Unfortunately, the power of today's continuing anti-Israel anti-Semitism makes too many of us too quick to caricature those with whom we disagree as anti-Israel or anti-Semitic. There are genuine anti-Zionists and anti-Semites in the world. Why recruit more to their ranks by calling sincere critics sworn enemies?

I do not want to live in an Israel or in a Jewish community where dissent is quashed, where with-me-or-against-me politics reigns, where political life becomes about denouncing rebels as foes. Yes, I draw red lines, but I also build a big broad tent – open on all four sides, like Abraham's – with blue-and-white poles, always trying to find common ground among Israel's supporters, even if we have different partisan spins or policy prescriptions.

It pains me to hear U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry denounced as anti-Israel or anti-Semitic. Disagreeing with some Israelis about how best to achieve peace with the Palestinians does not make you an anti-Zionist. Moreover, labelling as an "anti-Semite" someone who has supported Israel publicly for decades, who endorses Israel's right to exist, and whose brother converted to Judaism, is absurd. Such hysteria diminishes us all – and so broadens the term "anti-Semite" as to make it meaningless, thus letting the genuine, evil, anti-Semites off the hook. Just as stretching the term "apartheid" so broadly by applying it to Israel saps it of its racial dimensions and true pejorative power, so, too, does stretching the term "anti-Semite" to apply to Kerry remove the sting from what should be the serious accusation of Jew-hatred.

When I was a student living in Boston in the 1980s, we knew Kerry as Israel's friend – and knew that his brother, Cam, was Jewish. In 1985, when I visited Soviet Jewish Refuseniks who were blocked from immigrating to Israel, as "protection" I wrote into my phone book the "phone numbers" of Cam Kerry, John Kerry, and Ted Kennedy. I made up the numbers, using 617 for the first two and 202 for Kennedy as area codes. In that pre-Internet age, I figured that if I ran into trouble, I would mention their names, and Kerry's Jewish connection, to delude the Soviets into believing I was well-connected.

More broadly, it pains me to hear from Jews who care about Israel how repudiated they feel when they dare dissent about Israeli policy. "I'm tired of going up to friends' cottages or weddings and having them and their parents take jabs at me," a former student with whom I respectfully disagree about Israel's Palestinian policy recently wrote me. "It's this monopolization of 'the' community that 'If you don't support us on this one, you're not one of us' tone... that really put[s] me off."

I recognize the delegitimization movement's toxicity and have warned that more intellectuals, including Jews, are escalating from criticizing Israeli policy to rejecting Israel's right to exist. I also realize that delegitimization most threatens impressionable young Jewish students, some of whom reject Israel to be trendy or popular. But I also recognize the danger of demonizing some of our smartest, most critical, most passionate young people because they disagree with us.

Democracy begins in disputation which is also what the Talmud is all about. We, the people of the Book, should never be the people of the closed black-and-white book, but of a rich, multi-dimensional, open, colourful and welcoming book, distinguishing between true friends and real foes, and encouraging the kind of vibrant debate that made the Talmud the Talmud, and the Jewish People not just survive but thrive.

Repaying the Righteous Gentile

Urban Writer
Avrum Rosensweig

A few nights ago, I met the Pusuma family, a Roma family from Budapest. They have been given refuge in a west-end Toronto church and live in a room that's about 20 feet by 20 feet. Twenty other churches had rejected the request to give them refuge. So far, no shuls have agreed to give refuge to others.

The father, Jozsef, is 43 years old. His mother is Roma (pejoratively known as Gypsy) and his father was Jewish. Jozsef's wife, Timea, 33, is Roma. She has moxie to spare and very deep dark brown eyes, reflecting joy and a terrible history. Their little girl is Lulu. She is six and adorable. Lulu is a child with opinions. Melts your heart.

Jozsef was a human rights activist working for a minister in the European Parliament. His job was to drive throughout Europe to places where Roma had been persecuted and determine what had happened. He takes great pride in the fact he drove four million kilometres to accomplish his goals.

Timea would often take children into their home, some of them Jewish, offering them a warm compassionate place when their parents were working.

One day in 2009, in daytime Budapest, the Pusuma family heard a car enter their courtyard. They saw an intimidating black sedan. Four men jumped out in scary black clothing, "with big shoes" and masks. They were neo-Nazis brandishing bats. When the family came out, they were set upon. Jozsef told me one of them swung a bat at his thigh and smashed into the bone. He said it was incredibly painful. Timea heard a buzzing in her head after taking a blow to her ear. She touched her head and saw "much" blood in her hand. She was woozy.

Timea didn't know where her Lulu was. Where was her 15-month-old baby? She looked around frantically while the neo-Nazis beat them. Then she heard Lulu. She was lying underneath Jozsef. He was protecting their infant from the thugs. He was taking the blows that would have killed their little girl. Like a lion, like a father, like our people tried to do, he was protecting his little girl from evil. The entire event took three minutes. Evil is fast.

Five years ago, the Pusuma family arrived on our shores after reviewing our refugee policy and choosing our nation as their safe place. The first couple of years were fine, but then reality set in. They were scammed by a lawyer who took their money, but failed to process their papers properly. This led to a deportation notice issued by the government.

In time, through the assistance of very good Christians, the Pusumas were offered sanctuary in that west-end church. They moved in and haven't been outside since. They're in hiding. If they go for a stroll, they can be picked up and immediately sent back to Hungary – a country designated by our government as a safe place for its citizens.

In that tiny room, with shelves lined with donated toys, they teach Lulu her studies. Friends from the church drop by. Jozsef's daily regimen includes spending time alone in a dark room, playing the piano, songs from back home. He cries while he plays. He looks tired and in need of vitamin D.

Today, groups of people, including congregants and children from Toronto's Temple Emanu-El, are trying to find freedom inside our borders for the Pusuma family. By the time you read this, the family's story will likely have been told in a number of other media outlets. But a deportation notice still hangs over the heads of this Roma-Jewish family, which sentences them to live in Budapest 2014, where they are remembered well by big-shoed neo-Nazis and hooligans.

Nazi beatings. Remember your Holocaust education and the stories you read about Jewish beatings. Remember your Holocaust education and ugly testimonies about Jewish babies being thrashed to death, and then remember 15-month-old Lulu.

We are a comfortable and accomplished Canadian Jewish community. Use your authority and resources to help the Pusuma family.

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Kosher pop-up restaurant to feature fine dining

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Kosher foodies can look forward to a fine-dining pop-up restaurant. March 25 and 26 run by and in support of Dani (Developing Nurturing and Independence).

Catered by Dani Dairy Delights, the restaurant will be run at the Dani Centre at Garnet A. Williams Community Centre in Thornhill. It will seat 50 people per evening and feature a four-course pareve meal.

Carolyn Fingold, left, and Terri Quint prepare Dani Dairy Delight's signature cinnamon rolls.

Dani was started in 2005 by Kathy Laszlo and Susie Sokol to create opportunities for young Jewish adults with physical or cognitive challenges to participate as valued members of the community and enjoy a meaningful and dignified quality of Jewish life.

Dani Dairy Delights, the organization's catering business, began in 2011 as an important part of Dani's day program.

Josh Salmon, a Dani volunteer, said Dani Dairy Delights has catered to homes and offices, and each participant has a job that is based on interests and abilities.

"We provide all of the young adults with the opportunity to take part in the catering business, but we don't force them," he said.

Orders are delivered and payment is collected by the young adults, and the money raised is placed in a business account. The participants pay themselves a nominal salary from the profits, and the rest goes to fund programs.

Salmon said Dairy Delights recently prepared a dinner for 300 people at an abilities seminar.

"We were hired because the organizers wanted to showcase an organization that employs people with special needs," he said.

"We did it as a buffet and served salmon teriyaki, roasted potatoes, pasta, salad, fruit and cookies."

Dani participants acted as sous chefs and did food preparation such as washing, peeling, chopping and slicing, while others did serving, he added.

Dani Dairy Delights also prepares gift baskets and runs a snack kiosk inside the community centre.

"We try to hone in on the kids' skills. Some do repetitive tasks, but they feel accomplished about it. For many, it's the first time they are being looked up to for what they're doing, and the first time they're getting paid."

Salmon conceived the idea for the pop-up restaurant – he's keeping mum about the actual menu – because he was unaware of one ever being done as a fundraiser, he said.

"Kosher diners look for high-level, innovative cuisine, and this is what they're going to get. It will be a culinary experience. All cooking will be done here under the leadership of our resident chef, Orly Abu."

Salmon said Dani has had people come on board as sponsors, and has already raised $20,000.

He said that not only will the food be delicious, but it "will be food for the soul. By attending, you will be helping other people help themselves. That is what Dani is all about. We want a hand up, not a hand out."

For information and reservations, email info@dani-toronto.com, or call 905-889-3264, ext. 231.

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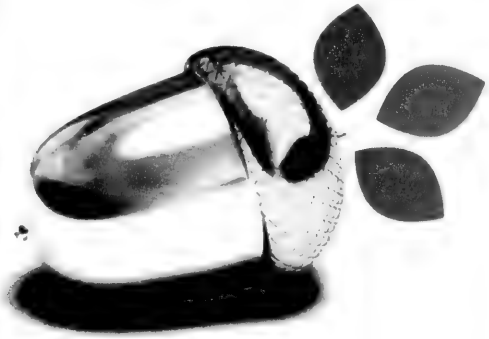

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Kids turn to social media to save dad's life

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Kevin Block is a kind man who loves spending his time with his wife and two kids. He enjoys being outdoors, sailing and taking his dog for long walks. He's laid back, patient and has a great sense of humour. His biggest joys are his children's achievements and having a great meal.

In June 2013, Kevin, 56, was diagnosed with stage four non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He has endured countless attempts at various chemotherapies without any success. Kevin's illness has left him unable to work, and as a result, he lost his business – a substantial source of family income.

The family is, therefore, in dire need of financial help.

At the end of January, Kevin's daughter Nadine, 23, and son Jamie, 17, received the devastating news that there was no cure for their father in Canada. They immediately began a social media campaign called "Keeping Kev" to fight for his life.

"Our campaign's mission is to raise the required funds for Kevin to be able to participate in a clinical drug trial only available from the United States. This drug has had great success in the U.S. with his particular type of cancer. This drug trial is not covered by any form of insurance or OHIP. The doctors have exhausted all forms of treatment for my dad in Canada," Nadine said.

From left: Rachelle, Nadine, Kevin and Jamie Block

She and her brother decided to create Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts to share their father's story. In addition, people have been directed to a website where they can take a closer look at Kevin's journey and donate.

"We turned to social media for our campaign because of its fast and easy accessibility to reach the community. Because of the dire urgency of the situation, we needed to raise funds in the quickest way possible," Nadine said.

"We also wanted our campaign to be relevant, effective and capture the interests of people all around the world. In just a few minutes we were able to set up accounts, post our story, pictures and links for everyone to see and access. In 3-1/2 weeks, we have almost 1,000 likes on our Facebook page."

To date, $96,000 has been raised, continuously inching closer to the ultimate goal of $200,000. All of the funds are going directly toward purchasing the drug from the United States, with the goal of putting Kevin's cancer into remission.

The medication alone costs the family $12,500 a month.

The Blocks "are continuously humbled by everyone's generosity and kindness," Nadine said. The community has been trying to assist the family with various initiatives, such as bake sales and Zumba classes, to raise the much-needed funds.

"We constantly receive uplifting emails, Facebook messages and people sharing their own personal stories."

Nadine said her father "has been blown away by all the support he has received thus far. He is so very grateful and appreciative of everybody's generosity, hard work and dedication to the campaign. The fundraiser has had a very positive impact on his health and well-being. It has lifted his spirits enormously."

Kevin has been on the medication for nearly two months.

"According to his oncology team, he is doing really well," Nadine said. "The medication is taking effect, and there have been significant changes in his blood counts and markers of lymphoma. Kevin is already starting to feel much stronger. He is up and about, has more energy and is slowly regaining his strength."

When asked what message she hopes to spread to other young people through her campaign, Nadine said: "Firstly, appreciate every day that you have with your family because you never know when that can be taken away from you. Secondly, never underestimate what you are capable of doing. Almost one month ago, I would never have imagined that my friends, family and I would have created such a success in such a short period of time. Being proactive and positive goes a long way. Thirdly, don't sweat the small stuff. Life is too precious."

To learn more about Keeping Kev, visit http://www.youcaring.com/medical-fundraiser/keeping-kev/117076.

KORN FERRY

President and Chief Executive Officer

UJA Federation OF GREATER TORONTO

The mission of UJA Federation is to preserve and strengthen the quality of Jewish life in Greater Toronto, Canada, Israel and around the world through philanthropic, volunteer and professional leadership. UJA is the only organization in Toronto which focuses on the entire community and has the most powerful means to dynamically respond to crises and carry out breakthrough solutions that change the Jewish world.

UJA is seeking an outstanding leader to set the strategic direction in order to realize its mission, build and sustain its role in the community and Israel, and to lead the Federation into the next generation. The President and CEO will work closely with the Board, donors and key stakeholders to further engage, motivate and expand participation in fundraising, networking and related activities as well, provide oversight and management of all operations, including the review and implementation of financial controls, protocols, policies and processes.

The President and CEO must be a visionary and possess strong leadership, business acumen, fundraising and strategic planning skills. Experience may have been gained in any sector – not-for-profit, academic, government or corporate – providing the candidate has experience working closely and successfully with lay leadership in a not-for-profit environment.

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Jewish day schools offer multiple options

Continued from page 3

"I think I missed out, and I think my parents had to shoulder more of the load, because the messages around the type of human being that they wanted me to be weren't necessarily being reinforced at school."

Stein said academics and the quality of general education at day schools were also a key part of his decision-making process.

"But for me, I think a big part of the decision was what kind of children do I want to raise, and what kind of message do I want to send them about what to value and what to prioritize?"

When it comes to persuading parents that Jewish day school is the best option, Stein said "one of the biggest obstacles is [overcoming] a lack of awareness of how much day schools have changed since the time that they were kids.

"I think the level of education that is available today, it's not just about having a school with a religious curriculum, it's that we have a school that is comparable in terms of academics and other offerings to any other school in the city, the best schools in the city, and on top of that, we have this Jewish component that extends far beyond the academic sphere."

Daniel Held, executive director of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education, who introduced the panel, told *The CJN* that the forum was not about marketing individual schools.

"It's about marketing and sharing the word about day schools and the power that day school has for a child's Jewish education and Jewish identity and Jewish upbringing."

Held, an Associated and TanenbaumCHAT graduate, said kids coming out the Jewish day school system have multiple options.

He said over the past 25 years, studies have consistently shown that "Jewish day school is the gold standard of Jewish education and that kids graduate from schools prepared for high school, prepared for college, prepared for the next stage of life."

He added that "Jewish day schools prepare kids for the world, the world Jewishly… [and] academically, in terms of raising mensches and leaders – kids who can think creatively and think intuitively and think widely."

Kayla Saul, one of the five panelists, and Daniel Held, executive director of the Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education addressed parents.

Following the announcement of the retirement of Sandy Keshen as President and CEO of Reena, a Transition Committee and The Osborne Group (Professional Executive Search Group) worked closely and diligently to seek a person qualified and capable of carrying forward Sandy's outstanding achievements at Reena. Reena is now happy to announce that the members of the Reena Board of Directors have appointed Mr. Bryan Keshen, B.A. (Hons), B.Ed., M.S.W., as President and CEO of Reena effective May 5th, 2014.

In making this announcement the Board is very confident that Bryan will not only continue, but will expand the excellent work carried on by Reena on behalf of individuals who have a developmental disability.

His professional vision is to build healthy, sustainable Jewish institutions that integrate passion with compassion through innovation, partnerships and resource sharing. This philosophy is evident in reviewing his many successes since entering the field of social services.

Bryan is a graduate of the University of Toronto with a Master of Social Work and is an alumnus of York University Concurrent Education program.

In his 23 years of Jewish communal service, Bryan has worked in partnership with agencies, volunteers and professionals to oversee the expansion of community engagement services. He has facilitated the development, restructuring and start-up of three community centres: Miles Nadal JCC, Prosserman JCC and the Schwartz/Reisman Centre. Bryan lead the largest celebration of Canadian – Israeli relations (Israel 50), and assisted in the year over year growth of the largest Jewish Community Annual Capital and Endowment Campaign in Canada (UJA, Toronto).

His most recent appointment has been with the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto as Vice-President Community Capacity Building.

Reena is currently celebrating its 40th Anniversary Year as a non-profit social service agency dedicated to integrating individuals with developmental disabilities into the mainstream of society with dignity and respect.

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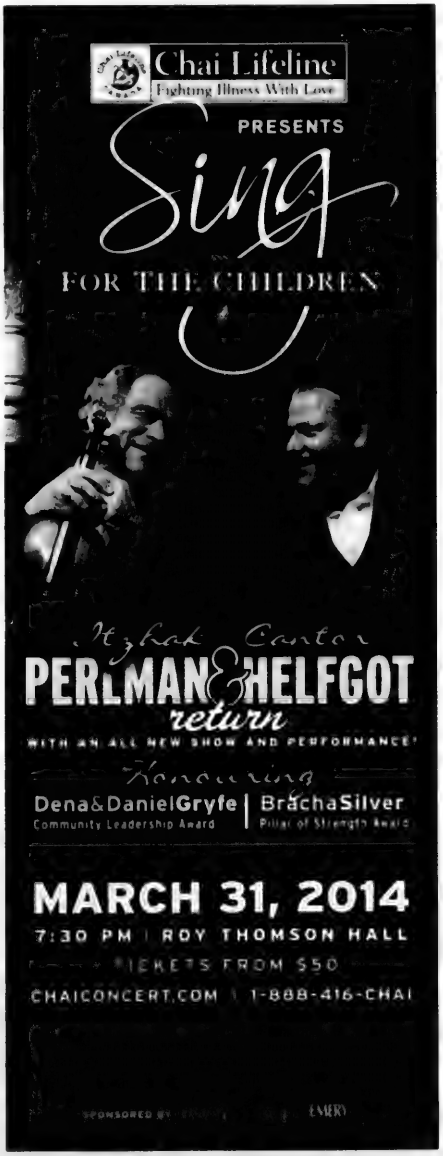

Doc reveals Jerusalem's compelling tale

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The subjects of *Jerusalem*, a documentary that tells the historical, spiritual and multicultural story of the Old City from the point of view of three young women – one Jewish, one Christian and one Muslim – were in Toronto for its Canadian premiere last week.

The 45-minute National Geographic Entertainment film, produced in partnership with the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University (CFHU), takes the viewer on a journey that features some of Jerusalem's most spectacular sites, including the Western Wall, the Dome of the Rock, and Masada.

Narrated by British actor Benedict Cumberbatch, *Jerusalem* was screened Feb. 25 at the Ontario Science Centre's IMAX Dome theatre. It shows the viewer what makes the city so special in the eyes of three Jerusalemites, Farah Ammouri, who is Muslim, Nadia Tadros, who is Christian, and Revital Zacharie, who is Jewish.

The three women, who attended an intimate reception hosted by CFHU board members Judy Bronfman and Karen Radomski Simpson the night before the screening, were on hand after the Science Centre event to answer questions about their experience making the film and how it has changed their perspectives.

From left, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University board member Judy Bronfman, *Jerusalem* cast members Nadia Tadros, Farrah Ammouri, and Revital Zacharie, writer and director Daniel Ferguson, and CFHU board member Karen Radomski Simpson pose for a picture at a screening of the film in Toronto last week.

Daniel Ferguson, the Montreal-born writer and director of *Jerusalem*, said in addition to wanting to produce a film that used breathtaking aerial shots as well as street-level footage to make viewers feel like they had just visited the city, he also wanted to tell a human story, rather than a political one.

"When we started this film, there was a sense among the filmmakers that everyone in North America and certainly in Europe has this kind of Israel-Palestine fatigue," Ferguson said.

He said leaving politics out of the film was less about ignoring the conflict and more about taking a deeper look into why the city is special to nearly half the world's population.

"Instead of making the conflict or the politics front and centre… I think the film needs to be timeless and it needs to answer two questions: why do we love the city in our own way, and how does that inform our understanding of the issues at hand?" he said.

"I think everyone is curious about Jerusalem. I think a lot of people want to go there, but they're frightened by whatever their perception of the security situation is. But the reality is that this is a chance for people to… gain a perspective on the city and obviously, in a limited time, and feel like they've travelled to Jerusalem. That's the real goal."

Ammouri, who is currently attending college in the United States, said that when she speaks to people about where she comes from, they "are very scared to go to Jerusalem, because they think of it as a city of conflict and tension. But we are just approaching Jerusalem from a different perspective, from three girls and how we live our daily lives."

Although the film, five years in the making, aims to explain why the city is so important to the three Abrahamic faiths, it was also a learning opportunity for its three subjects.

"I already had an idea of what Christianity is, but I wasn't very much aware of Judaism," Ammouri said. "Through the film, I was able to meet wonderful people who have changed my view on the Old City and to realize that it is important to everyone."

Tadros said that when she met Ammouri and Zacharie, she was surprised by how many interests they shared.

"I learned that they are a lot like us. We shared the same jokes, we liked the same movies, we go to the same places, so at first I was shocked that we do the same things… I hope everyone in Jerusalem can figure this out," Tadros said.

Zacharie, who was also surprised by how much they had in common with one another, said she believes that more communication between the communities in the Old City's four quarters – Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Armenian – is important.

"We do meet each other – I've met many Arabs in Jerusalem – but I hope that we'll have a chance to speak more and to understand one another's perspectives," Zacharie said.

Jerusalem opens March 7 at the Ontario Science Centre.

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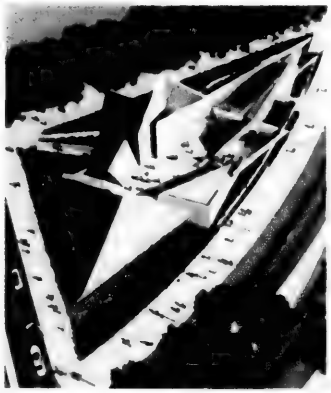
National Holocaust Monument

Design ideas unveiled

CJN Staff

OTTAWA — From an abstract structure that resembles a landed UFO to a sunken plaza, the public had a chance to see six design concepts shortlisted for the National Holocaust Monument to be built in Ottawa next year.

Members of the six international design teams, composed of architects, artists and, in some cases, Holocaust scholars, were on hand at the unveiling, which took place in the lobby of the Canadian War Museum on Feb. 20.



The design proposed for Canada's National Holocaust Monument by Daniel Libeskind and Gail Lord is organized around a stylized Star of David.
[*Canadian Heritage photo*]

A seven-member jury composed of art and urban design professionals, a Holocaust survivor and representation from the National Holocaust Monument Development Council will now recommend its choice to the government. The winning design is expected to be announced this summer.

The monument will be located in the heart of the capital region, at the corner of Wellington and Booth streets, facing the War Museum. The inauguration of the monument's main elements is scheduled for the fall of 2015.

Last May, teams of professional artists and architects were invited to submit their credentials and examples of their work in the first phase of the competition.

The most well known contestant is American architect Daniel Libeskind who designed Berlin's Jewish Museum and the 2007 expansion of the Royal Ontario Museum.

He and museum planner Gail Lord of Toronto call their design "Landscape of Loss, Memory and Survival." They say it is intended to "communicate the hardship and suffering of the victims while conveying a powerful message of humanity's enduring strength."

From an aerial view, intersecting triangles can be seen forming a stylized, six-pointed star, organized around a space large enough to hold gatherings of up to 1,000.

The team led by Iranian-Canadian architect Hossein Amanat and Paris-based Israeli artist Esther Shalev-Gerz proposes a 14-metre-high, 20-metre-wide half-sphere in white marble, positioned at an angle on its end, symbolizing a "broken world" after the Holocaust.

Montreal architect Gilles Saucier, who has worked on such projects in his home city as the Rio Tinto Alcan Planetarium and McGill University's Schulich School of Music, and artist Marie-France Brière have come up with a two-level monument that uses native geology.

Viewers are intended to get the sense of "a large tectonic plate rising out of the ground," suggesting the upheaval of history. The higher plane, which emerges into the light, symbolizes humanity's looking to the future.

The team led by Toronto art historian Irene Szylinger and including artist/architect Ron Arad and architect David Adjaye proposes a series of undulating concrete walls that create 22 narrow pathways, the number of countries where Jews were decimated in the Holocaust. The passages give onto a tranquil space for individual contemplation or large gatherings.

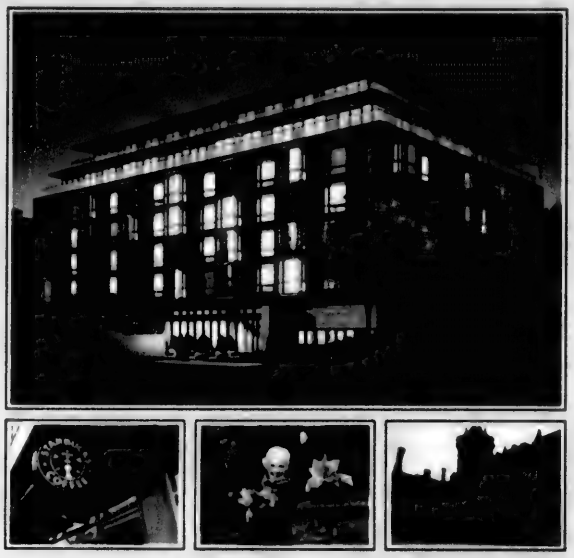
Adjaye, a Tanzanian-born Briton, is the lead designer of the new National Museum of African-American History and Culture in Washington, D.C.

The team, headed by Leslie Klein of Quadrangle Architects of Toronto and American scholar Deborah Dwork, submitted a design with three main elements: an 11-metre-high, gravestone-like granite structure, a small birch forest, which has both historical significance and suggests regeneration; and two art installations – one with video by Israeli artist Yael Bartana, the other featuring sound by Scottish artist Susan Philipsz.

The plan of Cambridge, Mass., architect Julian Bonder and artist Krzysztof Wodiczko entails excavating to the site's bedrock and building a sunken plaza. Aspen trees would be planted in soil that mixes earth from Canada with that from all of the homelands of Canadian Holocaust survivors.

"I am pleased with the high calibre of the teams that have answered our call," said Shelly Glover, minister of Canadian heritage and official languages. "The future National Holocaust Monument will be a lasting symbol for Canadians and visitors to Canada's capital region to remember the horror of the Holocaust and how it affected our history."

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird added: "This commemoration project will promote a better understanding of the historical events of the Holocaust and how they have affected Canadian history – an understanding that will benefit Canadians in every community across the country."



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Everything happens for a reason

Jori Lichtman

I didn't even shed a tear. OK. A really tiny one that wasn't even big enough to make it down my cheek and drip onto my shoulder. Seriously. Everyone reacts differently to life-changing news. And when the news was delivered to me that my services (along with the services of 59 other employees) were no longer needed at the organization I had, in many ways, grown up with for eight years, my reaction was, and still is, everything happens for a reason.

In fact, one of the 613 mitzvot, or commandments, is not to bear a grudge. I'm confidently upholding that one (along with the 612 others of course). I truly believe I will land where I'm supposed to land – at a great company, in a challenging marketing role that leverages my creative talents, leadership skills and go-getter attitude.

So why am I writing here today? Not because it pays the Hebrew day school bills (sure, every bit helps). But because I think there may be other young Jewish professionals in a similar situation who would benefit from hearing my story – my journey.

In fact, perhaps there are some readers out there who are also members of the Facebook group called The Tribe – Young Jewish Professionals Group, a group I stumbled upon, a "volunteer-driven group focused on fostering community engagement and building personal and professional relationships within Toronto's young Jewish professional community." Or perhaps you're not in this situation today, but you may be one day.

In the three months since I received the fateful message in a jet-lagged state (it was the day after arriving back from an amazing 10-day trip to Israel with my husband), I have met numerous other talented professionals who have faced a similar challenge. This group includes an old colleague who is charting a new, exciting path as a life and executive coach using me to test her talents on. Yenta the Matchmaker could not have made a better match – she wants to practise her coaching skills, and I want someone smart to give me honest, constructive feedback and advice.

So, what exactly am I up to these days? What haven't I been up to! I'm reading books and taking workshops to discover my greatest skills and what makes me happiest. I completed an online course in social media and received an industry-recognized certification. I joined an important industry association and developed a new mentor relationship with someone I clicked with at a networking event. I'm networking my tush off meeting dozens of professionals by phone, email, LinkedIn and personal introductions, and attending events through my Rotman MBA alumni network.

I'm leveraging my Jewish network to make connections and introductions – including telling all the moms and dads at my kids' school that I'm actively looking for my next great role. I'm keeping track of all my contacts, coffee dates and thank-you notes, and conducting hours of research on many organizations, especially the ones that are at the top of my list.

And probably most importantly, I've created a list of my top 10 professional goals for 2014. It's tacked to my bulletin board in my office at home, staring me in the face each day. They're not complicated and they're realistic. Of course, the first one is to land a great job I'm excited about.

Another goal is to attend four networking or professional development sessions this year. And another is to make one coffee date per month with a new connection or someone I want to re-connect with.

Speaking of coffee dates, I recently learned about the Canadian site www.tenthousandcoffees.com. It's a forum that helps connect young professionals with industry leaders and experts. The industry leaders sign themselves up – they want to help. Let's take them up on their generosity. Because as we all know, time is the most precious commodity.

Of course, as motivated as I am to get results, I don't have it all figured out. I make mistakes. I sometimes get nervous for interviews. I sometimes cram too much in one day and forget to breathe. I should meditate. I will. I made a promise to myself. But my mom and dad still think I'm the best, of course. Not to mention my husband, my biggest supporter of all!

With all this going on, homemade chicken soup with matzah balls is on the stove every week, and I would never miss a Shabbat dinner with my family.

And even if I've had a rough day, or a meeting didn't go as planned, I always remember God has given me so much to be thankful for – a loving and supportive husband, three beautiful and healthy children, and friends and family who are always there to lend an ear. I also have the amazing opportunity to be home when my kids get home from school, share their projects and artwork, and sing their beautiful Jewish songs.

Just the other week, I attended my son's incredible senior kindergarten Shabbat celebration at Robbins Hebrew Academy where he and his classmates performed Hebrew songs along with choreographed dances recognizing God's six days of creation and the seventh day of rest.

There, the tears came.

Lichtman can be reached at jorilichtman@rogers.com or linkedin.com /in/jorilichtman.

Jori Lichtman lives in Toronto.

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Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 32 years

Question: I am fifteen years old. I am currently living with my father and stepmother. I do not live with my mother because of a drug addiction she has had in the past and her failure to appear in court over custody of me. My mother has no custody of me, only visitation rights. I am truly unhappy living with my father because he emotionally abuses me, yet I do not want to live with my mother either. I would really love to live with my grandmother but I doubt it's possible. I have seen many counsellors and psychologists, yet nothing helps me. I have even contacted children's aid and they do not want to bother with my case either. I just need a place to live where I can feel safe and loved, which is why I would like to live with my grandmother. I feel like my feelings do not matter and I cannot understand why it is so difficult for me to just be happy. Please help me.

Answer: Youth between the ages of 12-17 who need their own lawyers in certain family law situations or in criminal law matters can turn to Justice for Children and Youth, an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, by calling 416-920-1633 to see if they can help. They are very kind and helpful.

Question: I have court papers saying that I am allowed to have my son every second weekend. One day my son, who is 10, decided he didn't want to see me anymore. The last time I went to see my son he was not there. My ex told me that the next time I come I have to make an appointment to see him. I called him during the holidays and was talking to him for a few seconds, then the phone went dead. I called back right away but nobody picked up the phone. I pay a lot for child support. Why bother paying the support if I cannot see my son? Is there anything I can do?

Answer: In law, you are obliged to pay child support even if you are denied access. But I would recommend that you ask a judge to cite your wife for contempt of court for breaching the court order and threaten her with jail or a large fine if she continues to prevent you from seeing your son. The court could also ask a child therapist to investigate your son's true wishes.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit ***www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.***

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Study finds stem cells that may lead to leukemia

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

The discovery of a stem cell that evades therapy and may trigger acute leukemia and relapses among patients in remission could potentially help stop the disease in its early stages, according to a new study from the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre that builds on research by a former Israeli medical resident.

Dr. Liran Shlush currently works at Princess Margaret, but his leukemia research began when he was completing his internal medicine residency at the Rambam Medical Center in Haifa.

Shlush is now part of a team under the leadership of John Dick that began studying acute myeloid leukemia (AML) cells with a general curiosity, not knowing what they would find.

Dick's team sequenced the genomes of AML samples and compared them with what was supposed to be a lineage of white blood cells unaffected by the disease.

That's when they discovered a mutation in the gene DNMT3a in 25 per cent of AML patients. That mutation causes pre-leukemic stem cells to appear as though they are normal cells, but they grow at an abnormal rate.

"That was the 'eureka moment,'" Shlush said.

Essentially, Dick's team has discovered a stage that is a precursor to the appearance or reappearance of leukemia in a patient.

AML occurs when white blood cells mutate and divide too rapidly. When you look at them through a microscope, they're actually composed of different sub-populations of cells that are genetically distinct, Shlush said.

It's hard to diagnose leukemia early on, Shlush said, because its cells circulate in a patient's bloodstream without any tangible or visible structure, such as a tumour, unlike many other forms of cancer.

"The patients [usually] come into the clinic with the full-blown disease," Shlush said. "No one knows what is the first mutation that started it all, but now we have a genetic marker we can test."

The team hopes its discovery will allow for earlier diagnoses and, therefore, increased survival rates.

All of the findings are very preliminary, Shlush emphasized. There aren't any drugs to target the rogue cells yet, and it's still extremely difficult to determine if people have them.

But the team's discovery could pave the way to some really significant findings in the future, and perhaps even a cure.

For now, the researchers will continue to study the disease using their discovery as a starting point to advance personalized cancer medicine by identifying who might be at risk.

JGH campaign decreases chance of medical mistakes

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Little did Bernie Weinstein realize that an incorrect dosage of medication given to his mother-in-law at the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) in 2002 would ultimately contribute to a program that is reducing medical errors and "adverse events" at the JGH, other hospitals and even overseas.

Bernie Weinstein

The two-year-old Speak Up! campaign, run by the hospital's Quality Program, allows hospital "stakeholders" – patients, families and clinicians – to work together to minimize medical mistakes and near-misses, reduce patient fears and enhance inter-communication.

It does so through a co-ordinated team effort that fends off friction between parties in favour of co-operation, mutual respect and more informed participation.

And it is proving so popular that another Montreal hospital, the Montreal General, is implementing its own Speak Up! program – as is a hospital in Asia, Weinstein said.

Hospitals in Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba, as well as in the United States, have also have launched their own versions of Speak Up!

JGH information indicates that preventable adverse events and medical errors contribute to the deaths of up to 24,000 Canadians each year.

"It's... the patient who must be the focal point," said Weinstein, 66, who chairs Speak Up! at JGH and is currently giving a series of public talks on the campaign through the end of April. "It's not just about 'speaking up,' but also about 'active listening' by doctors, nurses, caregivers, and families.

"It is all about a continuous process of education and reinforcement," he said.

The Canadian Jewish news

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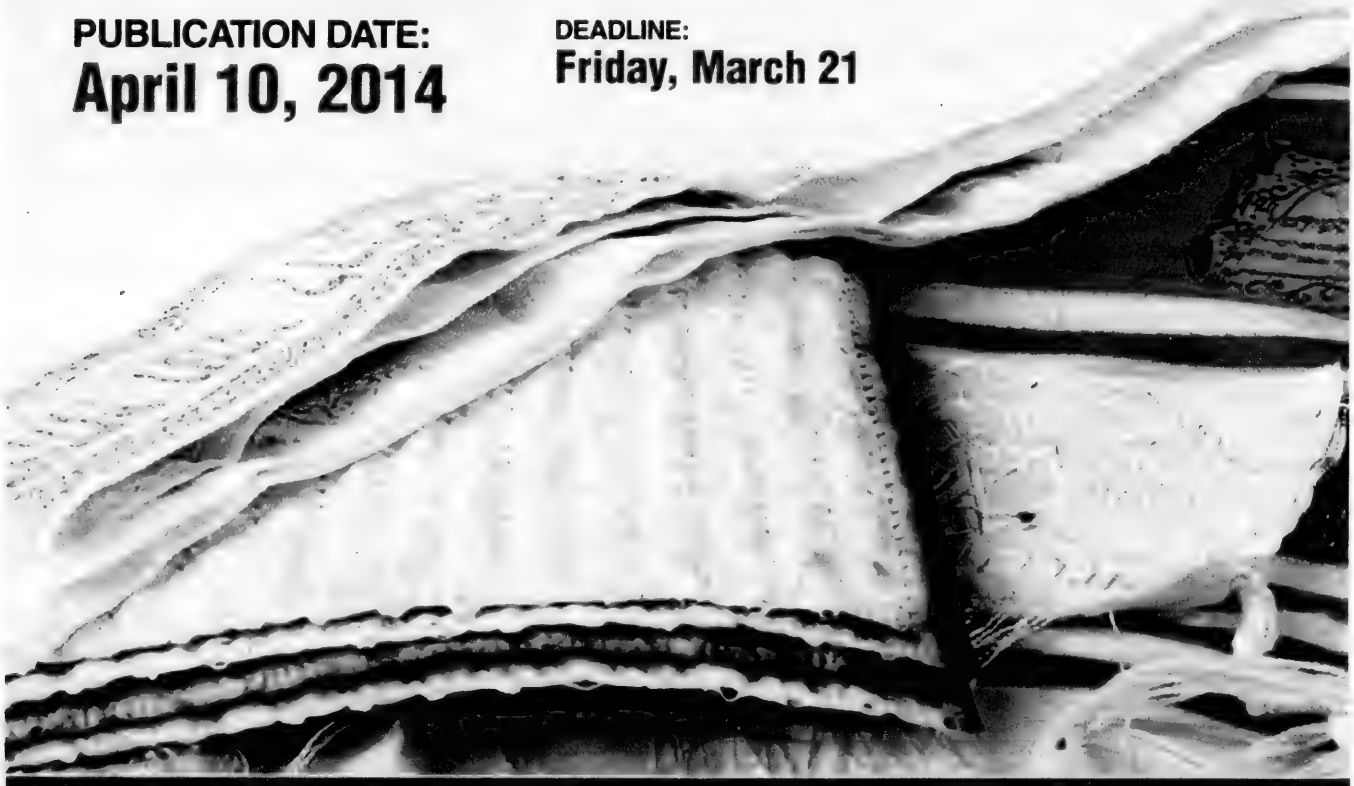

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Designer helps brides' dreams come true

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

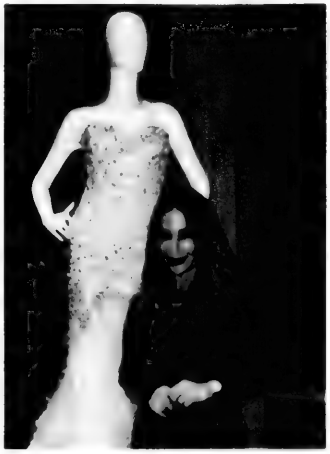
Israel-based fashion designer Pnina Tornai's exclusive wedding designs were showcased at United Jewish Appeal's Young Leaders and Young Women's Leadership cocktail evening on Feb. 20.

Tornai, who stars in the successful New York-based reality TV show *Say Yes to the Dress*, began her career 25 years ago in a small Tel Aviv shop where she designed dresses, working with only one additional seamstress. Today, she owns a high-end design studio in New York City, attracting brides from all over the globe – including the Arab world, Asia, Europe and Canada.

Visiting Canada for the first time for the event, held at the Shangri-La Hotel, Tornai thanked the Jewish community of Toronto. "I believe that Israel would not exist if we didn't have the Jews and the Diaspora, especially those who live in America and Canada, who support and donate so much to Israel."

Tornai has never studied design, but she began designing clothes instinctively at a very young age.

"My parents realized my gift and talent when I was four years old," she told the 60 women at the event. "I used to draw and sketch dresses – especially ball gowns – on the walls of our house."



Fashion designer Pnina Tornai is seen with one of her exclusive wedding gown creations.

It was really a mistake, she said. "I wanted to be an actress. God decides for us what we should do, and I personally very quickly understood you don't argue with Him. The profession literally chose me – I didn't choose the profession.

"It started with a dream," she continued. "I was lying on the lawn and I saw these dresses falling from the sky – amazing bridal dresses. I was looking at them, and I could see every detail on those dresses. I woke up in the morning and I understood it was a calling. That morning, I went to the store, and I said to my one salesperson: 'We are closing the store.' I painted the store in white and gold. I found a seamstress who said she knew how to sew wedding dresses, and that's how it started."

Tornai said another sign from God came when she sold her first dress.

"My first bride came and bought a dress for her wedding. The following day, her wedding was featured in the front page of all the newspapers. She got married in the north [of Israel] and had rockets flying over her head at the chupah. The newspapers wrote about the couple that got married under fire. That's how my dress ended up in all the newspapers."

Tornai's global success came in 2005 when she was offered an opportunity to sell her dresses at the New York wedding gown giant, Kleinfeld Bridal Salon.

Calling Israel home, she travels each month back and forth from Tel Aviv to New York City.

"I think my dresses are so successful because of the spirit and soul I put in. They also have a certain style. I was the first one to start with the corset in the U.S. Most brides feel the most beautiful they could feel on the day of their wedding. That I made their dream come true is the greatest compliment to me."

Tornai's designs also include eveningwear. Her handmade dresses are designed using the principles of haute couture. Materials are imported from all parts of the world, with designs ranging from classic to sophisticated that include trimmings with Swarovski stones, lace and other fabrics. Tornai also designs modest dresses for Orthodox brides.

Hudson's Bay is set to launch a 20,000-square-foot Kleinfeld Bridal Salon at its flagship downtown Toronto store on May 1.

"You're not going to have to go to New York to buy your dresses, because we are going to have Pnina Tornai exclusively in Canada and we are very proud of that. Everything but the groom – that is what I want to deliver to the Canadian bride," said Evelyn Reynolds, senior vice-president of bridal licensing and business development at Hudson's Bay.

Tornai is extending her brand. She's working on a bathing suit and lingerie line in Israel, as well as on developing a perfume

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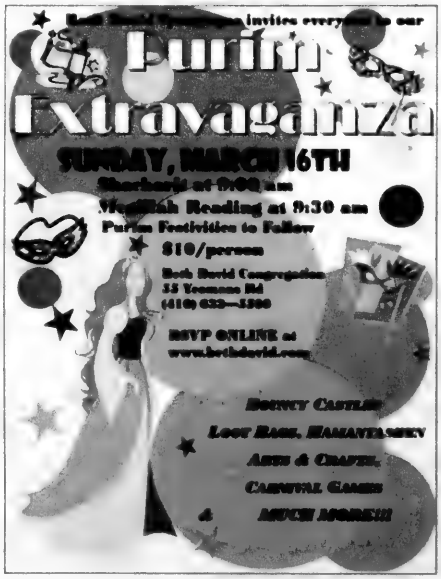
The Young Men's Hebrew Association has submitted by-laws to the Registrar of the *Funeral, Burial, and Cremation Services Act, 2002* for Wilson Cemetery (located in Mount Sinai Memorial Park, 986 Wilson Avenue) and Roselawn Cemetery. Any interested parties may contact Mr. Goldman at 416-586-8654 or info@ymha.ca for information, or to make copies. By-laws or amendments may be reviewed or copied by contacting the YMHA to set an appointment.
These by-laws are subject to the approval of the Registrar, *Funeral, Burial, and Cremation Services Act, 2002*. (Tel: Cemeteries Regulation Unit (416) 326-8399)



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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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AUTHORS & POETS
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Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes.

They should not exceed 2,000 words. Selected submissions will appear in the Passover Supplement of The CJN on April 10 2014, in either our Montreal or our Toronto edition, or both. If you have a preference, please state it on your submission. Not all submissions can be published. We look for originality. Please don't send more than three entries.

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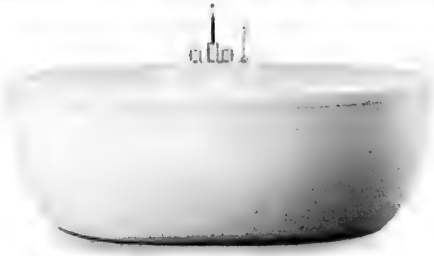

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Ari Shavit

Author tries to help Israel find its narrative

Israeli journalist Ari Shavit's new book, *My Promised Land, The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*, is being hailed for its historic sweep and insights into the Israeli experience. Shavit was in Toronto recently, and he discussed his award-winning book with *The CJN's* Paul Lungen.

Can you tell us what the book is about, why you wrote it?

I wrote this book because I felt what happened to us is that we've lost our narrative. Israel was a narrative before it was an entity. We had a very strong sense of where we were coming from and why there is a need to build a home for the homeless people that we were. And what happened, sadly, over the years is that while Israel physically grew stronger, its sense of meaning and narrative disintegrated in many ways.

So what I tried to do in this book, in my own way, is to rewrite a narrative, to look at the larger picture of our existence.

My point is that we got lost in the friction, in the conflict, in the debates over the territories, the settlements, the religious issues, and we lost sight of the great miracle that Israel is.

The book is about getting the story back. I think the way I do it is by telling the life stories of different Israelis, reflect the different aspect of our lives, the different aspects of our history. And I think by doing it, I want to enable readers who care about Israel to refresh a renewed interest in this country, to see how magical it is, that with all its faults and problems and flaws, how remarkable it is. And really to bring back the love of Israel, especially to those who were alienated by Israeli policies in the last decades.

You talk in your book about Israelis' existential fear. Are you an optimist or a pessimist about peace with Israel's neighbours?

My claim is that contemporary Israel is defined by two unique situations. One is occupation. The other is intimidation. And my claim is that while people on the left tend to focus on occupation and ignore intimidation, people on the right tend to emphasize intimidation and ignore occupation. I think the realistic approach called for is to address both, to see that the uniqueness of the Israeli situation is shaped, is defined by these two elements.

On the one hand, we are the one democracy that rules over another people. On the other, we are the only democracy and probably one of the only nations in the world that is really existentially threatened. This is a fundamental feature of our being. Now I'm not saying that peace is impossible, but I think that the conflict between us and our neighbours is a very deep one. I oppose occupation and have to deal with it, but I don't think this is a conflict over occupation or settlements.

I think it's a deep conflict that has a historic dimension, and it has to do with the identity of both sides. There are religious elements in it, cultural elements in it. There is the element of tension between a Jewish state and an Islamic world; the conflict or tension between a Jewish nation state and the Arab world; and there is the conflict between the Zionist state and the Palestinians. All these create a conflict that I don't think can be easily resolved.

I think a realistic approach to peace is needed. And my approach is basically the following: try what [U.S.] Secretary [of State John] Kerry is now trying, which is to achieve a final status agreement, but don't wait for this to happen.

If I were in power, I would prepare in advance Plan B, a different approach which is based not on solving all the core issues, but rather to move forward in a sort of gradual, cautious, creative process where we gradually deal with occupation while the Palestinians gradually build their state.

So if peace cannot be achieved this year, I think we should not fall into despair, but we should try to design some new peace approach [in] which we pull out gradually from parts of the West Bank and give the Palestinians more and more space, geographic space, economic space, political space. So at every given moment the Palestinians will have more than they had before, but they will not have everything.

And then hopefully, after we go through this long process, we are able to go for the final reconciliation, which I doubt we can reach right now.

Why would the Palestinians have any incentive to negotiate a peace agreement if you're handing over territories and powers? Is there reciprocity?

I support the prime minister's position, unlike many of my peers and friends. I think the Palestinians should recognize Israel as a Jewish state. It is very important, because it will signal to Palestinian youngsters that we Jews belong on the land.

If an interim agreement cannot be achieved, I think this kind of situation that moves us toward a two-state solution to create two states, improves our position and improves their position.

It improves our position because it deals with the moral issue of occupation, it deals with the demographic problem of controlling another people, and mainly with a problem Israel has now with its legitimacy.

Do you see a danger that your approach will heighten divisions within Israel?

I think the point is there is another people there and we cannot ignore that. If we ignore that, we actually risk the entire Zionist enterprise. If you look today at the new world we are facing, Israel has three main external threats. The first one is Iran. I'm very firm on the Iranian issue. I think it's a dramatic threat.

The second one is occupation, which is killing us quietly and gradually.

And the third one, which has to do with occupation, is Israel's legitimacy. If we are to regain our international legitimacy, we must deal with occupation. That would also enable us to deal with Iran.

I'm not one of those people on the left who are into settler-bashing. I respect many of the settlers. But I think they made a fundamental historic mistake, although they had the best intentions. They totally failed in convincing the world that there is justification for their endeavour. As a result, they are putting Israel's legitimacy in jeopardy. They do not mean that, they do not want that, but this is the outcome. If we do not deal with occupation, we will lose international support, and when we need it to deal with the real existential issues, like Iran and others, we will have no allies.

Can you comment on the social protest movement in Israel a few summers ago?

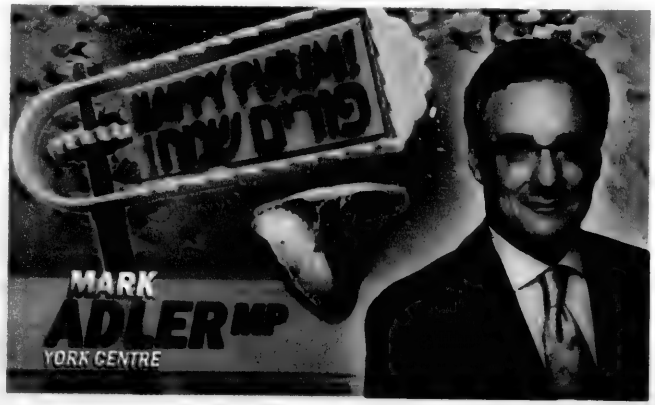
I think that of all the world's social protest movements, Israel's was the most remarkable. It was civilized, it was moderate, it was reasonable. It had very wide support.

Ari Shavit

I saw in this really the awakening of Israeli civil society. I think we have a great people, I think we have flawed politics. And this was a summer-long occasion where you saw the eruption of the power and the energy of civil society in Israel, demanding deep change.

I think there was a conceptual revolution. The mindset of Israelis has changed. I think in the future we will see new forces that will emerge from that movement. So, no it wasn't an event of one summer, although the demonstrators are not out in the street, they really changed our psyche.

The capitalist revolution in Israel went too far and we let the market be our ruler. Here was a demand to have the state back, not like extreme socialism, but to strike the right balance with I would say is a kind of social democratic undertone to it. It was proof of the strength and vitality of Israeli society, and I think we'll see more coming as a result of it.



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Digging up Jerusalem

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

The period after the Six Day War proved to be a bonanza for the archeology of Jerusalem. Between 1948 and 1967, Israeli archeologists were denied access to the Old City, and it was in east Jerusalem that the most desirable archeological sites were found.

Between 1961 and 1967, it was the British who conducted the most important excavations in east Jerusalem under the leadership of the legendary archeologist Kathleen Kenyon. Her assistant director, A. D. Tushingham, would become the chief archeologist, at Toronto's renowned Royal Ontario Museum. Because of him, the *Globe and Mail* made their excavations known across Canada. Their work was brought to a halt by the Six Day War of 1967.

The year 1967 was a turning point in the archeology of Jerusalem. For the first time, Israeli archeologists had a chance to take the lead in excavating the city that lay at the heart of Jewish history. It was a task they took up with gusto.

Excavations began at the Western Wall right after the Six Day War, under the legendary Benjamin Mazar, the dean of Israeli archeologists. In the 1950s, Mazar had been the president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he also headed the prestigious Institute of Archaeology. Mazar's excavations revealed the scope and breadth of occupation around the Temple Mount, especially the massive platform built by Herod the Great for his impressive reconstruction of the Second Temple, which would be destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.

Another important excavation project in Jerusalem's Old City was undertaken in 1969 by another pioneer of Israeli archeology, Nachman Avigad. His spectacular discoveries spanned more than 1,000 years of Jerusalem's history, starting with the Broad Wall dating to the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah, in the late eighth century BCE. Avigad also discovered the Burnt House, a palatial dwelling destroyed by the Romans in the upper city when they sacked the Second Temple. He capped it off with the excavation of the Byzantine Cardo of the fifth and sixth centuries CE. Avigad's work visibly illuminated a large part of Jerusalem's history.

Jerusalem's earliest history, at the City of David, was uncovered by the charismatic Yigal Shiloh, who directed these excavations from the late 1970s until the mid-1980s. In the process, Shiloh found the earliest habitation of Jerusalem dating from the dawn of recorded history c. 3,000 BCE. He also uncovered the massive Stepped Stone Structure that rose over six stories on the City of David's eastern slope. With his work, Shiloh unleashed a hornet's nest of controversy when ultra-Orthodox haredim accused him of disturbing a cemetery. Their protests almost brought the dig to a halt with worldwide headlines describing it as the "War of the Bones." Tragically Shiloh died of cancer when he was barely 50, prematurely cutting short what was a brilliant career.

Recently the City of David excavations were resumed by Eilat Mazar, the capable granddaughter of Benjamin Mazar. She made sensational headlines around the world when she claimed to have found the remains of David's palace.

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Purim forever

Midrashic Moments
Rachael Turkienicz

The holiday of Purim is one of the most joyous and mysterious holidays in our calendar. Certainly we all remember the story of being victorious over the evil Haman who plotted to eradicate the Jewish people. The hero, Esther, and her uncle, Mordechai, represent complex Jewish portraits of transformation.

It is customary to dress in costumes, drink excessively, feast, give treats to each other and give charity to the poor. Of course, we listen to the reading of the Megillah and we boo and stomp to eradicate the sound and memory of Haman, who is considered part of Amalek.

In short, we are partying, engaged in ritual, drinking, booing and hissing, eating and delivering treats. Indeed, we celebrate this holiday in a very unique Jewish style.

In fact, the story itself has already put us into a mood of confusion and disorientation. When the sages tell us that our goal is to not know the difference between "cursed is Haman" and "blessed is Mordechai," it's because the story itself moves them in and out of each other's shoes. Mordechai is deserving of a promotion for saving the king's life, but it's Haman who gets the promotion. The king plans a reward for Mordechai and asks Haman for his opinion, and Haman believes the king is referring to him. The king gives his ring to Haman to seal the decree to kill the Jews and later gives his ring to Mordechai to seal the decree to defend the Jews. The topsy-turvy plot unfolds with layers and layers of inversions.

But let's not forget Esther and the Megillah's only other woman of significance, Vashti. Once again, the text shows us mirrors and inversions. Vashti disappears because she does not come to the king when she's summoned, whereas Esther's danger is that she will visit the king when she's not summoned. Vashti is hosting a feasting party for the women at the start of the book, while we read that Esther is fasting and her maidens are likewise fasting with her.

The ridiculousness of the royal antics reach their climax when we realize that all the marital advice is coming from a group called "sarisim," which translates as eunuchs.

All of this raises the obvious question that we have been asking ourselves for centuries: what are we supposed to make of all of this?

One of the answers can be found in the Megillah itself. It is a literary document, and as with any good literature, it will state its theme near the start and quite clearly. The beginning of the Megillah says that this is the story of this empire that spans from "Hodu to Kush, one hundred and twenty seven provinces." In other words, this is the story of exile. It's a story of political intrigue and confusion. It's a story where you're never completely sure what will unfold, and one minute the hero of the story is the villain and the popular villain has become the hero. It's a reality of shaky ground and broken promises. If we forget for a moment what exile is, if we trust it as the answer, we're doomed, and it will devour us.

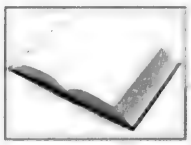
We celebrate this knowledge and we defend ourselves with education (by reading the Megillah) and strengthening our community (sending treats). The key to Jewish survival is our ability to navigate the world around us as we bring the values of Torah into the world and not isolate ourselves from it.

This might be one reason why the sages in the Talmud determined that even after the Messiah comes and we no longer celebrate Jewish holidays, we will nonetheless celebrate Purim forever.

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

Play and the wisdom of children

Rabbi Rena Arshinoff



Rabbinic Reflections

Pirkei Avot asks: who is wise? The second-century scholar Shimon ben Zoma answers, "One who learns from everyone," based on Psalm 119:99, "from all who would teach me have I gained understanding." This persuades us to ask: what do we learn from children?

In my work with grieving children, I always reflect afterward, thinking, "out of the mouths of babes…" as I marvel at their often brilliant insights when they try to understand significant losses in their lives.

We often talk about how children say and do remarkable things, and indeed, we learn a great deal from them. We know how important play is – they explore their world through play. But as adults, we forget this. We all like to have fun, but how often do we as adults allow ourselves to be carefree and childlike?

As we watch children, we see their absolute honesty and ability to just be who they are. Some of the things they learn through play are sharing, thinking of others, releasing emotions, imitating adults, apologizing for being too forceful or greedy, accepting an apology from others, and forgiving. These are concepts Judaism teaches, but such learning does not always come easy.

We each have an "inner child" that is full of energy and somewhat whimsical. We do have a fun side, but finding it can be a challenge for some of us. Children don't need permission to play – they do it naturally, but as adults, we need to tell ourselves that play is acceptable and even beneficial at times. We can even evaluate ourselves in this playful context by asking: how do I play with others? Do I share? Am I a bully? Do I say I am sorry if needed? Do I help others? If others apologize, can I accept?

Children love to laugh. Laughter moves energy and releases endorphins that make us feel good. What a wonderful feeling after being silly or having a giant laugh. Although not always appropriate, sometimes it can even help to laugh at ourselves. God does not expect perfection – God expects us to have an openness to learn how we can be our best. The idea of laughing at ourselves helps us to realize: "How could I have done such a ridiculous thing?" and, most importantly: "How will I be better next time?"

Children readily use their imagination and allow new ideas to simply appear, and such freedom brings new insights. Adults can also do this in finding new ways to fulfil mitzvot, in exploring new and unique concepts in Torah study, in establishing new social justice initiatives, and even in trying to make sense of life's challenges. Children teach us a great deal by simply being who they are in their uninhibited and delightful ways, even in difficult times.

Yes, children have their difficulties as well. Judaism focuses on making the world a better place. The approaching holiday of Purim reminds us that we need not be so serious all the time. Play offers new understandings and children teach us wonderful approaches to doing this. May we have the openness to learn from their open and genuine wisdom.

Rabbi Rena Arshinoff is a chaplain at Toronto Western Hospital and a group facilitator and professional advisor with the Children's Program at Bereaved Families of Ontario.

The rest of the story

Rabbi Philip Scheim

From the Bimah
Rabbi Philip Scheim

The veteran American radio commentator Paul Harvey would end his broadcasts with his trademark phrase: "And now you know the rest of the story."

The story I share now begins almost four decades ago in my student years at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in New York. One of the more interesting personalities at the seminary was a bookseller named Shimon Gruber, a Skverer Chassid, who would wander the halls, his hands filled with talmudic and chassidic commentaries and assorted Judaic texts. In truth, I was one of Reb Shimon's best customers. It was difficult for me to resist his sales pitch, in which he proclaimed his books to be "scientifish," because of the presence of an index, knowing that JTS favoured an academic approach to text study.

In my years at the seminary, I acquired numerous "*metziahs*" (bargains), as he would term them, books that I can attest to never having opened even once. At the time of purchase, I knew that I would make little use of *Animals in the Mishnah*, and other less-than-riveting works that Reb Shimon sold me, but I liked him, and enjoyed the opportunity to exercise my limited Yiddish. It is interesting that it never occurred to me – or my fellow students – to question how a Skverer Chassid ended up selling books at JTS.

Some 20 years ago, my cherished rabbinic colleague, the late Rabbi Joseph Kelman, happened to be in my office. As rabbis tend to do when visiting other rabbis' offices, he was browsing my bookshelves, picked up an obscure volume and asked: "Where did you get this?"

Assuming that my answer would mean nothing to Rabbi Kelman, who had not attended JTS, I said: "From Reb Shimon."

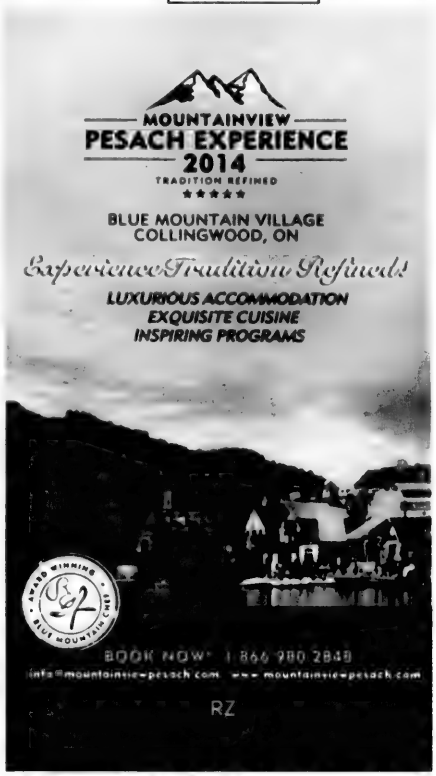
"Oh, you mean Shimon Gruber," he said.

"You know Shimon Gruber?" I responded in surprise.

He told me that Shimon Gruber had been one of the German Jewish refugees interned in Canada by the British during the Holocaust. The Kelman family in Toronto was instrumental in seeking the release of these Jewish refugees, and in assisting many of them upon their release. Many of those former internees would become distinguished leaders in Jewish communal life in Canada and beyond. Many became highly successful, but some, like Shimon Gruber, who ended up in New York, were struggling to find their place in life.

It was here that the Kelman family connection would prove significant. Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, of blessed memory, long-time executive vice-president of the Rabbinical Assembly, was based at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He took it upon himself to find a worthy occupation for Reb Shimon, and suggested that the seminary could use a bookseller.

And now you know the rest of the story. For decades, Shimon Gruber sold books to seminary students and faculty. I own many of them. Indeed, there were many times when I questioned my purchases. But my questioning ended once I learned how Reb Shimon came to the seminary, how it was the result of compassion and caring that, for decades, every weekday, a Chassid travelled the distance from New Square to Morningside Heights, from Chassidism to Conservative Judaism. Those "Gruber-metziahs" that I had denigrated years earlier, I would learn, of all my books, were the most precious and the most sacred.



Crimea's sole rabbi speaks out

Jews should 'not become targets'

Amanda Borschel-Dan
The Times of Israel

The sole rabbi in the Crimean peninsula said Sunday he is advising his congregation to stay indoors and away from the centre of Simferopol, the capital of Ukraine's Crimean republic and the epicentre of the Russian invasion, where hundreds of soldiers were deployed by Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday.

Speaking to the *Times of Israel* from the relatively quiet outskirts of Simferopol, Rabbi Michael Kapustin, an ordained Reform rabbi, said there is an atmosphere of fear in the city, with few cars and fewer pedestrians on the streets.

Located in the heart of Simferopol's Old City, Rabbi Kapustin's Ner Tamid synagogue was vandalized on Thursday night with anti-Semitic graffiti, including swastikas, "Death to the Jews" and far-right extremist emblems. The rabbi said the attack was anti-Semitic in nature, but likely not carried out by a member of any far-right party, since the emblems were apparently "botched."

Friday night, Rabbi Kapustin and the few members of his congregation who arrived for Shabbat evening prayers lit candles and said a prayer for peace. The rabbi subsequently asked his congregants to go home, and he cancelled Saturday morning prayers in an effort to keep his members out of danger zones.

Synagogue in Simferopol, Crimea, defaced with Nazi graffiti

"I would say the situation is dangerous – a lot of things might happen," said Kapustin, who is sending his wife and two small children, 1-1/2 and nine months of age, to Israel on Monday.

Rabbi Kapustin has asked his congregation not to voice any political opinions in public, either pro-Russian or pro-Ukrainian nationalist, and not to make targets of themselves.

But he did not hold back. "As a rabbi, I am in the public eye. I am not afraid to speak. I am a patriot of this country and I believe what is happening is an aggression on the part of Russia," Kapustin said.

The rabbi was born in Russia but raised in Georgia. In 1991-92 he and his family fled to Ukraine as refugees. He subsequently studied in England and Israel, but returned to Ukraine to serve those he calls his countrymen.

"Now basically I am the only rabbi left in the Crimea and I look after anything Jewish. I'm talking about thousands of people," Rabbi Kapustin said.

He asks the Jewish communities of the world to support Ukraine and the Jewish communities of Ukraine and Crimea, which "is under aggression from Russia." He specifically asks that Diaspora Jews speak with their governments and demand sanctions against Russia.

"We are very poor and miserable, but it's not a question of money, it's a question of freedom," Rabbi Kapustin said.

According to the Joint Distribution Committee, there are an estimated 17,000 Jews in Crimea today, mostly located in Simferopol, Sevastopol, Feodosia and Yalta.

Timesofisrael.com

Religious communities ask Russia to pull troops

JTA

Religious communities in Ukraine, including the Jewish community, called on Russia to "stop its aggression against Ukraine" and pull out its troops.

The religious communities also appealed to the international community, including the United States, Great Britain, the European Union, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, to "stop foreign invasion into Ukraine and brutal interference into our internal affairs."

Rabbi Jacob Dov Bleich, president of the Jewish Federation of Ukraine and a chief rabbi in the country, was among the signatories of the letter circulated by the Institute for Religious Freedom. Other signatories include the heads of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate; the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church; the Evangelical Baptist Union of Ukraine; the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ukraine; and the Ukrainian Lutheran Church.

"Dear Brothers and Sisters in Russia: The Ukrainian people have only friendly, fraternal feelings toward the Russian people. Do not believe the propaganda that enflames hostility between us. We want and we will continue to build friendly and fraternal relations with Russia but only as a sovereign and independent state," the letter states.

Meanwhile, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee said Sunday that it has activated emergency plans to help needy Jews in Crimea, which is home to about 17,000 Jews who live in and around Simferopol, Sevastopol, Feodosia and Yalta. The assistance includes delivering food and medicine to the homes of elderly and poor, establishing emergency phone chains and increasing security around Jewish community centres.

Rabbi Jacob Dov Bleich

The JDC said in a statement that it has "prepared appropriate contingency plans in case the situation worsens."

In a statement released Friday, Rabbi Michael Kapustin of the Ner Tamid Reform synagogue in Simferopol, in the Crimean Peninsula, said he would go to his synagogue to light candles even though services were cancelled for security reasons.

"The city is occupied by Russians. Apparently Russians intend to take over the Crimea and make it a part of Russia," Kapustin said. "If this were the case, I would leave the country. In this case, I will leave this country since I want to live in democratic Ukraine."

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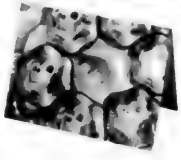

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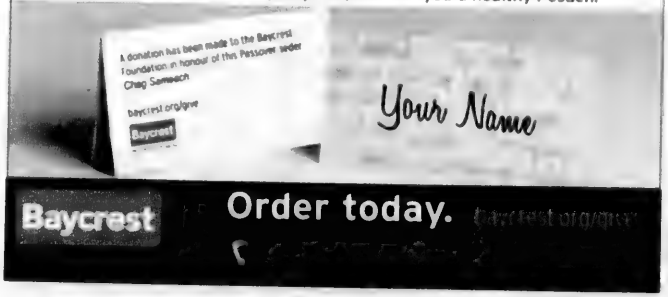
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Beyond nuclear: The threat of Iranian terrorism

Sheryl Saperia
Special to The CJN

Negotiations over Iran's nuclear program have dominated headlines worldwide. With the debate inundated with references to break-out times, heavy-water plants and centrifuges, it would be understandable if some observers lost track of the core issue of this crisis: the threat is not so much the weapon as the regime that owns it.

Under the leadership of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran manages a huge industry of torture; executes its poets, children, and dissidents; persecutes minorities; sponsors terrorism; and speaks openly about the need to annihilate another sovereign state. As such, Iran is a country that cannot be trusted with nuclear weapons.

Comment

Even if Iran were never to launch a single nuclear warhead, merely its capacity to do so would provide the regime with a protective shield, emboldening it to continue and intensify its pursuit of regional hegemony and global instability. Iran has undoubtedly paid close attention to its ally, North Korea, which has deftly pioneered the path to political ascension through nuclear intimidation.

The essential menace emanating from Iran is, therefore, a result, not of its nuclear technology, but of its ideological convictions. Iran was a global concern prior to its nuclear advances, and will continue to be so in the aftermath of any nuclear deal – regardless of the terms.

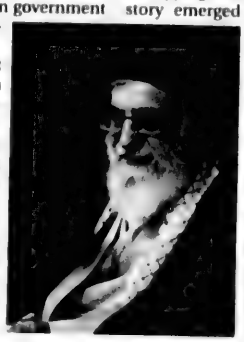
Senator David Tkachuk underscored this point to the Canadian Senate last week, when he spoke about the Islamic Republic of Iran's intimate relationship with terrorism. He drew attention to Iran's nine-digit budget line to support international terrorism, and the ideological context of the regime's embrace of terrorist diplomacy.

Tkachuk is the same Conservative senator who played a central role in the passage of the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA), a bill enabling victims of terror to file civil lawsuits against the sponsors and perpetrators of terrorism, and leading to the government's designation of Iran and Syria as state sponsors of terror. Canadians would be fortunate indeed if Tkachuk's statement last week is a prelude to greater action taken by the Canadian government with regard to Iranian terrorism.

Experts have noted that Iran regards terrorism as an essential element of its foreign policy, military strategy and religious revolution. Responsibility for executing this terrorism policy has largely been delegated to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and its overseas branch, the Quds Force, which maintain operations in dozens of countries. The IRGC is currently assisting Bashar Assad in slaughtering thousands of Syrian civilians, and has been involved in terrorist attacks around the globe in which Canadian citizens have been murdered. Notably, the IRGC also provided assistance to the Taliban and Al Qaeda during the post-9/11 mission in Afghanistan in which so many Canadian soldiers were injured or killed.

Hamas and Hezbollah, both of which are listed terrorist entities in Canada, have received critical support from the IRGC. Hezbollah, in fact, has been referred to as nothing less than a wholly owned Iranian subsidiary, and a terrorist group currently more dangerous than Al Qaeda. This is an organization that seeks operatives with Canadian passports, extorts money from Lebanese expatriates in Canada, and has been caught conducting surveillance of Jewish and Israeli targets in Canada.

Hezbollah's Canadian presence is just one manifestation of Iran's interest in this country. The regime has attempted to extend its influence in Canada by surreptitiously funding conferences, mosques, university student organizations and cultural centres. Iranian-Canadians have often feared that speaking out against the regime will mean harm accruing to themselves or their families back in Iran.



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Iranian diplomats were, in fact, expelled from Canada in 2012, partly due to their spying on Canadians of Iranian origin. But the spying continues. A sensational news story emerged this month about Arian Azarbar, an alleged Iranian spy whose movements and activities were being monitored by Canadian security, intelligence and immigration officials. While Azarbar denies any connection to Iran, security expert Tom Quiggin has pointed out that the name of Azarbar's Canadian-based company figures prominently in a series of videos promoting an Iran-Venezuela business co-operation project in housing. More information will surely emerge in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, there is every indication that Iran's commitment to terrorism will remain unchanged. Accordingly, Canada should consider legislative and policy options to contend with that threat.

For one, the IRGC as a whole should be designated as a terrorist entity. Currently only the IRGC's Quds Force is listed as such. Yet in the past, Canada has wisely refused to recognize the legitimacy of any branch of a terrorist entity, and has banned groups like Hamas and Hezbollah in their entirety. The same measure should now be taken against the IRGC.

As noted by Emanuele Ottolenghi, a specialist on the IRGC, "The revenues derived from all [the IRGC's] activities fund their military endeavours – including support for terrorist groups abroad and the pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology at home."

Moreover, sanctions under the Special Economic Measures Act could be imposed for Iran's terrorist involvement, rather than solely for violations of its international nuclear obligations.

Finally, Canadians should press their government to maintain existing sanctions until there is verifiable evidence that Iran is not building a nuclear weapon. And legislators like David Tkachuk and Liberal member of Parliament Irwin Cotler deserve to be supported in their efforts to bring attention to an Iranian regime that has truly earned the distinction of being the pre-eminent state sponsor of global terrorism.

Sheryl Saperia is director of policy for Canada at the U.S.-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a think tank specializing in national security and foreign policy.

Film on oldest survivor wins Oscar

JTA

A documentary about the world's oldest Holocaust survivor won an Oscar one week after she died.

Alice Herz-Sommer, right, who died in London on Feb. 23 at the age of 110, was the subject of *The Lady in Number 6: Music Saved My Life*, which won the Academy Award for documentary short Sunday night.

The Prague-born Herz-Sommer, a concert pianist, was a prisoner in Theresienstadt. In accepting the Oscar, the film's director, Montrealer Malcolm Clarke, said that he was struck by Herz-Sommer's "extraordinary capacity for joy" and "amazing capacity for forgiveness."

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Haredi men rally against military draft

JTA

JERUSALEM — Hundreds of thousands of haredi Orthodox men gathered at the entrance to Jerusalem to protest a bill that would require yeshiva students to serve in the military.

The main haredi factions were represented at what was dubbed the "million man protest." The March 2 protest did not have any speeches, just prayers and psalms. Police estimated the crowd at 300,000; protest organizers said it was 500,000.

More than 3,500 police and security personnel were at the site of the demonstration to protect the protesters. The main entrance to Jerusalem was closed to traffic at 1 p.m.; the Jerusalem Central Bus Station closed at 2:30 p.m.

Naftali Bennett, head of the Jewish Home party, made up mostly of modern Orthodox members, called on his party members to stay away from the rally.

"You won't find any mention of criminal sanctions in the bill," Bennett said Saturday night. "Those who shout that they need to speak out know that no yeshiva student will be sent to jail. The bill is fair. Military service is not an edict, it's a mitzvah."

Under the proposed military draft law being prepared by the Shaked Committee, haredi men would be criminally charged for evading the draft, but the penalties would not go into effect until 2017. In addition, draft orders for haredi men up to age 26 will not go into effect until up to a year after the law is implemented.

The measure is likely to be brought before the Knesset plenum this month.

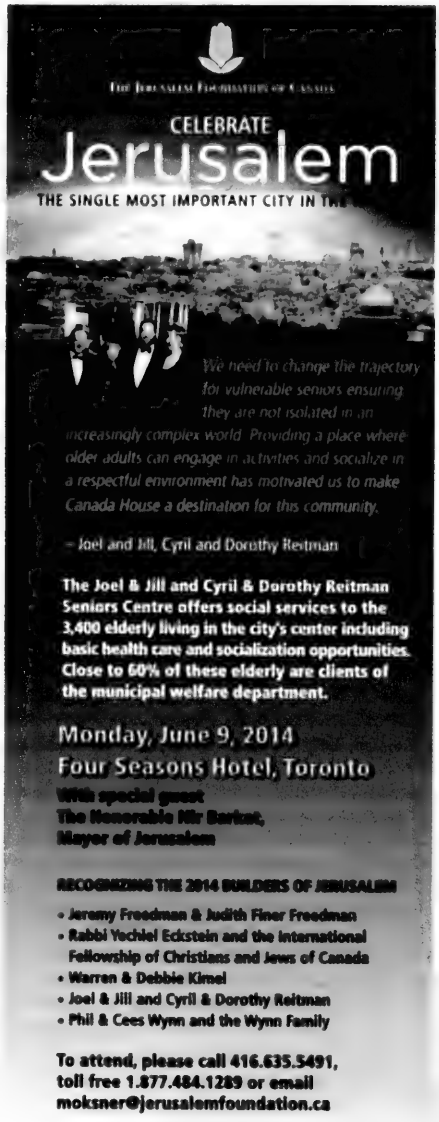
The Tal Law, which allowed haredi men to defer army service indefinitely, was invalidated by the Supreme Court in February 2012 and expired in August that year. Haredi yeshiva students since then have had their drafts deferred.

On March 1, modern Orthodox leader Rabbi Haim Druckman called on his community to stay away from the rally.

Another rabbinic leader of the movement, Rabbi Yehoshua Shapira, head of the Ramat Gan yeshiva, changed his mind on the day of the protest regarding participation in the rally, saying that movement leaders would not attend despite announcing their intent last week to join the rally. Expressions of disrespect by the haredi Orthodox community toward the modern Orthodox reportedly was the reason for the change of heart, according to *Israel National News*, a modern Orthodox news service.

The Belz chassidic sect has threatened to leave Israel en masse if the law is passed.

Haredi Israelis rallying against the proposed draft law at the entrance to Jerusalem. *(Israel Sun photo)*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Most Israelis would accept peace deal, poll finds

Raphael Ahren
The Times of Israel

Three-quarters of Hebrew-speaking Israelis would support a peace agreement with the Palestinians based on the Arab peace initiative, and more than half would vote for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu if he were to leave the Likud party and create a new party, according to a new poll published Feb 27.

The survey, commissioned by the non-profit Israeli Peace Initiative (IPI), was conducted earlier this month among a representative sample of 500 Hebrew-speaking Israelis. The poll's sponsors said it indicated that a large majority of the country's Jews hold hawkish views regarding the peace process but would be willing to accept a deal if they understood what Israel stands to gain from an accord normalizing diplomatic and trade relations with the entire Arab world.

First adopted by the Arab League in 2002, the Arab peace initiative promises Israel "full diplomatic and normal relations" with 57 Arab and Muslim states, in exchange for a "comprehensive peace agreement" with the Palestinians. Israeli leaders have so far reacted mostly coldly to the initiative, unhappy about some of its terms.

According to the survey, 76 per cent of respondents said they are "sure" or "think" that they would be willing to support an agreement after they were told about nine different elements of the deal, all based on the Arab peace initiative, presented to them in a way that made them seem beneficial to Israel. More than 60 per cent of respondents said they would likely support a regional peace treaty even before any components of it were discussed.

"This represents a statistically significant increase over the findings in other surveys conducted over the past few months," according to the authors of the survey.

"The significance of this poll shows that a) Israelis indeed hold right-wing views, b) they don't believe the Palestinians, c) they will accept a far-reaching deal based on the Arab peace initiative if presented properly to them, and d), that they will support Netanyahu if he does make such a heroic decision," said IPI's Koby Huberman in a conference call with reporters Thursday.

More than half of the poll's respondents said they consider themselves either "extreme right wing" (28 per cent) or "soft right" (24 per cent). About 30 per cent define their political position as centrist and 16 per cent as either "soft left" or "extreme left."

Last week's poll presented respondents with what Huberman called a "legitimate interpretation" of the Arab peace initiative, though not with its exact wording. Some of the terms presented to the respondents included the creation of a demilitarized Palestine, settlements remaining under Israeli sovereignty with only "minor territorial exchanges," east Jerusalem as capital, no right of return for Palestinian refugees (with the exception of "a symbolic number"), security arrangements to protect against Iran and terror, and the promise that economic access to "300 million consumers and a billion residents (in the Arab and Muslim world) will improve the situation of Israeli citizens."

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Fox, Karola	Feb. 13/14	1121 Steeles Ave. W.
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Goldstein, Esther	Feb. 14/14	86 Wild Gingerway
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Deeply Missed

Flag vandalized during BDS vote campaign

Ron Stang
Special to The CJN

WINDSOR, Ont. — Police are continuing their investigation into vandalism at the University of Windsor that has been described as a hate crime.

The vandalism took place over the night of Feb. 26-27 – the eve of a controversial and successful campus boycott, divestment and

sanctions (BDS) vote – and the target was one of the student association's vice-presidents.

Jacob DeJong, the University of Windsor Students' Alliance's (UWSA) vice-president of academic affairs, showed up for work on Thursday morning only to find his office in disarray and a Support Our Troops flag pinned to the wall desecrated with spray paint spelling out "Zionist" and a drawing of the Star of David.

"My first response was to back out of the office without touching anything and call the campus police," he said.

DeJong, a native of Windsor and a former military reservist, called the vandalism "a slap in the face to myself and any other members of the military."

DeJong, who is not Jewish, thinks the flag might have been targeted because "not everyone is supportive of some of the events that happened in Afghanistan or Iraq or the intervention in the Middle East."

But he may have also personally been a lightning rod. DeJong said he didn't express an opinion either way during the campaign leading up to the BDS vote – which was endorsed by Windsor undergraduates 798 to 585 – but he did repeatedly criticize the legitimacy of the ballot question "because it was biased, it has some misleading statements, it was convoluted, [and] it was double- or triple-barrelled."

Ironically DeJong said his "fear from the beginning" was for student safety. He pointed to a "backlash" around the time of a BDS vote in 2009 at York University in Toronto.

"We have a decent amount of students who are both Jewish and Palestinian, [and] I wanted to see if we could handle this in a way without students feeling intimidated or scared on campus," he said.

Windsor police spokesperson Matt D'Asti said the complaint to police "came in as a hate crime [from campus police] and that's the way we're looking at it.

"We take it seriously whenever there's derogatory type comments that are spray-painted like this… and we will investigate it thoroughly."

UWSA president Rob Crawford said he couldn't remember a similar incident on the normally tranquil campus.

"Definitely we've never experienced anything like this. I mean, this is definitely an act that we would condemn strongly," he said.

Crawford said DeJong was a "well-known person on campus" and has "been trying to make sure that [the BDS campaign and vote was] run as fairly as possible."

Crawford was unsure what practical effect the vote would have on the student government. It would not apply to the university as a whole.

"I believe that would be left to interpretation whoever the executives are at that time and how far they want to push that [agenda]," he said.

The question was brought by the campus Palestinian Solidarity Group. Efforts by *The CJN* to reach the group were unsuccessful.

Josh Zelikovitz, vice-president of the campus Jewish Students Association, said the BDS vote created a "toxic environment" and an "unsafe environment for Jewish students."

Zelikovitz said while no Jewish students have actually been targeted, he said "there's some reason for trouble." He said there has been "increasing rhetoric" through social media with comments such as "people describing supporters of Israel as scum, as child killers, using the kind of language that one might see in lead-up to violence."

The association, which launched a website (www.nobdswindsor.com) during the campaign, was highly critical of the way the question got on the ballot.

"It was effectively rushed through in a way that would minimize debate, minimize dissent," he said. "The campaign period occurred mostly over reading week, [and] the undergraduate society violated its own rules and its own constitution in order to bring this referendum about."

Crawford did not respond to a request for comment about the abuse of process charge.

Meanwhile, following the vote, university president Alan Wildeman said the school will launch an investigation into the process.

IAW organizers condemned

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

With the 10th Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) underway, Jewish groups are condemning the decision by IAW organizers to include messages from two convicted Palestinian terrorists in their programming on Canadian campuses.

The organizers of IAW, an annual series of anti-Israel events held in cities around the world, have chosen to feature Black September airline hijacker Leila Khaled and convicted terrorist Samer Issawi.

On March 6 and 7, IAW organizers will screen a pre-recorded video message by Khaled at a lecture called, "Towards our liberation: Women leading anti-imperialist movements," at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Surrey, B.C., and at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, respectively.

As a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Khaled was convicted in Israel for her role in the hijacking of TWA Flight 840 from Rome to Athens in 1969. On March 7, Issawi, who was first convicted by Israel in 2002 for being a member of a terrorist organization – the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine – and for possession of explosives and attempted murder, will appear at an event at the University of Toronto's Mississauga (UTM) campus, either via Skype or pre-recorded video.

In 2011, Issawi was released along with 1,027 Palestinian prisoners as a result of the prisoner exchange for the return of kidnapped Israel Defence Forces soldier Gilad Shalit. Less than a year later, he was re-arrested for violating the terms of his release by leaving Jerusalem and entering the West Bank.

"Framed under the banner of 'solidarity,' organizers and attendees will clearly be showing solidarity with a convicted terrorist and airline hijacker by presenting them as honoured speakers. The sheer irony that cries for 'justice and peace' will be made by those guilty of endangering and threatening the lives of civilians is apparently lost on the organizers," said Frank Dimant, CEO, B'nai Brith Canada.

Hillel of Greater Toronto's executive director Marc Newburgh expressed his displeasure that a convicted terrorist will be spreading his message to U of T students.

"IAW's glorification of Issawi illustrates the moral bankruptcy of this movement and how out of touch its organizers are with cherished Canadian values. No wonder Canadians have turned their backs on IAW extremism," Newburgh said.

"We call on the university administration to take all necessary steps to prevent UTM from providing a platform for an acknowledged terrorist to address its students and to strictly enforce all campus codes of conduct."

U of T spokesperson Michael Kennedy said the school is aware of the event planned for March 7, during which Issawi will be a featured guest.

"As we do for all events on our campuses, we will balance the need for freedom of expression with the need for the safety and security of students, staff, faculty and visitors," Kennedy said in a statement.

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Mobile vet provides services for aging and ill pets

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Palliative and end-of-life home care are growing and accepted parts of modern medicine for people.

But Toronto veterinarian Faith Banks is one of the few in her profession offering mobile palliative and hospice-like care for aging and terminally ill pets.

"Pet owners want to know what to expect as the future unfolds. They want to know they are doing all they can to make their pet comfortable. There is a market for what I do. After providing a pet with a good life, people want to provide them with a good death," Banks said.

Over the years, after working in regular clinics since graduating from the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph in 1996, Banks became interested in pain control for pets.

As she pursued courses on pain management, her interests further expanded to include geriatrics, rehabilitation, and palliative and hospice care.

"I launched my business – a mobile practice, Midtown Mobile Veterinary Services [MMVS] – just under two years ago. I loved the idea of being a mobile vet, because I was then able to spend more time with each pet and its owner," she said.

Banks visits clients in the comfort and privacy of their homes, with consultations lasting from one to two hours.

"When clients would come into the clinic and discuss different issues that they were experiencing, we would have maybe 15 or 20 minutes together, and I'd see how stressful it was for their pets," Banks recalled.

Dr. Faith Banks with her dogs, Smudge, left, and B.D. *[Kelly Fischtein photo]*

There are very few veterinarians in Canada offering this kind of hospice service. In veterinary medicine, hospice care is utilized when the pet has several weeks or days to live. Banks' pet loss grief counselling expertise also targets pet owners' psychological well-being.

MMVS serves clients across the GTA. The demand is high. Banks visits six families a week, with fees that she says are only slightly more expensive than a trip to a regular clinic. A new veterinarian, Dr. Karen Stekel, recently joined MMVS.

Forty per cent of Banks' in-home visits provide a quality of life consultation. Her "quality-of-life scale" is made up of 14 different categories, including assessing an animal's appetite, its mobility, and its willingness to give and take love.

New clients receive a geriatric consultation that includes an in-depth conversation covering concerns, fears, needs and goals regarding the condition of a pet that's nearing the end of its life and possible euthanasia.

In-home euthanasia allows the family to say goodbye the way they want in a less stressful and more familiar environment for their pet, she said.

"I have had people Skype in from as far away as Abu Dhabi to participate in the euthanasia. It is a very special ritual. It is all very calm and peaceful," said Banks.

Other services MMVS provides are caregiver support, massage therapy and stretching, nutritional and fluid therapy, pre-euthanasia guidance and preparation, in-home euthanasia and after-care. The only services Banks doesn't provide her patients are surgery and x-rays.

Banks told *The CJN* about her family's recent loss of their 14-year-old Bernese mountain dog, Smudge.

"I practise what I preach. We had Smudge since she was seven weeks old. I had her on many different types of medications with little mats all over my house to help with mobility. We had a special harness that she used. All the things that I talk to my clients about I was experiencing with my own dog. I applied the quality-of-life scale on her about three different times. Finally, when it was her time, I did the euthanasia myself, outside in the sunshine in the snow, which is where she loved to be, and it was absolutely beautiful."

If desired, Banks will make a clay imprint of an animal's paw and leave it with the family. If the family chooses cremation, she later returns their pet's remains.

Banks is growing the business through veterinarian referrals, word of mouth and social media.

"My rewards are huge. I feel honoured to be able to help people in this way. Sometimes I do it with a lump in my throat, sometimes with tears in my eyes, but always knowing that it is with pure love and kindness that we are ensuring our wonderful fur babies die a good death."

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
President

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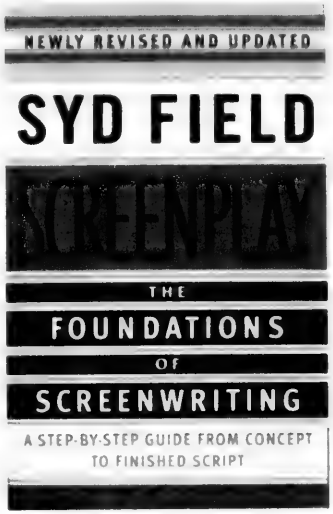
Book may transform the way we view a film

Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting
Syd Field
Delta

Reviewed by Bill Gladstone



As announced in obituaries in *Variety*, *Hollywood Reporter*, *New York Times* and other publications, screenwriting guru Syd Alvin Field died last November in Los Angeles at the age of 77.

It's been 35 years since Field's book *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* was first published in 1979. It sold millions of copies, became known as the "bible" of screenwriting, and established him as a sought-after consultant who gave high-priced seminars to which hopeful novitiates and Hollywood insiders alike would flock.

Field gained seminal experience as a writer-producer and script-reader at a couple of Hollywood production companies. At one company, he read more than 2,000 screenplays in little over two years, recommending only 40 for further development. Only half of these – just one per cent of the total – did he consider worthy of production involving potential investment of millions of dollars.

Field writes that the mountainous size of the slush pile of screenplays never varied, "no matter how fast I read or how many scripts I skimmed, skipped or tossed."

He could synopsize two screenplays a day, but when he got to the third, "the words, characters and actions all seemed to congeal into some kind of amorphous goo of plotlines concerning the FBI and CIA, punctuated with bank heists, murders and car chases, with a lot of wet kisses and naked flesh thrown in for local colour."

This passage reminded me of my decades-long involvement as a freelance reader for a major Toronto-based commercial publisher. A huge pyramid of unsolicited action-adventure manuscripts towered behind my boss's desk. Each time I visited, he gave me a stack of them; I was paid $75 to $100 to read and write a two-page synopsis of each. Over time, I learned to skim through the pages, seeking out what Field would call the essential "plot points" that help shape and define the narrative, dividing the ever-present sections that Field, like Aristotle, labelled Beginning, Middle and End.

Field gave immense thought to why he gave the thumbs-down to most scripts and what distinguished the precious few that won his approval. "What I was looking for, I soon realized, was a style that exploded off the page, exhibiting the kind of raw energy found in scripts like *Chinatown*, *Taxi Driver*, *The Godfather* and *American Graffiti*."

But of course there was much more to it than that. Ultimately he looked beyond content to structure, finding the essential "plot points" that exist, or should exist, in all narrative films, no matter the story, setting, characters or genre.

Most films run 90 to 120 minutes on average, Field reasoned, and a script should average about one page per minute of screen time. In a 120-page script, the beginning section, Act 1, will be about 30 pages long. This is where the screenwriter sets up the story, establishes the characters, illustrates the situation surrounding the action and launches the movie's dramatic premise.

Act 2, approximately 60 pages long, is where the main character deals with the challenge earlier established, confronting a series of obstacles in pursuit of his or her dramatic goals. Act 3, filling the remaining 30 pages or so, delivers the resolution to the story. Field's reductionist paradigm, "Set-Up, Confrontation, Resolution," along with the plot-points separating these sections, should be recognizable in all movies, he writes. When a set-up is weak, viewers lose interest, though they may not know why. When a film lacks a clear resolution, viewers will be disappointed, saying the plot went wrong or became confused.

I must acknowledge that Field transformed the way I view films. Usually when I watch a film, I try to identify two key plot-points – the "handshake" moment at the end of Act 1 when the dramatic challenge is defined, often with a handshake or vow, and the grand "reversal" at the end of Act 2 that sets the stage for the resolution. Who dared say, before Field came along, that all movies were essentially the same in structure?

"Syd was the pioneer of the study of the screenwriting form," screenwriter John Truby told the *New York Times*. "He was the first to challenge the old romantic notion that writing a good script was a gift of divine intervention, and instead showed that it comes from a craft that can be learned."

Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting is the most popular of Field's handful of books on the subject. When I first read it many years ago, I felt I had found the cinematic equivalent to *The Anatomy of Criticism*, Northrup Frye's brilliant and unsurpassed classic of literary criticism.

Revised and updated numerous times, *Screenplay* stands up well to a second reading, and its insights still seem exciting, but the movies cited as examples – such as *The Godfather*, *Chinatown* and *Witness* – seem dated and limited. Field is certainly not in the same league as Frye, but novice scriptwriters are nonetheless well advised to consider his cinematic paradigm as a sort of "great code" of the movies.

• • •

Correspondences
Poetry by Anne Michaels and Portraits by Bernice Eisenstein
McClelland & Stewart/Random House

Here's something you probably never knew about Joyce Kilmer, author of the famous poem *Trees* ("I think that I shall never see/ A poem as lovely as a tree"). Turns out that despite the first name, Kilmer was a man – an American from New Jersey who died tragically young, age 31, in World War I.

Correspondences is an "accordion book" featuring the poetry of Anne Michaels (author of the award-winning novel *Fugitive Pieces*) on one side and colour portraits by Bernice Eisenstein (author of the graphic novel *I Was A Child of Holocaust Survivors*) on the other. Their shared subjects are a gallery of notable 20th-century writers and thinkers – Camus, Celan, Einstein, Kafka, Levi, Mandelstam, Manger, Schultz, Schwartz-Bart, Sebald and others – many of whom trod around or into the fateful terrain of war and the Holocaust that is so familiar to both contributors.

Portrait of Osip Mandelstam by Bernice Eisenstein, from *Correspondences*

While Eisenstein's portraits are a delight and instantly accessible, Michaels' poems seem aloof, unable to make friends easily. The stated purpose of this avant-garde book is to engage the reader in the correspondences and spaces between the former's beguiling bust portraits and the latter's much more demanding observations and pontifications, seemingly so deep at times as to be obscure.

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A different take on a mother-daughter relationship

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Leah Cherniak

Toronto's Leah Cherniak directs Factory Theatre's latest offering, the world premiere of *6 Essential Questions*, Canadian poet, novelist and academic Priscila Uppal's first play.

Based on Uppal's 2013 critically acclaimed memoir *Projection: Encounters with My Runaway Mother*, the play *6 Essential Questions* tells the tale of Renata as she travels to Brazil to see the mother who abandoned her when she was five years old. In fact, the character of Renata is based on Uppal herself.

"The play is a spiritual recounting of a young woman's [trip] to Brazil to visit her mother, whom she hasn't seen in 20 years. Her mother ran away from their home in Canada and there was no contact between them. It's a play that looks at what happens when family memory is repressed," the multi-award winning director said.

Cherniak said she was drawn to the play because of its poetic language. "The play has the quality of a dream, it's like *Alice in Wonderland*, where the daughter falls from somewhere and ends up in this strange country, which is Brazil, where she meets her mother and parts of the family, and how they respond to her."

Much as she appreciates the poetic tone, she said, "there are challenges in directing this because it's not your basic psychological realism, those sorts of plays you can work out in a specific kind of theatrical structure. It has much more poetic licence and dream language in it. It's always challenging, but that is also what's exciting about it because the world is rich, quite beautiful and funny. For me, it is a wonderful story... the story of a woman discovering something about herself and her family and [finally] giving herself... the freedom to move on."

But despite the poetic quality of the play, Cherniak said *6 Essential Questions* does not idealize mother-daughter relationships.

"We are actually saying that are we operating under a learned and habitual experience of how mothers and daughters behave and what happens if you don't have a mother," Cherniak said. "And what does it mean to be motherless, and can you get beyond that? I think this play says, yes you can, and that we shouldn't assume that just because you don't have a mother, your life has any less forward drive than if you had a mother."

The cast consists of Mina James as Renata, Elizabeth Saunders as her mother and Maggie Huculak as the grandmother. Richard Zeppieri takes the role of Renata's uncle. All of them have thrown themselves into the style of the play, grappling successfully with the issues and the language.

Cherniak said the actors have also tapped into their comedic side and captured the very funny moments in the primarily serious piece.

Having started her theatre career as an actor, Cherniak feels she comes to directing with an actor's' perspective. She was co-founder, along with Martha Ross, of Theatre Columbus, which has created more than 30 new plays and can boast about its innovative productions of classics. She directed many of the plays in the Theatre Columbus repertoire, including *The Anger in Ernest and Ernestine, Gynty, Twelfth Night, The Betrayal, Hotel Loopy, And Up They Flew* and *Dance of the Red Skirts*.

She is also an associate artist and associate director with The Academy at Soulpepper Theatre Company and has many other directing credits. In addition, she teaches in the Ryerson Theatre Program and at the University of Toronto.

Cherniak who is a mother herself, to daughter Margaret Rose, 16, credits her family for her love of the arts, although she is the only one in her family to have pursued a career in the field. When not directing, she enjoys films, reading and dinners with friends and family.

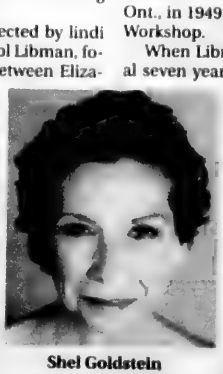
For tickets to *6 Essential Questions* at the Factory Theatre, March 1 to 30, call 416-504-9971 or go to www.factorytheatre.ca.

Play builds on 'connections' between people

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

A play about the ways in which the lives of six people are affected by love, loss and memory debuts this week at the Sterling Studio Theatre in Toronto.

A Life Beyond Doubt, directed by lindi g. papoff and written by Carol Libman, focuses on the relationship between Elizabeth, a 30-something divorcee coping with the recent death of her mother, and Tom, a widower in his late 40s and a father to two teenaged boys, who is hesitant to let Elizabeth in.


Shel Goldstein

Libman, a Montreal native who began her writing career as a sports reporter for the *Montreal Gazette*, explained that *A Life Beyond Doubt* evolved from a one-act play she wrote called *Connections*.

"It started out with one scene – a mother-daughter scene... At the time, the play was called *Connections* because of the way they were connected. As I keep saying, everyone wanted to know what was going to happen next, including me. The characters didn't want to leave the stage, and I had to continue, so I started writing more scenes, dialogue," said Libman, 85, who has been involved in theatre since she moved to Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., in 1949 and joined the Sault Theatre Workshop.

When Libman moved back to Montreal seven years later, she helped establish the Playwrights Workshop Montreal, which just celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Libman, who now lives in Toronto, is an active member of the New Play Development Group of the Alumnae Theatre. She said her latest project, *A Life Beyond Doubt*, is about history, memory and relationships.

"It involves how memory affects you, and if you don't have memory about something, you have no idea. But if you do have memories of something similar, how do you react? How do you absorb that and go forward? We ask a lot of questions," she said.

"One of the main characters, Elizabeth, who is the daughter, meets a man who is a widower with two boys and they become involved, and then there are questions because they have baggage."

Libman said a major theme in the play is "the way people carry memories but manage to find ways of coping and moving on because otherwise you're paralyzed. You have to move forward, no matter what happens to you. What choice do you have?"

Shel Goldstein, who plays the role of Marge, a woman in her early 70s who was a close family friend of Tom's late wife, said that when she thinks about what the play is about, "loss is the word that keeps coming up – different ways of how people in their lives lose what is most beloved to them and different ways of dealing with that, or coping."

Although the play centres on the dynamic between Elizabeth and Tom, another interesting relationship develops between Marge and Tom's 14-year-old son, Kevin.

"He tells her things that he doesn't tell other people. She's not closely related, but she's available, so that is an unusual relationship on stage for a non-relative – she's not his grandmother – and it sort of fills a void for her, too," Goldstein said.

Beyond creating deep relationships between the characters, Goldstein said Libman also succeeded in writing realistic, relatable dialogue.

"Carol has this wonderful facility of dialogue and humour, and I think what I love most about her writing is the nuance of capturing an argument, of how someone will say something but it's not quite heard, and then they build on their misunderstanding," she said.

"In my life experience, we get caught up in the heat of the moment and we miss the point, and if that can be repaired, that's great, but sometimes those things can't be repaired."

Although the writer, director and two of the actors are Jewish, this isn't a Jewish story.

"But it's a story about people, relationships, loss, which is a universal, common experience... It's entertaining and touching," Goldstein said.

The play, presented by Tomorrow's Eve Theatre, runs from March 6 to15 at the Sterling Studio Theatre. For more information, visit www.tomorrowsevetheatre.org or call 1-800-838-3006, ext 1.

Solo or with others, singer shares love of music

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

Singer Janis Siegel can't be categorized by her music or the people she sings with. Her repertoire includes Broadway, jazz, rhythm and blues, swing and other genres, both as a solo performer and as a member of the four-part jazz group The Manhattan Transfer.

Siegel will showcase her vocal talents with The Manhattan Transfer at Koerner Hall in Toronto on March 8 in a Royal Conservatory of Music concert. She also may sing a solo from her latest CD, *Night Songs*, a collection of Caribbean and Latin-flavoured songs.

Siegel is the rare singer to have dual careers – singing for 41 years with The Manhattan Transfer while also performing solo for 32 years and never leaving the group for her solo career.

"I love all aspects of music. I never want to stop the individual style of singing solo, and yet, at the same time, I always enjoyed the beauty of singing in harmony," the 61-year-old Siegel said in a phone conversation from her home in New York.

Seen are members of The Manhattan Transfer, clockwise from bottom left, Janis Siegel, Tim Hauser, Cheryl Benetine and Alan Paul.

The Manhattan Transfer's original four members, including Siegel, have endured longer than The Beatles, The Four Seasons and most other vocal groups.

"All four of us care and have both professional and personal friendships that have endured for decades," Siegel said. "We instinctively know how to harmonize and which songs fit best for each singer in the group. It is a blessing for me to have been with The Manhattan Transfer for most of my life."

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Siegel started singing at age 12 with the group The Young Generation, and released two singles on record while still a teen. She had no intention of making singing a career, studying nursing in college, but a chance meeting with Tim Hauser, who was to create The Manhattan Transfer with Siegel and two other singers, led her to a new path.

"I loved singing, and the thought of doing it full time for a kid who loved Motown, Beatles, jazz and Streisand was too enticing to resist. I never had any regrets for choosing singing as my career."

Over her career, Siegel has earned nine Grammy Awards and 17 nominations for her music, both with The Manhattan Transfer and as a solo performer. Her strong vocals led to songs such as *Operator*, *Chanson D'Amour* and *Route 66* becoming hits for The Manhattan Transfer.

Less well-known are Siegel's strong Jewish roots and love of Judaism, especially because she has been romantically involved with Rabbi Harry Levin for several years.

"Harry has made me appreciate his deep connection and love for Judaism that inspires me and [makes me] wish to share the more meaningful values and ethics of our religion."

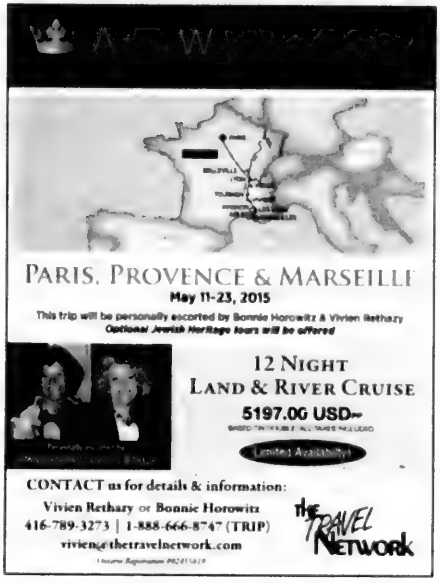
Siegel has used her vocal talents to express her joy at being Jewish. In the 1993 film *Swing Boys*, set in Nazi Germany, she gave a stirring emotional interpretation of the famed Yiddish song *Bei Mir Bist Du Schein*.

She also teamed with Jewish vocal partner Alan Paul of The Manhattan Transfer in the 2008 CD *Jewish Songbook*, singing vocal harmony in the song *Ut A Zoi*.

The Manhattan Transfer has performed in Israel many times and will perform there again in May.

"I especially enjoyed my first trip, taking my parents to see me perform there, and it was thrilling," Siegel said.

Siegel performs with The Manhattan Transfer March 8, 8 p.m., at Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. in downtown Toronto. For tickets, call 416-408-0208 or go to www.rcmusic.ca.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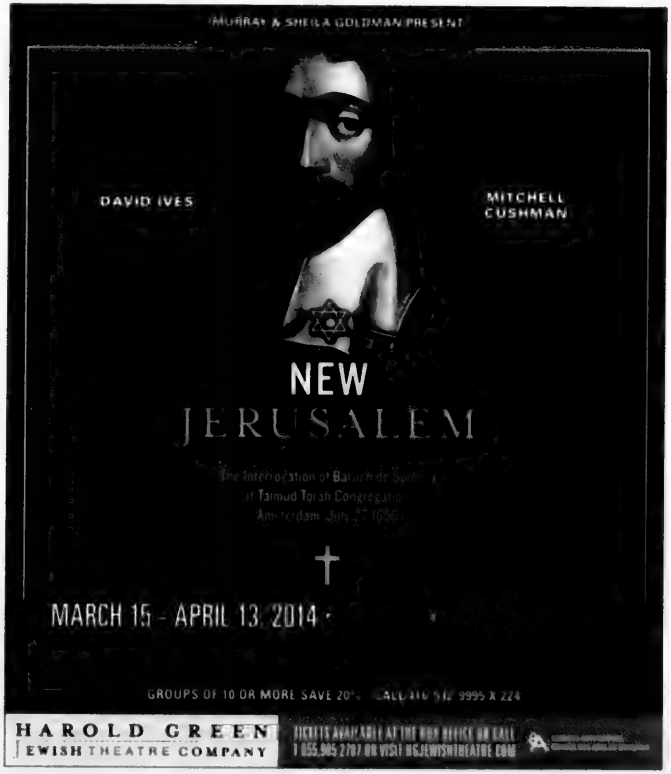

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

200 YEARS OF JEWISH COSTUME ON VIEW AT ISRAEL MUSEUM

Dress Codes – Revealing the Jewish Wardrobe, an exhibition opening March 11 at the Israel Museum, presents an array of traditional apparel from the 18th through the 20th centuries from the museum's world-renowned collection of Jewish dress. More than 100 costumes from four continents will be on display. The exhibition presents clothing as representative of such universal human themes as identity and memory, and it examines how traditional clothing has stimulated fashion design. On view at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, until October 25. www.imj.org.il

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Yiddish Concert: Friends of Yiddish presents *Itzik Manger and his Megilleh*, a pre-Purim Freylekhs Concert. Montreal-based Yiddish folklorist **Janie Respitz** performs her lively and nostalgic interpretations of Manger's traditional holiday songs and guitar melodies.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. between Sheppard and Finch. Sunday, March 9, 2 p.m. Refreshments and door prizes. Everyone welcome. Admission $10, FOY members free. Please RSVP to yiddish18@yahoo.ca

• • •

Kazablan: The Mifgash Theatre, a program of the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, presents *Kazablan*, a play in Hebrew with English subtitles. Set in a run-down neighbourhood of Jaffa in the 1950s, the play features Kazablan, a young Moroccan immigrant who falls in love with Rachel, an Ashkenazi Jew whose father objects to this association. The hero turns from a leader of a street gang to the leader of a struggle for social justice.

Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor. Saturday, April 5,, 8 p.m. and Sunday, April 6, 1:30 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets $25. srcentre.ca

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Arts in Brief

• New York guitarist **Gilad Hekselman** and his trio, along with the **Shai Maestro Trio** and the **David Buchbinder Ensemble** perform a concert as part of the Spotlight on Israeli Culture. Toronto Downtown Jazz and the Consulate General of Israel. Cover $15. Rex Hotel, 194 Queen St. W. Thursday, March 6, 7 p.m. www.torontojazz.com

• Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre has extended the run of **Jason Odell Williams**'s romantic comedy *Handle With Care* an additional week until Sunday, March 9. At the Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St. teatrontheatre.com

• Film maven **Shlomo Schwartzberg** continues his series of lectures with film clips on the work of director **Steven Spielberg**, with a look at Influences: *Super 8, Ace in the Hole, Lawrence of Arabia* and *Back to the Future*. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, March 10, 7 to 9 p.m. $11.25 drop-in, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Opera educator **Iain Scott** presents "Opera Appreciation: Viva Puccini!" a three-part series hosted by Active 55+. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesdays, March 18, March 25 and April 1, 1:30 p.m. Series $36, drop-in $14. 415-924-6211, ext. 0.

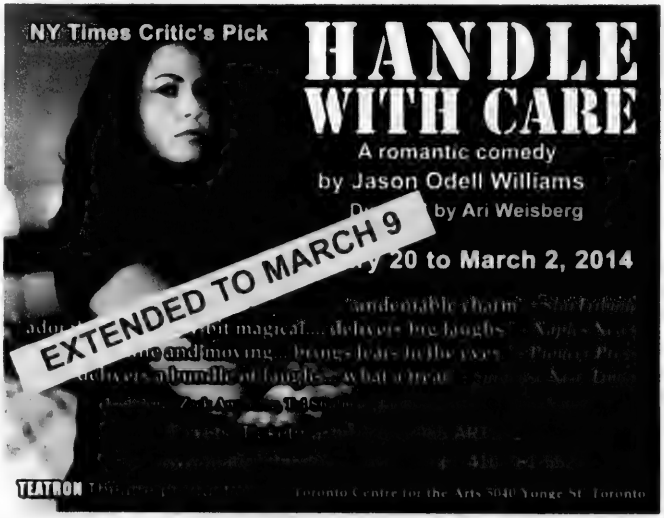
• Active 55+ presents *Judaica Through the Ages* with silversmith **Zahava Lambert**, a tour through the rich history of Jewish artifacts and ritual objects used in home and synagogue. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, March 20, 2 p.m. Drop-in $4. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

At the Galleries

• *Sisters in Resistance*, an exhibition of oil paintings by **Harry Tiefenbach** celebrating women resistance fighters of World War II, is currently on view at the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery. Reception, March 13, 6 to 8:30 p.m.

• The remarkable shtetl paintings of artist **Shoshana Eden** depict the shtetl from a young girl's point of view, offering a unique perspective of a world destroyed by the Holocaust. Born in Poland in 1917, Eden went to Palestine in 1935 and lost nearly all of her relatives during the war. She and her husband and family lived in Haifa, where she produced small-scale naive shtetl paintings based on her childhood memories. She died in 2002, but her canvases continue to inspire. View them at www.shoshana-eden.co.il/Eng

Kreinchi the crockery seller **by Shoshana Eden**



MORASHA
New in Toronto

Yehudit Shier Weisberg
Jewish Prayer, a Gift for Living Part II
March 26 - April 30
(no class April 16)
10-11 a.m.

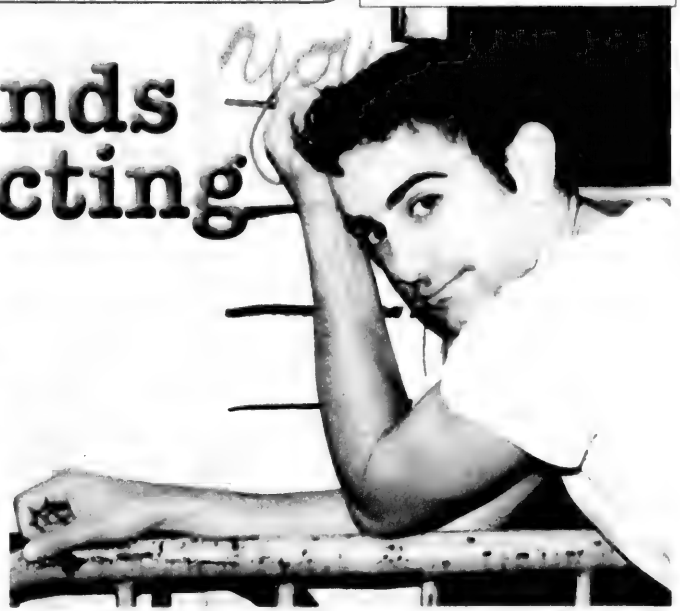
Jerry Fink
Western Art Music from a Jewish Perspective
March 26 - April 30
(no class April 16)
11:15 a.m.-12:45

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue
100 Elder St
Registration and information: Loretta Tanenbaum
rabtanenbaum@sympatico.ca
416-789-7400

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Comedian blends improv and acting



Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

An improv comedian is someone who thinks on the spot and isn't afraid to take chances. That describes Alan Kliffer in a nutshell.

Through his production company Kliffer Entertainment, the Winnipeg-born, Toronto-based actor, director and writer produces live shows featuring some of the biggest names in Canadian comedy. We're talking Colin Mochrie, Linda Kash, and Kathy Greenwood, among many others.

What's even more impressive is that the 28-year-old Second City alum launched his company less than a year ago. However, he's no overnight success. He's been acting since the age of five, when his parents enrolled him in a class at the Manitoba Theatre for Young People.

While performing his first monologue in that acting class, Kliffer noticed the audience started laughing hard. That's when he realized the power of acting.

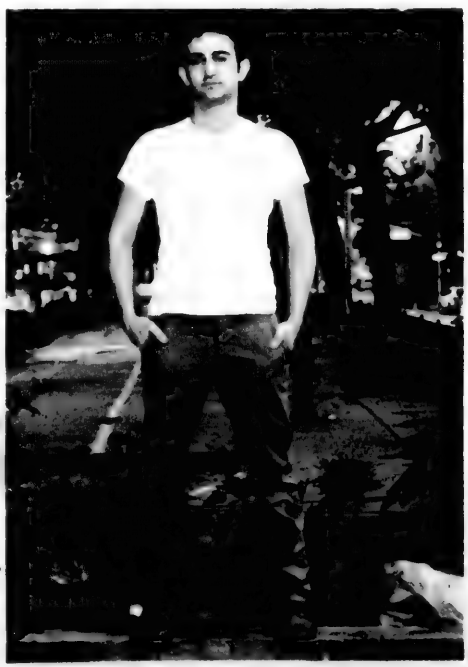
"I went to my parents when I was five years old and I said, 'When I'm 18, I'm moving to Toronto and I'm becoming an actor,'" he told *The CJN*.

Kliffer did just that. But first, he found another love: improv. The young performer and Camp Massad alum began taking improv classes at the age of 14. He started competing in the High School Canadian Improv Games shortly afterward under the direction of Second City's Scott Montgomery.

He attributes part of his passion for improv to a babysitter who let him watch sketch comedy as a kid.

"[She] let me sneak it when I was young," he says, adding that he was watching *Saturday Night Live* even before he could understand the comedy.

Kliffer has never been afraid to make opportunities for himself. Early on, a Winnipeg sketch comedy troupe turned him down. Instead of giving up, he rallied his friends to form his own group and produced his first show at the age of 15.



He moved to Toronto in the early 2000s to study acting at the Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts. The Winnipeg native is the first to admit he's had his fair share of ups and downs, but he's always been able to bounce right back.

"I got held back my first term – I had to repeat it," he says, revealing that he used to talk back to teachers and get to class late. "After I repeated my first term, I actually got kicked out of the school. I'm the only person in their 21-year history to have gone right back into the program and finished it and won an award."

Not only that, Kliffer also founded the school's improv club. He was recently invited back to Randolph – this time as an instructor – and today he teaches improv to first- and second-year students, many of whom seek his advice and mentorship.

After graduating from Randolph in 2006, he joined the prestigious improv conservatory program at Second City. Once he completed it, Kliffer was invited to work for the organization that launched the careers of comedians such as Eugene Levy and Tina Fey. Starting off as the camp director, he eventually became the training and education co-ordinator before moving on to the position of youth program director.

After two years of working for Second City, the comedy institution gave him two options: he could either go his own way and pursue acting, or stay in the organization in a strictly administrative role. It was a tough call, but he chose to go after his acting dream and become his own boss. It turned out to be the best decision he ever made.

Kliffer decided to use his savings from a corporate gig with the Discovery Channel to move to New York for the summer. While in the Big Apple, he spent a lot of time at the Upright Citizens Brigade, where he was introduced to a show that really piqued his interest.

Kliffer got the rights, tweaked it a bit and *Mixed Company* was born a few months later.

The show, which takes place every month at Toronto's Comedy Bar, pairs actors with improv comedians, and the result is pure comedy gold. The actors are scripted, but their improv scene partners have no idea what's coming next and are forced to do what they do best: think on the spot and improvise the entire scene.

The show is often performed to sold-out crowds, and the calibre of performers is quite impressive. The cast rotates each time, but on any given night audiences can expect to see stars from *Degrassi*, *Rookie Blue* and *Whose Line is it Anyway?*, among other shows. What's even more impressive: the actors are willing to participate for free, a testament to Kliffer's hard work and dedication.

A one-man company, Kliffer adds his personal touch to everything. The energetic producer makes sure his cast is always taken care of, edits the pre-show advertisements himself and sometimes stays up until 5 a.m. baking food to sell at the concession stand for his productions.

Kliffer says he hopes to continue growing his projects, which also include a web series (*First Dates*). One day, he also hopes to launch an improv acting studio in Toronto.

At the end of the day, he loves what he does and can't imagine doing anything else.

"We as actors and as artists get to make people feel something," he says.

"That's pretty huge. Yeah, doctors save lives. We make people laugh and cry. We evoke emotions in other people. That is an unbelievable thing."

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of March 20 is March 10. The deadline for the issue of March 27 is March 17. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 6

A LIFE BEYOND DOUBT

Tomorrow's Eve Theatre presents *A Life Beyond Doubt*, Sterling Theatre, 163 Sterling Rd., Unit 5. March 6-15. For tickets, call 1-800-838-3006, ext. 1.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Debby Feldman of JF&CS discusses "Domestic violence and abuse in the Jewish community," 8 p.m. Temple Har Zion.

IBD INFO EVENING

Dr. Melvyn Grovit and psychotherapist **Stacey Dombrowsky** discuss how to live better with IBD and other autoimmune diseases, 7 p.m., 48 Yonge St., suite 1200. Sponsored by Aaron's Apple. $50. For tickets, call 647-430-5933, ext. 9.

Saturday, March 8

MELAVEH MALKA

Rabbi Chaim Kramer discusses "The Mystical and Cosmic Essence of Joy," 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation.

March 9, Rabbi Kramer discusses "The Power and Prayer of Gratitude," 7:30 p.m., 949 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Sponsored by the Canadian Friends of Chasidei Breslov. Free. 416-346-5055.

Sunday, March 9

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Janie Respitz performs a one-woman show *Itzik Manger and his Megilleh*, 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. Friends of Yiddish members free, guests $10. Call 416-458-1440 or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

TRAILBLAZING WOMEN

Activist **Hamutal Gouri** speaks to the New Israel Fund of Canada, 7:30 p.m., The Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. RSVP at nifcan.org.

JEWISH GENEAOLOGY

Professional Israeli genealogist **Rose Lerer Cohen** discusses "International Search Strategies and Integrating Resources," 1 p.m., Temple Sinai. www.jgstoronto.ca.

ISRAEL ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

Aviva Klompas, speechwriter for Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, discusses "Israel on the Global Stage," 7:30 p.m., Kehillat Shaarei Torah. 416-633-5770 or www.torahinmotion.org.

CAMP SOLELIM

Camp Solelim invites its rookie campers to play laser tag, 2-4 p.m. 416-781-5156, ext. 221.

Monday, March 10

JEWISH TORONTO HISTORY

Jack Lipinsky discusses "The History of Jewish Toronto," in 3 sessions, 7:15 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. March 10, "Immigrant Life in Toronto, 1860-1950."

PREWAR NEWS CULTURE

Mordechai Ben-Dat discusses "Reflections on the News Culture prior to World War II," 7:30 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Tuesday, March 11

WINE AND CHEESE

Beth David Synagogue hosts a wine-and-cheese reception, 7:30 p.m. Sample kosher wines for Passover and visit gift and craft boutiques. Tickets $15. Call 416-633-5500, ext. 28, or visit www.bethdavid.com.

PURIM AND PASSOVER

Bracha Feder, leads three study sessions on Purim and Passover, starting March 11, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $10 for non-members.

Also at Beth Tikvah, Tuesdays with Larry, watches the film *Fill the Void*, 2 p.m., $5.

Wednesday, March 12

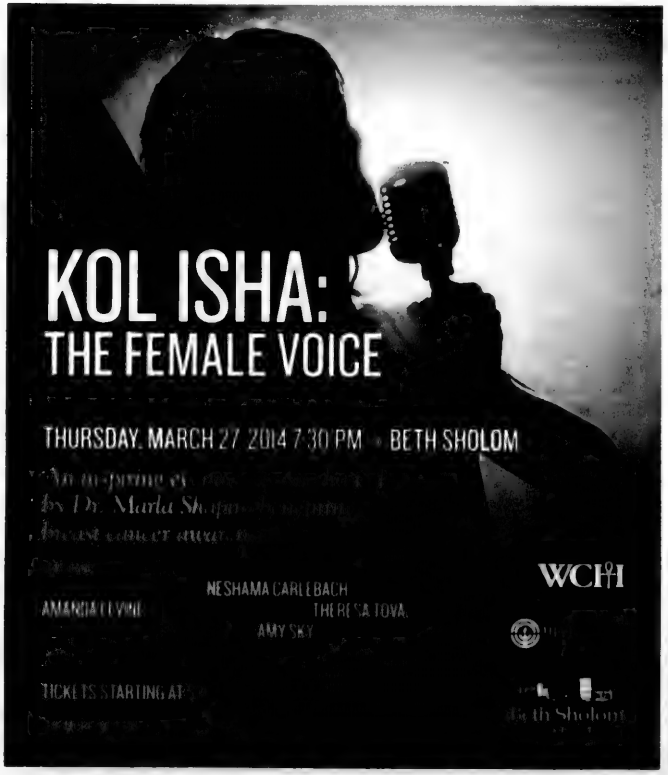
RABBIS IN CONVERSATION

Rabbis Aaron Flanzraich and **John Moscowitz** discuss "Can non-Orthodox Jews be religious?" 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue.

THE RITE OF RETURN

The Polish Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada presents *Rite of Return: Canadian-Jewish Artists and Contemporary Poland*, Beth Tzedec Congregation, 7-9 p.m. The evening begins with tours at 7 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. of an exhibition of photos by **David Kaufman** and is followed by a roundtable discussion with Kaufman, **Francine Zuckerman, Michael Rubenfeld** and **Evelyn Tauben** on their recent experiences in Poland.

Continued on page 41



Continued from page 40

Upcoming Events

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

MORASHA CLASSES

Yehudit Shier Weisberg teaches a 5-week course on "Jewish Prayer: A Gift for Living," 10 a.m., starting **March 26.**

Jerry Fink teaches a 5-week course on "Western Art Music from a Jewish Perspective," 11:15 a.m., starting **March 26.** To register, call, 416-789-7400.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 6-week bereavement group for men and women who have lost a spouse, starting **April 24.** Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10 for more information.

VENDORS WANTED

Beth Avraham Yoseph Toronto Congregation is seeking clothing and accessory vendors for its pre-Pesach fashion sale on **March 23**. Call **Rich Winkler** 905-886-3810, ext. 135, or email rich@bayt.ca.

JEWISH YOUTH CHOIR

Harmonia, a Jewish youth choir, is now accepting registrations. Rehearsals start **March 30**, 4 p.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC. Email harmonia@mnjcc.org.

HEBREW CLASSES

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering conversational Hebrew ulpan with **Yael Lev.** Intermediates meet Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.; Advanced Thursdays at 1:30 p.m. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

PURIM FUN

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds an adult Purim party, **March 8**, 7:30 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr. 416-385-3910.

The Toronto Partnership Minyan will hold a Megillah reading with both men and women reading, followed by a festive celebration, 8:45 p.m., **March 15,** Toronto Heschel School, 819 Sheppard Ave. W. Email torontopartnershipminyan@gmail.com.

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents *The Megillah According to Disney*, **March 15,** after Megillah reading at 8:15 p.m.; **March 16** at 1:30 p.m. Purim carnival March 16 at 2:30 p.m. Call 416-633-3838 for tickets.

Temple Sinai holds a Purim party, **March 15**, 7 p.m. For tickets, call 416-487-3281. **March 16,** Temple Sinai and Leo Baeck Day School celebrate Purim at the Toronto Zoo, 9:30 a.m.-noon.

Temple Har Zion's Purim shpiel and Megillah reading start **March 15**, 7 p.m.

Temple Kol Ami's Purim spiel and Megillah reading begin at 6 p.m., **March 15**. 905-709-2620.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue's Purim parade starts at 8:15 p.m., followed by Megillah reading, **March 15**. **March 16**, Megillah at 8 a.m., carnival starts 11:30 a.m.

Danforth Jewish Circle holds its "Purim Learning and Celebration," **March 16**, 2-4 p.m., 310 Danforth Ave. Email info@djctoronto.com.

Morris Winchevsky School holds a Purim celebration **March 16**, 11 a.m. at 918 Bathurst St., featuring entertainer **Sarah Sheps.**

Rabbi Shaanan Scherer discusses "Megillat Esther and Archeology," at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation, **March 17**, 7:30 p.m.

PASSOVER SEDERS

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Passover seder, April 14. Register by March 17, 416-221-3433.

Temple Har Zion is holding a seder April 15. Register by March 28. Call, 905-889-2252, ext. 232.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Beyond the Chupah: Becoming A Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group, starts March 12, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2-10. Starts March 18, 7 p.m.

High-Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents in a high-conflict situation, not for individuals in an abusive situation. March 20, 6:30 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Opera Appreciation: Viva Puccini with **Iain Scott,** 3-part series starts March 18, 1:30 p.m.

Judaica through the ages with silversmith **Zahava Lambert,** March 20. Doors open at 1:30, program begins at 2 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Active 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Chiropractor **Bryan Sher** discusses how to keep your back healthy and strong, March 12, 2 p.m. Email colinb@mnjcc.org or 416-924-6211, ext. 526.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. March 11, **Mordechai Ben-Dat** discusses "Thinking of Israel-An Update," 10 a.m.; March 13, Laughter Yoga, 12:15 p.m.; March 13, **Dr. Lilian Schwartz** discusses "Keeping Your Skin Healthy," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine March 26 (register in advance). Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Purim Tea Party with princesses and superheros, March 16, 4-5:30 p.m. $12.

Spring and summer programs for children are open for registration. Call ext. 4235 to register.

Women's only fitness classes: cycling, zumba, yoga and core conditioning are offered. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com.

Join the Prosserman JCC and be part of the studio audience for the CBC show *Steven and Chris*, April 2.

Registration for the 2014-2015 school year for the daycare and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Sisters in Resistance, paintings by **Harry Tiefenbach** of women resistance fighters from World War II is at the gallery until March 24. A reception will be held March 13, 6 p.m. **Sara Ginaite-Rubinson,** the subject of one of the paintings, will attend.

Sharoni Sibony discusses the relationship between *kavanah* (intention) March 9, 2:30 p.m. ext. 154.

Habonim Dror-Camp Gesher and the downtown shinshinim present a program for children in grades 7-8, March 9, 1:30 p.m. 416-633-2511, or email shaliach.gesher@gmail.com.

Shlomo Schwartzberg discusses the work of director **Steven Spielberg,** 7 p.m. March 10, "Influences."

Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. ext. 250.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Wednesdays to March 26, 11 a.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays to March 12, 12:15 p.m.; Introduction to healthy breast yoga, April 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays to March 14, 6:30 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call 416-898-1818, ext. 574.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

Social club for singles 35-50 meets March 8, 7:30 p.m. Enjoy a movie and social time. Tickets $10-$18. To register, call **Andrea,** ext. 3006, or email adaiam@srcentre.ca.

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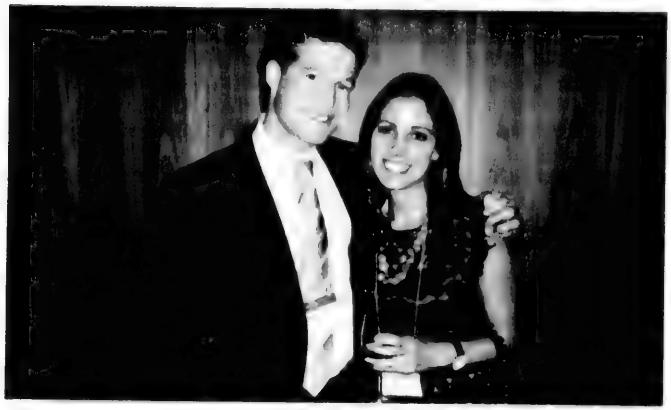


This year's Revolving Tables co-chairs are Jeff Kimel & Laura Licht. [*Cara Edell photo*]

Young professionals mingle with mentors

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Philanthropy and networking were again the focus of the fourth annual Revolving Tables, which this year raised $130,000 for the Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF).

More than 250 young professionals, along with almost 40 high-profile executives and community leaders, gathered Feb. 19 at the Four Seasons Hotel for an interactive and informative three-course dinner.

The executives in attendance included Jordan Banks, managing director of Facebook Canada; Len Cochrane, president of Teletoon; Paul Godfrey, president and CEO of Postmedia Network Inc.; and Janice Fukakusa, chief administrative officer and chief financial officer of RBC.

Organized by a committee of people who are mostly under the age of 30, the event demonstrated how young professionals can get involved in fundraising while creating a productive and valuable experience for their peers.

During the meal, the young adults had a unique opportunity to rotate from table to table and speak with professional mentors, trendsetters and leaders in their fields.

"I think [Revolving Tables] is so important because it allows young professionals to build their skill sets and network with other like-minded individuals," said Laura Licht, event co-chair with Jeff Kimel. "This event is particularly rewarding for them, as they are very selective of where they spend their dollars and they want to give back in a way that's meaningful to them.

"This event really helps them build their visibility and get connected with some of the most high-profile executives in Canada, while, at the same time, giving back to their community."

Licht, who also volunteers for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada, said she first got involved with Revolving Tables two years ago. "I attended the event as a participant and was on the organizing committee last year. I loved the event and was ecstatic when I was asked to chair it."

She said she originally got involved when her mother was diagnosed with cancer. "The more I shared my experience, the more I realized cancer really touches everyone and I wanted to be a part of helping to find a cure. I also believe in the importance of getting young professionals involved in not-for-profit work and in fostering young leadership."

Kimel said he thinks Revolving Tables is a particularly important event because the ICRF accomplishes two goals in one night: mentorship and networking, as well as fundraising. He encourages other young professionals to get involved with similar community initiatives, as "it's one of the greatest decisions anyone can make."

Kimel said he was fortunate to grow up in a household where his parents led by example and demonstrated the importance of becoming involved in the community.

"Everyone I have spoken with who has taken on significant leadership roles within the community has told me that you get way more out of giving and getting involved in the community than anything else," he said. "I would suggest starting anywhere – reach out to any philanthropic organization you feel a connection with and join a committee or help brainstorm new ideas. The opportunities in the community are really endless."

ICRF executive director Joy Wagner Arbus said Revolving Tables has been "an overwhelming success" with young adults. "The volunteers and participants are contributing toward supporting critical cancer research in Israel. The 'next generation' continues to be an inspiration. Their keen interest in giving back to Israel and to such an important cancer cause is truly amazing. We look forward to watching them grow into their professional careers while supporting superior research that is extending lives of cancer patients, both now and in the future."

Starting from scratch

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

"How can you write that?" My husband has just read one of my *Married With Kids* columns and is vetting it. Big time.

"It's too personal," he says earnestly. "You're going to get into trouble, and I'm going to say, 'I told you so!'"

One story I wrote a couple of years ago got me into so much trouble, we still referred to it as "the incident." I thought I'd written piercingly on an important issue, at the time. Turns out, others did not agree – my spouse, in particular. In fairness, he'd warned me that the column was dangerous, but my ears were deaf to his cautions, and my sensibilities dulled about the potential marital backlash.

When he reads today's column, he asks me one question: "Didn't you learn your lesson the last time?" The lesson he's referring to is "the incident," of course. I gulp and make a new plan.

It's not easy being the family member of a journalist, particularly when you never know which aspect of your life will become fodder for the next column. I'm constantly trolling through my experiences for stories, looking for anecdotes that readers can hopefully relate to in the realm of marriage and children. What's off limits? I'm still trying to figure that out, one month at a time.

My spouse has been extraordinarily good-natured about his presence in my columns, showing graceful tolerance when I give readers a glimpse of our inner life together. Whether it's his iPod addiction or his strewn clothes under discussion, he takes it in stride. But every now and then, he puts his foot down. Tonight was one of those times, and it meant a column about one of our kids' friends was about to bite the dust, even though I believed every word of it to be true. My daughter, spying her name on the computer monitor, insisted on reading it too, and agreed.

"You can't do this to me, Mom," she declared. "If my friends or their parents ever read this, the friendship is over."

I sighed. I was on deadline and couldn't afford another "holy cow," a subject that was utterly taboo. The one under discussion in particular was a meaty one that I felt sure readers would be able to identify with.

"I could change the names," I tried.

But I was surrounded on all sides. Vetoed. The column was destined to join a few others in my folder that had been deemed too dangerous – potential friendship killers, whether they were true or not.

I know a bit about "holy cows." There are some subjects too tender to make their way into my columns and some relationships I've forbidden myself to delve into in this public space. My fear is that I'll fracture the delicate shells of those relationships or create waves of long-term unpleasantness I don't even want to imagine. Still, when I'm reaching for new ideas, it's these that beckon. Money, and how its change of hands impacts the family. Friendships, and their deeper politics. Parents-in-law, and the complicated yet inexorable ties that bind us all together in a sometimes uncomfortable family embrace.

Writing about marriage and kids is stressful when I get vetoed, but it's also deeply cathartic. It offers a space, both in my mind and on the blank page, where I can explore an issue in my home, turn it this way and that, and sometimes gain a deeper understanding or perspective on that issue.

But there are always others involved when you are married with kids, and when it's their business that you're discussing, you have to be careful.

When I'm skirting close to the limit in my columns, I ask my husband to read them first, even though I know precisely what his response will be. I argue my case, he counters with his, and then I swallow hard and sometimes start again from scratch.

MEZUZAH HUNG: Rabbi Yirmi Cohen of Ohalei Yoseph Yitzchak Congregation and newly elected Thornhill MPP Gila Martow put up a mezuzah at her new Queen's Park office Feb. 24. Martow is the only Jewish MPP in the Conservative caucus. Among those attending the ceremony were former Thornhill Liberal MP Susan Kadis and local school trustee Joel Hertz.

Purim – the holiday for the kids

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

Purim is a holiday where we celebrate by poking fun at ourselves. We throw all decorum away for the day. It is said that Purim is a time for silliness and humour.

The Purim holiday is also the time when children can go all out and participate in their favourite activities. Kids can dress up, play games, run around and make tons of noise and get away with it.

Our holidays are always known for great food, and Purim is no exception. Kids can gobble up oodles of traditional treats. It's known for its delicious hamantashen, the official Purim treat, the traditionally shaped triangular pastries that resemble Haman's pockets, ears or three-cornered hat, that are filled with sweet or savoury fillings.

Wicked Haman was the man who terrorized and plotted to exterminate the Jews in ancient Persia. He is the villain of the Purim story or Megillah that's read each Purim. Although most details in the real story of Purim should not be discussed with young children, they quickly learn to recognize a major detail – shaking their greggers or noisemakers at the mention of Haman's name is an important tradition.

Children should be taught to understand that in an era when we are still fighting against anti-Semitism, Purim is a time to celebrate that we have beaten anti-Semitism in our history. So this Purim, encourage your children or grandchildren to have fun and enjoy these scrumptious and amusing hamantashen along with every other entertaining and pleasurable aspect of Purim.

ADORABLE HAMANTASHEN WITH CHERRY FILLING

1/2 cup canola oil
3/4 cup sugar
1 tsp. pure almond extract
2 large eggs
1 tbsp. water
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/8 tsp. salt
1 can cherry pie filling

In food processor or in a mixing bowl, combine oil, sugar, almond extract, eggs and water. Add in flour, baking powder and salt just until blended.

Preheat oven to 350. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a floured board, roll out dough to 1/4-in. thick, and with a glass or cookie cutter, cut dough into 3-inch circles. Spoon 1 teaspoon of cherry pie filling into the centre of each circle. Pinch edges tightly to form three corners. A small amount of the filling should peek out. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until golden brown. Place cookie sheets on wire racks until cool.

Puppet Eyes
2-4 tbsp. white chocolate
M&M's chocolate candies
2 tbsp. semi-sweet chocolate

Place some parchment paper on a flat tray. Melt the white chocolate in a small glass dish for about 20-30 seconds in the microwave. Mix chocolate with a fork until smooth. Dip the flat end of a wooden spoon into the white chocolate and make a small circle on the parchment paper. This will be the white of the eye.

Add one M&M to the centre of each circle. Continue making white chocolate dots and placing M&M's until you have enough for a pair of eyes for each hamantash. Place tray in the fridge for 10-20 minutes to cool and harden. Melt semi-sweet chocolate, and using the end of a smaller spoon, dip into the chocolate and make a dot in the middle of each M&M.

Remelt the remainder of the white chocolate, and with a toothpick, dip into the chocolate and make a small white dot on one side of the dark chocolate to look like a reflection of light. Cool in fridge once again. Carefully remove the "eyes" from the parchment paper. Glue the eyes to the hamantashen with another dot of melted white chocolate.

M&M's HAMANTASHEN WITH CHOCOLATE FILLING

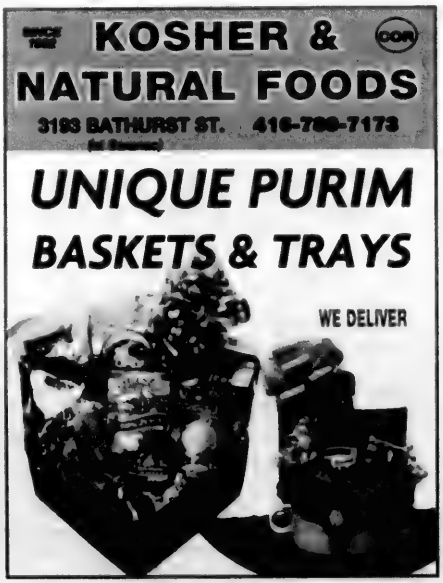
Pastry
1/2 cup canola oil
3/4 cup sugar
1 tsp pure vanilla
2 large eggs
1 tbsp. water
1 tsp. orange zest
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/8 tsp. salt
1 cup M&M's chocolate candies
Chocolate Filling
1 cup chocolate chips
2 tbsp. butter or margarine
1/3 cup sugar
1 egg, beaten
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

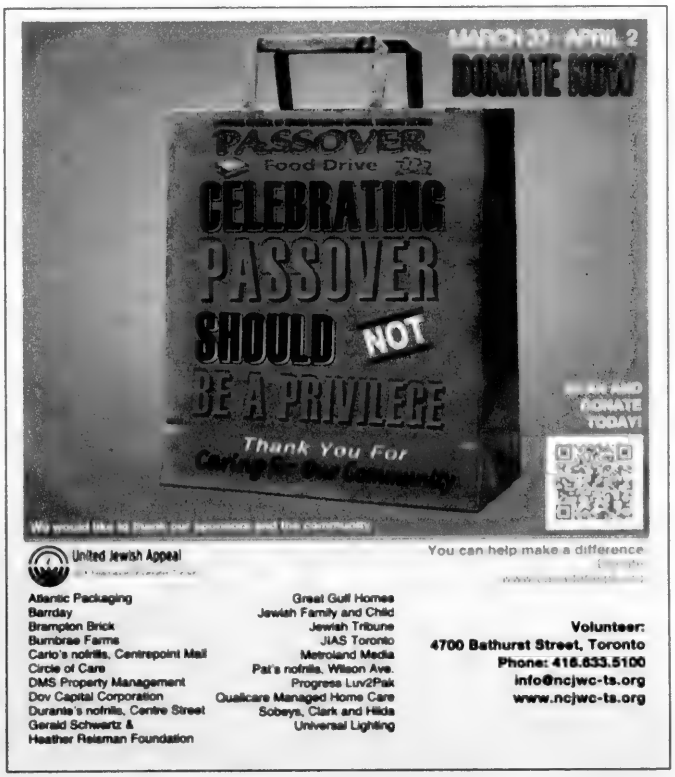
In food processor or in a mixing bowl, combine oil, sugar, vanilla, eggs and water. Add in orange zest. Add in flour, baking powder and salt just until blended. Add in M&M's by hand.

For filling, melt chocolate and margarine in a covered Pyrex or microwave safe bowl for 60 seconds. Cool. Combine in sugar, egg and vanilla.

Preheat oven to 350. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a floured board, roll out dough to 1/4-in. thick, careful not to crush the M&M's. With a glass or cookie cutter, cut dough into 3-in. circles.

Spoon 1 tsp. of chocolate filling into centre of each circle of dough. Pinch edges tightly to form three corners. A small amount of the filling should peek out. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until golden brown. Place cookie sheets on wire racks until cool.





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Welcome Home Addiction Recovery Academy

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

Back in 1999, when John Volken began looking for a destination for his intended charitable donations, he wanted to be strategic.

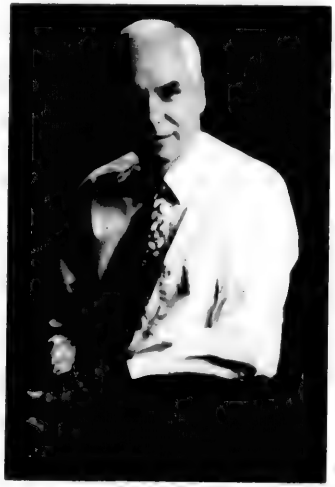
Volken, who owned United Furniture at that time, met with members of the Union Gospel Mission and the Salvation Army to find out where his help was most needed. In the process, he learned that many individuals with addiction went through up to 10 detoxification programs before they were even 30 years old.

"We need a long-term residential recovery venue so former addicts can learn life and work skills," he was told.

Volken determined he would create one, and dedicated over $100 million to make it happen. In 2003 he opened the Welcome Home Addiction Recovery Academy in Surrey, B.C.

It started with a duplex, grew to include four homes in the neighbourhood of Newton, and is set to expand once again when a 100-bed facility opens in Surrey at the end of 2014.

The not-for-profit residential addiction recovery program serves men and women from across Canada, between the ages of 19 and 34. What distinguishes the program is its length: a full two years. Residents spend their days working in one of Volken's stores to learn work skills, and have 'Encounter Sessions' each week where they're coached by their peers on behaviour that needs improvement. In addition there's a host of opportunities for them to learn useful life and work skills.



John Volken

"The two year commitment is the biggest hurdle for recovering drug addicts," says Bil Kooner, director of the academy.

Kooner gets residents to interview other, potential residents and advise on who is suitable.

"They figure out on our behalf if new applicants need detox first, or if they're just looking for a warm bed, or if they have any real commitment to recovery," he explains.

Once accepted, applicants or their families are required to pay a one-time fee and the rest is taken care of by the John Volken Foundation. In this abstinence-based program, residents start off with limited freedoms and earn their freedoms back over time. Those freedoms include more visitors, phone calls and specified hours away from the residence.

But they're kept busy at the academy. The days begin at 6 a.m., with morning motivational meetings, shifts at the retail store, encounter sessions, yoga, gym time, instruction in writing skills, swimming, basketball and computer classes. Kooner says the new facility, which will be on King George and 68th avenues, will include a gym and exercise rooms, computer labs, a library and a banquet hall. It will more than triple the academy's capacity when it opens.

The success stories over the last decade have been many. "We have one guy who was a prolific car thief with a drug habit and who is now an aluminum welder," Kooner says. "Another guy is in university and another former resident is getting his mechanics tickets. They're not all going to be superstars, but they're doing jobs and feeding themselves."

Part of the graduation project at the academy is finding a job or pursuing further education. Residents can live in the Alumni House until they've saved enough money to move out. "We want to see where they'll be living and working, to ensure it's not an atmosphere conducive to falling back into old habits," he explains. "Anyway, the residences they're staying in with us are nicely furnished million-dollar homes, so residents don't usually want to move down when they leave here."

For applicants outside of Vancouver, interviews can occur by telephone. For more information on the Academy visit whrecovery.org.

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New oncology spa & boutique coming to Toronto

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

When Compassionate Beauty opens in Toronto this spring, the oncology boutique and spa is going to make a big difference for women living with cancer. It will be the first retail site people will encounter as they leave Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre.

"For me, this is a huge location," says Saundra Shapiro, a Calgary resident who founded the company in Calgary in 2005.

"Toronto is just a whole different market. I really think that given the location, people and the population being funnelled through Toronto, it's huge."

Shapiro is an entrepreneur dedicated to providing a unique centre for women undergoing cancer treatment. Her spa and boutique offers mastectomy fitting, wig fitting, an esthetician, a cosmetician, a massage therapist and tattooing services. The store also offers swimwear, yoga wear, lingerie, sports clothes and other apparel for women with cancer.

"For women in treatment, their immune system is compromised so they can't have a regular spa treatment – but they still want it," Shapiro says. "We found ways and products to ensure their safety and still give them the services they're used to getting."

Saundra Shapiro

Shapiro's staff is specially trained to deal with women undergoing cancer treatment. The massage therapists, for example, are trained with manual lymphatic drainage, which is important for a woman who has had surgery involving lymph nodes.

Shapiro has locations in Calgary, Vancouver and Phoenix, with impending openings in Edmonton and Toronto. A Montreal native, she moved to Alberta in 1982. When she learned that her best friend Louise, from childhood, was diagnosed with recurrent cervical cancer, the two friends spent a year brainstorming about the things women would want at a store like Compassionate Beauty.

"One day in particular, Louise just wanted a facial but she wasn't comfortable taking off her wig and laying on the esthetics bed," she recalls.

"She wanted to feel safe and accepted and have a sense of belonging, instead of standing out because of her visible effects of chemotherapy. Compassionate Beauty now has a facial room and happily loves every woman that has a treatment, with hair or without."

After Louise lost her battle with cancer, Shapiro was determined to open the store, and the response has been tremendous. "From our first year we've quadrupled the number of women coming in," she says. "We've seen over 11,000 women – pretty scary numbers, and now we have doctors, surgeons, oncologists and cancer hospitals behind us, referring patients to us."

It turns out, her own mother is one of her best clients. "When we first opened, my mother, who had never had cancer, used to spend days with me at the store. She never understood why I would want to open a store like Compassionate Beauty," Shapiro says. "A year later she was diagnosed with lung cancer, and one year after that was cured, she was diagnosed with lymphoma, then breast cancer, and now her lymphoma has returned."

Shapiro is all ready looking forward to the day she can go out of business. "Our slogan is, 'unfortunately, we're open,'" she says.

"We're sad to be here because cancer is so prevalent, but there needs to be a store here for all these women. We're humbled to help them through a really scary time in their lives. The day cancer is eradicated I'm going to close the store and sell it to a spa or salon with a big smile on my face, because there's nothing worse than being diagnosed with cancer. The effect it has on family, friends and yourself, you can't compare it to anything else."

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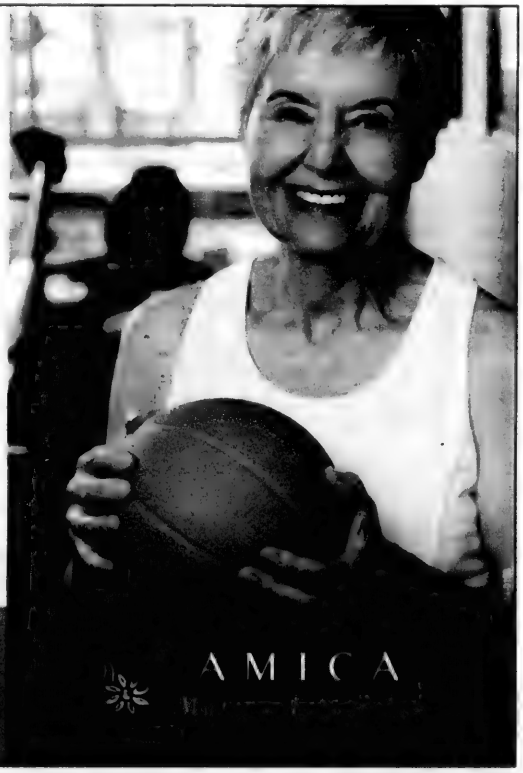

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Runners unite to raise funds for Israel's Shalva centres

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Marathons can be rewarding and life changing. Toronto friends Samantha Diamond and Arlene Rosenberg will be running more than a race at the fourth annual Jerusalem International Marathon on March 21. They are running to raise funds and awareness for a charity in which they believe: Israel's Shalva centres.

Shalva's mission is to provide respite, care, innovative programming, and critically needed therapies to hundreds of children with special needs, as well as to their families, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. All of Shalva's services are provided completely free of charge.

"As a Jew, I thought, what a dream come true. I am a runner. I love physical activity and a challenge. Compared to the challenge that these kids have, running on the hills and the cobblestones in Jerusalem will be no challenge at all," said Rosenberg, grandmother of six.

Israel's Team Shalva will gather some 400-plus runners, and 180 international participants are expected to travel from London, Mexico, Canada and the United States to run with the group from Israel.

No strangers to running, Diamond and Rosenberg have been hitting the pavement for years. Rosenberg is fresh off the heels of the New York Marathon, and Diamond, who has run several half-marathons, will be competing in her first full marathon in a race setting.

Training consists of a 16-week program from the Running Room designed to build speed and stamina. It includes gradual hill training, together with circuit training focusing on sprints, tempo run, and long runs building up to 23 miles, with easier runs ranging from 8 to 15 miles. Every Saturday is a designated rest day.

Diamond, a mother of two young children, said, "Not only do I get to be in Israel, our homeland, but I also have the chance to meet the educators and the children of this incredible organization. I feel as though I am making a difference by the funds I am raising."

Having volunteered with special needs children in the past, she added, "when I was younger, I did volunteer work at Zareinu Education Centre."

Rosenberg said, "My passion has always been helping kids. I used to volunteer with Starlight's Children Foundation."

Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, a spokesperson and volunteer with Shalva, will be running with Team Shalva and participating in the weekend programming, which includes speakers, a victory party after the marathon, and a Shabbat dinner.

Shalva was founded in May 1990 by Kalman and Malki Samuels. Their own experience with the challenge of raising a child with special needs, coupled with a strong desire to help families in similar situations, was the inspiration behind its creation.

Samantha Diamond (left) and Arlene Rosenberg

The Hebrew letters *shin, lamed, vav,* and *heh,* comprising the name Shalva, stand for *shichrur l'mishpacha v'layeled hamugbal:* "liberating the child with special needs and their family." In Hebrew, the word shalva means "peace of mind."

From humble beginnings, today Shalva has become a leader in the field of disability awareness and intervention in the Middle East.

Tania Cohen, director of Shalva, said, "this year, the marathon Team Shalva is expected to raise upwards of half a million dollars. The money raised from the Team Shalva effort supports both Shalva centres, located in Jerusalem and Alon Shvut. Runners who raise a minimum of $3,600 will have corporate sponsors underwriting the cost of their round-trip airfare and three nights' hotel accommodation."

For more information go to www.run4shalva.org

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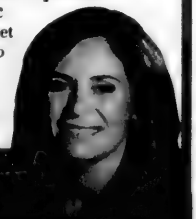

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David S. Koffman is assistant professor in the Department of History, York University, where he teaches North American Jewish studies, specializing in the Canadian Jewish experience. He is completing his first book about encounters between Jews and Indigenous peoples in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is the co-editor of the journal *Canadian Jewish Studies.*

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American olim create spiritual approach to dealing with illness

Judy Lash Balint
JNS.org

Israelis have a reputation for being frank and direct – *dugri*, in local parlance. But when it comes to death and dying or dealing with chronic illness, many Israelis have as much trouble dealing with it as people in any other part of the world.

For the past decade Life's Door -Tishkofet, a non-profit organization founded by Dr. Ben and Dvora Corn, American immigrants to Israel, has been helping Israelis understand that illness and loss are part of the continuum of life, and teaching professionals as well as patients how to transform anguish, confusion, and denial into hope and personal growth.

The Corns made aliyah in 1997 with their four daughters and realized that they could make a meaningful contribution by bringing the concept of spiritual care to Israeli society. Tishkofet's activities today encompass a broad array of programs in seven communities throughout Israel. The programs include training workshops for hundreds of medical professionals and volunteers in the art of emotional and spiritual support for people with chronic or terminal illness, as well as individual therapy for thousands of patients and their loved ones.

Support groups and retreats with an emphasis on taking control and finding the spiritual strength to confront illness are all part of how Tishkofet leaders hope to change society's view of illness.

"The natural inclination of most people faced with serious illness is denial," says Tishkofet co-founder and executive director Dvora Corn, a U.S.-trained occupational and family therapist. "Israelis love to say: '*Yehiye b'seder*' (It'll be OK). We've built barriers to what's a natural part of human existence," she asserts.

Corn believes that once people confronted with illness are provided a structure to explore how to make choices of where to spend time and how to invest in their life, they can grow and cope.

"Illness is another life challenge," she says, emphasizing that Life's Door-Tishkofet is committed to helping people utilize their existing strengths, relationships, and community to deal with the challenge.

Corn explains that for patients and their loved ones, Tishkofet develops individual treatment plans with a strong emphasis on the emotional, social, and spiritual rather than the medical. "It's not just so you'll 'get through' illness, but how you'll grow. We want to ensure that whatever happens medically, there will have been a more fulfilling life," she says.

That message resonates for D., a 42-year-old with a degenerative neurological disorder, who explains, "When I was diagnosed, I thought my life was over. Even though doctors told me I had time until I would lose my ability to walk, I already felt like it was that day. All I could see was black and all I could feel was fear. I couldn't talk to anyone. After taking part in the Partners for Life Couples Retreat, I began to be able to

Continued on page TB7

A Tishkofet workshop for caregivers in Jerusalem *(Photo courtesy of Tishkofet)*

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Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Wondering what your skin may look like down the road? Take a peek at your parents, as genetics play a key role in how skin ages.

Dr. Fred Weksberg, owner and medical director of The Weksberg Centre for Cosmetic Dermatology and the Toronto Vein Clinic says, "How you live those years is equally important. Sun exposure, diet, exercise, pollutants all come into play. I can generally see from a patient's facial structure and bones how they are going to age, and I tell the patient right away what treatment is right for them."

Non-surgical cosmetic procedures have changed the scope of Weksberg's private practice over the last 26 years.

"I was one of the first doctors in Toronto to start using Botox back in 2000. Patients came in asking for these treatments and it snowballed," said Weksberg.

A new generation of treatments is springing up to fulfil the demand for more natural looking ways to slow down the aging process for women and men who want treatments that help them achieve a fresh, radiant version of themselves.

Weksberg is a recognized expert in the field of cosmetic dermatology and sclerotherapy and is frequently invited to lecture and train colleagues both locally and abroad. He has published in medical journals, and sits on medical advisory boards.

Weksberg said, "Botox is an effective agent for the treatment of frown lines, which cause muscles to weaken. The patient will lose many of the lines and grooves that are directly caused by the action of those muscles. Common areas for Botox are between the eyebrows, forehead and crow's feet.

Botox is also used for medical purposes as in hyperhidrosis, excessive sweating. Areas such as the palms, soles, and armpits can trigger excessive sweat. Treatment involves a series of tiny injections to the affected area.

In 2011, Health Canada authorized approval for Botox to treat migraines. It can be very helpful in reducing the frequency and/or intensity of both muscle tension headaches and migraine headaches. Treatment consists of a series of Botox injections on the forehead, the sides of the scalp and on the back of the neck.

Weksberg teaches injectable techniques to other physicians. His practice has been named as the 'Centre of Excellence' in Central Canada for Botox cosmetic treatment.

Dr. Fred Weksberg

Hyaluronic acid dermal fillers such as the Juvaderm and Restylane lines are the most commonly requested injectables. They address the signs of aging in many parts of the face.

Fillers have now evolved from changing a few little lines in the face to looking at the face in a three-dimensional way, because as we age we lose volume in our cheeks, and we lose volume in different parts of the face.

Fillers are not easy to inject, he said. "It involves a lot of art and science. The face is like a canvas. It is how you put it in the face that makes all the difference."

In place of needles, there are lasers, peels and radio-frequency energy treatments, all of which work by stimulating the production of collagen, the protein that makes skin firm, plump and youthful, in turn rejuvenating the complexion.

Weksberg has perfected new techniques for thermage – the mini facelift with no down time. His practice also includes sclerotherapy to eliminate veins of all sizes, photorejuvenation for removal of lesions caused by sun damage, and skin peels which offer a combination of exfoliation and dermal infusion to improve and revitalize the skin.

Other procedures include laser hair removal, liposonix fat reduction and fraxel laser resurfacing.

"I see patients in their mid-20s continuing right up to old age. I have women in their 80s coming in regularly for laser treatments to help with their brown spots," said Weksberg.

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Physicians need compassion

Continued from TB5

share my fears with my wife. I was afraid at first, but now we are going through this together, as a team. I know that I have my moments, but when I do, I have the people at Tishkofet who help me listen to my inner self and find my courage and meaning to live. Every day is a blessing—really!"

Patients come to Tishkofet from all parts of Israeli society and are treated on a sliding-scale fee basis. At the Jerusalem headquarters there's an intake of some 15-20 new people per week, and the single-story house that serves as the Tishkofet base is at full capacity, with counseling sessions, art therapy, body work, and administration going on all day.

Tishkofet co-founder Dr. Ben Corn, whose day job is Chairman of Radiation Oncology at Tel Aviv Medical Center-Ichilov Hospital, also maintains academic appointments at Tel Aviv University School of Medicine and the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. In 2011, he accepted the National Award for Volunteerism from President Shimon Peres on behalf of Tishkofet for "changing the way people face serious illness."

Over the past year, Ben has been writing a popular weekly blog "52" at the *Jerusalem Post*. The blog has been another outlet for sharing the wisdom and caring behind the Tishkofet philosophy. A collection of his blog posts will soon be released as the book, *Think Like You'll Die - 'Cause You Will*.

As a physician who travels in both Israeli and American medical circles, Ben notes that "many senior physicians are not embodying a compassionate approach towards patients." Things are changing, he says, attributing the positive change to Israelis feeling more secure in their scientific credentials in the world.

"Israeli scientists are in the vanguard of cancer research and clinical trials. Once Israeli doctors felt secure on that stage, they allowed themselves to be open to entertain discussion of the human side of medicine," he says.

Both Ben and Dvora credit Israel's pioneering spirit for the success of Tishkofet's programs. "This wouldn't have happened in the U.S.," says Ben. "The inertia is too strong."

For Dvora, it's the closeness and intimacy of Israeli society that makes it easy to get access to decision makers and has allowed their community-based program to make a large impact.

"Plus, Zionists are dreamers and want to be actively doing something to change society based on Jewish values," she says. "Here the people in our midst matter."

The organization recently launched an international twinning program that will link communities in Israel with those abroad by providing leadership and volunteer training through the Tishkofet community caring model.

Along with expanding Tishkofet services to other cities in Israel, the Corns believe that their philosophy and many of their programs are transferable to the United States.

"The model is transportable; it will help tie Israel and American Jewry together," Dvora says.

Dvora and Ben Corn

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Eating well as we age

Lisë Stern
JNS.org

We all have our traditional favourites – and for many this means Ashkenazi fare, like slow-roasted brisket, matzah ball soup, lockshen kugel, and perhaps cholent and blintzes. Unfortunately, such classics aren't the best choices for us as we get older.

Toby Smithson is a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and founder of DiabetesEveryDay.com. She says, "Age 50 appears to be the time when some of our nutritional needs change." Our metabolisms begin to slow down, so we need fewer calories – yet at the same time, we still need food that is high in nutrients.

The challenge, then, is to get all the nutrients we need without overeating. If you are physically active, great – though most people are not scaling the same number of mountains at 60 or 70 that they were at 30. There are also specific vitamins and minerals we need more after we hit 50, Smithson says, notably potassium, calcium, and vitamins B12 and D. We also need fibre, but slightly less than we do when we're younger.

Sodium is a concern in the opposite direction – too much can contribute to high blood pressure, and we need to significantly reduce consumption as we get older, to about 3/4 teaspoon per day (1,500 milligrams)—that includes both what we add to our plate and what occurs in foods naturally. Unless specifically made for seniors, prepared kosher foods can be high in sodium.

Too much sodium is a concern regarding blood pressure, and potassium helps blunt sodium's affect, Smithson says. Calcium, coupled with vitamin D, helps with bone strength, and vitamin B12 protects against anemia. Fibre serves multiple purposes—it helps with digestion and heart health, and can help prevent certain kinds of cancer. Good sources include fruits and vegetables, as well as whole grains like oatmeal and brown rice.

For many in their 50s and above, choosing meals and preparing their own food may not be an issue. But as the Jewish population ages, more and more people are living on their own, with family far away. Jewish organizations offer services to this group. Meals on Wheels supplies a daily meal to seniors and those who cannot easily get out of the house.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation indicates that our vitamin D needs can almost double once we hit 50—those under a half century need 400 to 800 IU daily, while those over need 800 to 1000 IU.

"Vitamin D is needed to help keep bones strong along with calcium," Smithson says. The primary natural source of vitamin D is sunlight, but how our skin absorbs it can depend on where we live, if we use sunblock, and how much time we spend inside, an issue for shut-ins.

If you don't spend much time in the sun, you may need vitamin D supplements; check with a health care provider for the best balance.

In general, the most efficient source for the nutrients we need as we get older is food, rather than supplements; supplements should do just that—help with what we're getting from food already. Food has the added advantage of being good for multiple nutrients. Dairy products, for example, contain both calcium and potassium.

Other good sources for potassium include beans (think cholent) and fruit, including dried apricots, prunes, and raisins (tzimmes, anyone?). Dates are also a good source, along with pistachios and other nuts. (Nuts can be high in fat, so moderation is key.)

Fortunately, it's easy to fit a healthy diet into a traditional Jewish diet—for the most part. Brisket isn't the leanest cut of meat, but it can be reserved for special occasions

"Many traditional dishes can be modified," she advises. "Dishes like lockshen kugel can be made with a heat-resistant sugar substitute and egg whites to make it more heart-healthy and diabetes friendly."

"The best advice is to modify recipes, watch portion size, and add more vegetables to your meals," she adds.

Suggested Menu for a Day

Toby Smithson suggests the following sample menu.

Breakfast: oatmeal, a glass of skim or 1% milk; 1 cup of berries, and a slice of whole grain toast with tub margarine, almond butter, or peanut butter

Lunch: tuna fish salad with reduced fat mayonnaise; 1 slice low fat cheese; 2 slices whole grain bread, 1 cup baby bell peppers, 1 peach or nectarine.

Snack: 3 graham cracker squares, 6 ounces low fat vanilla yogurt sprinkled with cinnamon and chopped almonds.

Dinner: 3 ounces baked skinless chicken breast with rosemary; 1 medium sweet potato; 1 cup green beans; an orange.

Suggested Shabbat Meal

Shabbat: chicken soup with whole grain noodles; cholent with more beans than meat; a green leafy salad with bite-sized raw vegetables; baked sliced apples with cinnamon and sugar substitute.

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Toronto therapist brings handwriting analysis mainstream

Jennifer Tzivia MacLeod
Special to The CJN

You may have seen Annette Poizner's celebrity handwriting analysis in *Reader's Digest* or the *Huffington Post*, but she doesn't do bar or bat mitzvahs, weddings or street fairs. Far from its mumbo-jumbo connotations of the past, modern graphology isn't a parlour game. According to Poizner, it's a useful tool for personality insight – and a major catalyst for change.

Graphology isn't taken seriously in North America, says Poizner, who has a master of science in social work from Columbia University in New York and a doctorate of education in counselling psychology from University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Elsewhere, it's given far more respect – including in Israel, where its power and accuracy is well known. Poizner says, "It's very common in Israel to have handwriting analysis for anything that involves entry to a kibbutz, a job. It's fairly familiar to Israelis that there's probably going to be some handwriting analysis."

So why the bad reputation here? The popularity of graphology has worked against it. "People read a few books and do that bat mitzvah party," says Poizner.

She set out to re-establish graphology as a serious clinical tool with her textbook, *Clinical Graphology: An Interpretive Manual for Mental Health Practitioners* (2012, Charles C Thomas Publisher).

"When you want to bring something new to the field," says Poizner, "you need to talk to clinicians." Her textbook, "published by a peer-reviewed, academic publishing house which publishes classics… of psychological measurement and psychiatry," proves the respectability of her discipline. "It's a scholarly, academic piece of work."

She also teaches workshops for the Canadian Psychological Association and for undergrads in related fields. "I want to make this tool accessible, particularly [to] those who are in private practice," she says.

Many in the academic world also claim that graphology's reliability hasn't been established experimentally. Yet this is also true even for several popular and widely accepted techniques in psychology. It's difficult to study handwriting empirically, says Poizner. Many factors influence our handwriting, like "alcohol, medical problems, cognitive difficulties, visual problems."

Graphology shouldn't be used alone, she says. "I never use it in isolation… I have people make up a story, have them draw pictures… tell me their dreams.

Annette Poizner

"It's a launch pad for therapeutic conversation that is rich," she says. "When you use different techniques and see the same theme from all the different modalities, you tend to get a hit."

Graphology changes the dynamic of therapy, with clients more involved, feeling excited and motivated. Therapists "get to know their clients better, faster," and can also present problems in a neutral way, demonstrating handwriting features and asking, "Do you see what I see?"

"Looking at something on the page, it's not them… it allows people to step away and… be a little more objective. In that state, you can really intervene better."

There are sometimes surprises. One couple came in to see Poizner because the wife had serious complaints about the husband. She doesn't usually do graphology with couples, but had them write their names, address, and a few other details. When she glanced at the samples, something struck her, and she told the woman, "What I'm seeing… [is that] you are a very independent, competent, bright, professional woman," all traits which had helped her succeed professionally.

"But," Poizner went on, "it would be hard for you to allow vulnerability and moments of dependency to allow your husband to really dock in this relationship. I can imagine him staying away quite a bit because he couldn't find traction as a man."

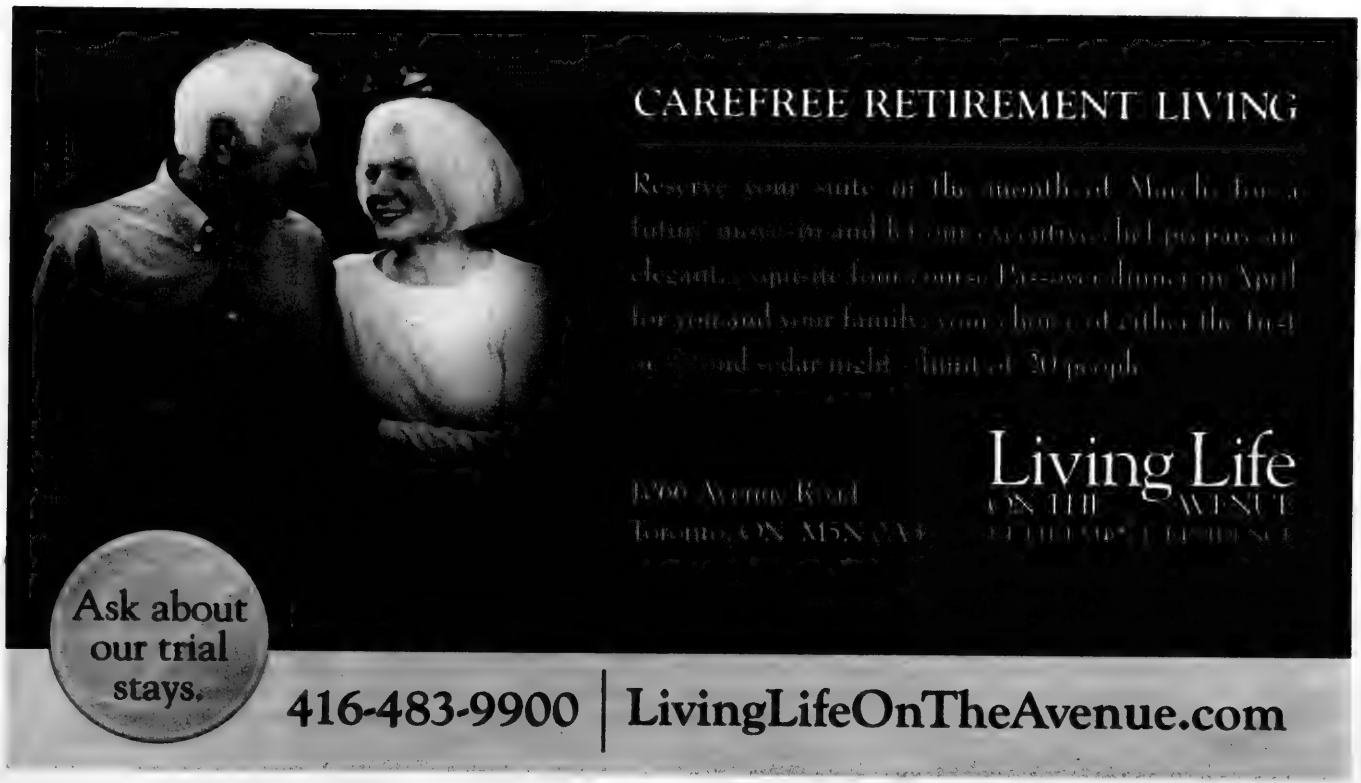
"Sure enough, I never needed to see him again."

Poizner continued to meet privately with the wife. "She needed to evolve to the point where she really was relationship material." Once the wife's issues were resolved, the husband "could come out of his protective zone of working all the time."

These days, Poizner is busy spreading the word. She also often speaks to groups of non-therapists, and while she'll answer general questions afterwards, won't analyze handwriting on the spot. "I don't stand on one foot and look at that signature." Her media work, analyzing handwriting of politicians and celebrities, focuses on informing the public about this powerful tool.

"If you put it out there like that," she says, "people go to their therapist and ask, 'Do you analyze handwriting, by the way?'"

She says, "We often lose the value of the written word. We have to come home to it. It's absolutely invaluable for therapeutic purposes."



Physican specializes in anti-aging medicine

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

Many physicians are starting to embrace holistic medicine by working more collaboratively with alternative health practitioners.

But Dr. Sheryl Brown has taken holistic health a step further. She is a physician, as well as a practitioner of integrative medicine.

Brown, a member of Genesis Professional Group, is a board-certified specialist in anti-aging medicine. She received this designation through a master's program in integrative medicine at the University of Miami.

She notes that integrative medicine is supported by peer-reviewed research. However, evidence-based studies showing the benefits of holistic medicine tend to be more prevalent in European medical journals than in North American ones.

In her practice she combines nutritional supplementation and lifestyle counselling with conventional medical treatment.

"Integrative medicine gives you more options. It's nice to have an array of choices that you can use with a patient."

And integrative medicine plays an important role in anti-aging medicine, she says, pointing out that scientific research has shown that one's genetic disposition is only responsible for 30 per cent of one's health. "What we have learned is that 70 per cent of health is based on lifestyle choices, and this impacts on how we age.

We know that a positive attitude to life can often affect longevity.

"This knowledge can empower people to take a more proactive approach in their health. A healthy diet, adequate sleep, stress reduction and regular exercise can increase your longevity and improve the quality of life as you grow older.

"Anti-aging medicine is about aging with vitality. It's about growing old and having a good quality of life."

Brown says chronic diseases of aging like type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease can be prevented by following a healthy lifestyle.

Type 2 diabetes can even be reversed in the early stages with such interventions as an exercise program and a diet that limits processed foods. "Carbohydrates like white flour, white rice, potatoes and sugar, all cause the immediate elevation of blood sugar. That surge taxes the pancreas, because it has to produce more insulin.

"Over time, people become insulin resistant or glucose intolerant. It's a pre-diabetic state. That's the ideal time to intervene with diet and exercise."

Metformin, a pharmaceutical that helps control blood sugar, may often be used at this early stage of the disease, she says. "We get great results with Metformin, but lifestyle changes impacts blood sugar levels even more."

Scientists are also developing new theories about cardiovascular disease, Brown says. "Natural saturated fats like butter and coconut oil eaten in moderation are not as problematic as we previously thought.

"It's actually simple carbohydrates found in many processed foods and hydrogenated oils or trans fats that are now viewed as key culprits in heart disease."

She says the nutritional recommendations for heart disease for the amount of fat in one's diet can be "confusing terrain" to sort out. "Instead of people worrying excessively about the amount of fat in their diet, an approach for heart-smart eating would be to focus less on the fat in foods and concentrate instead on minimizing simple carbs in the diet and eliminating trans fats altogether."

Brown recommends a Mediterranean-style diet, which is high in fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts, legumes, fish and healthy fats found in olive oil and avocados. But the processed grains found in bread should be consumed in moderation.

She says people can still indulge in some "sin foods" like desserts and pasta at social gatherings and holidays. "You do have to live a little bit."

Osteoarthritis, inflammation and/or stiffness of the joints caused by wear and tear, is another disease commonly linked to aging. While acknowledging that moving with arthritis can be painful, Brown still prescribes exercise, because it increases the flow of oxygen and nutrients in to the inflamed area and that can stimulate some healing. "If you don't use a joint it degenerates. I'm talking about mild to moderate arthritis."

Dr. Sheryl Brown

She says an anti-inflammatory diet, which combines raw and cooked foods can also help people with arthritis. Such a diet includes foods like cherries, strawberries, cucumbers, celery and an adequate amount of greens. "I recommend green tea, which is highly anti-inflammatory.

"I've also been reading literature on Boswellia, a plant that has anti- inflammatory properties. The studies hinted that compounds from this plant may help to improve arthritis somewhat."

Sleep can also affect the aging process, she says. "Sleep is huge. Sleep is a dynamic process that enables the body to heal and repair itself."

Some sleep problems like insomnia are linked to high stress levels and according to Brown, stress can impact the aging process. "People who are unable to manage stress tend to produce too much adrenalin. It can lead to the depletion of some of the minerals and nutrients that would otherwise be utilized by the immune system."

Aging is linked to the body's immune health, Brown says. "We know that as we age, so does our immune system, so any strategy that optimizes immune function is going to contribute to longevity.

"We know that a positive attitude to life can often affect longevity. Optimism empowers people and that sense of empowerment and well-being indirectly boosts immune system functioning."

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Israel's "olim cholim" undaunted by illness

Jennifer Tzivia MacLeod
Special to the CJN

It's so common here in Israel that there's a name for it: olim cholim – sick immigrants, laid low with the many ailments that are rumoured to plague us for our first couple of years here. At first I thought it was just a rumour. We arrived in August, and months later, we'd seen no sign of nasty bugs.

Then, winter hit. Winter in Israel changes everything: it's damp and cold, open season

Dr. Andy Levy

for every virus and bacteria out there. You wouldn't think cold would be a problem for hardy Torontonians, but without insulation and central heating, even a little cold can set off lung problems and other complaints.

"Olim tend to pick up everything their first year in Israel," says Tziona, a Torontonian and mother of four who's lived in Israel for 11 years. "It gets better after they build up some immunity to the new bugs."

Our new family doctor recommended flu shots, especially given our son's history of mild asthma. We were confident that, with this additional insurance policy, we could be even more sure that the worst of winter's ailments would pass us by.

They didn't. So far, it's been an endless round of fevers, sore throats, coughs, sniffles, and tummy complaints. Staying in school for an entire week has become a novelty for our kids. They're probably even more vulnerable because, having been homeschooled back in Toronto, this is their first time in an institutional setting. And our youngest is in *gan*, an Israeli kindergarten populated by over a dozen four-to-six-year-olds with very little comprehension of the benefits of soap and warm water.

Another Hebrew pun on the term *olim chadashim* (new immigrants) playfully refers to these bugs as *cholim chadashim* (new sick people), but for some, it's no joke. Mom of two, Rachel, who arrived from Toronto a few weeks before we did, lists her family's health problems over the last six months. "Pneumonia, two tummy viruses... every two weeks a cold, and we pass it around to each other."

According to Dr. Andy Levy, a professor at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology's faculty of medicine, "it's very logical, when you're moving to anyplace... With someone coming from Israel to the United States, the same thing would happen."

In each geographic area, Levy explains, newcomers encounter brand-new viruses and bacteria, along with slight variations on "familiar" bacteria and viruses. With those small changes, he says, "you're no longer immune to them." These organisms can be transmitted by healthy people, not just those who are sick.

An oleh of 16 years, he adds that "olim in general are under stress, not sleeping right, not eating right... stress in general increases your risk of getting sick and depresses the immune system."

Levy finds olim are particularly sensitive to airborne pathogens (through coughs and sneezes), and to pathogens in the water "that people who have lived here for years don't seem to be bothered by." Many also suffer from chronic gastrointestinal problems (diarrhea, bloating, food intolerances) for one or two years.

Avraham, another former Torontonian, says, "Most of us got gastrointestinal sick for as short a time as a week (the kids), and as long as six weeks (for me) within a few months of arrival. Then we didn't get sick with anything for about three years... A rough start, but welcome relief from our usual round of ongoing seasonal ailments in Toronto."

But the *olim cholim* phenomenon doesn't hit everybody. Michal, a Tennessee native who married a Torontonian before making aliyah, says, "I don't think we were sick at all in our first year. Granted, it was 11 years ago, but nothing stands out."

Levy has a few suggestions for staying healthy. "Exercise and keep as regular a schedule as possible; often these things are disturbed when we make aliyah. Consider getting purified water rather than tap water," he advises, though he "can't say there has been any rigorous study proving that really prevents illness." "If you are over 65, have a lung condition or a heart condition get the annual pneumovax [against pneumonia]." Finally, "be careful of where you buy your food; this seems obvious, but there is considerably less regulation here."

As for my family, I tell myself our adjustment period will end soon. And I'm heartened to know that some olim even end up healthier than they were before the move.

Avraham believes that his family has actually been healthier since moving to Israel than they ever were in Toronto. Living in Ma'alot, a small Upper Galilee city, he says, "our use of Ventolin and inhalers for my daughter and myself dropped from several times a month to a few times a year... [I] never thought of Toronto as a big ball of allergens and pollution before."

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught, "the Land of Israel is acquired only through suffering." He probably meant war, famine and other persecution more than the common cold... in which case, we should pass the tissues and count ourselves lucky.

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Holistic nutritionist aims to educate

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Craving sweets and suffering from insomnia were just a couple of the symptoms Marsha Fenwick, registered holistic nutritionist, was experiencing on a regular basis, and which led her to study at the Institute of Holistic Nutrition.

"I now look at the body as a whole, with a focus on the underlying and root cause of health and well-being, to uncover nutritional deficiencies, imbalances, and overloads," said Fenwick.

Mainstream medicine may not emphasize the significance of poor nutrition as a cause of a wide range of health disorders.

Research in the last five years has identified many links between the food we eat and chronic inflammation. Chronic inflammation and poor nutrition are associated with numerous diseases and disorders, including many forms of cancer.

Fenwick said, "I advocate an anti-inflammatory whole-food diet in my practice which includes eating plenty of fruits and vegetables that are high in antioxidants, as well as lean protein, replacing refined carbohydrates with healthy fats, herbs, and spices, and avoiding refined flours, sugars, and other packaged and processed food.

"The fundamental recommendations for everyone include eating whole, locally grown foods (organic when possible) and trying to remove as many toxins as possible from your environment."

Experts say nutrition can help improve outcomes associated with many illnesses and disease. These include obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, hormone fluctuations, and inflammatory diseases such as arthritis and colitis, as well as links to disorders such as autism and Alzheimer's disease.

Even environmental toxins can overload people with heavy metals such as mercury, and can lead to many chronic illnesses.

Fenwick is in private practice with a focus on women's health including hormones and weight loss, as well as health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular health, gastrointestinal issues, and autoimmune diseases. "I am striving to teach people how to eat to optimize their health at any age. No matter what stage of life you are in, I will guide you to success through a series of small changes. Small changes can lead to big differences. I do this by analyzing a client's diet, lifestyle, and environmental factors. This information is used to create an optimized nutrition protocol.

"My client came to me complaining of migraine headaches, bloating after meals and insomnia, and she wanted to lose some weight. She also ate on the run, occasionally skipping meals.

After a detailed health review, along with a five-day food journal analysis, I suspected food intolerances, poor food combining and a lack of macronutrients potentiating blood sugar fluctuations.

"My recommended nutrition and lifestyle protocol included a high protein breakfast – essential to boost her metabolism, improve appetite control, and balance blood sugar swings. I provided a 'prepare ahead list' of meals and healthy snacks to avoid eating processed foods on the run.

"Tips included increasing water, herbal and green tea intake. I suggested she have a small amount of apple cider vinegar just before lunch and dinner, which should relieve her bloating. Insomnia relief often requires balancing of blood sugar, eliminating stimulants and hormone balancing.

"After a six-week program to reinforce new eating habits with healthy food choices and lifestyle changes, my client was feeling much better with new long-term goals and changes implemented."

Fenwick shared a favourite recipe. "Razzle Dazzle Rainbow Salad Rolls is easy to digest, gluten free, soy free, dairy free and vegan."

Marsha Fenwick

RAZZLE DAZZLE RAINBOW SALAD ROLLS

3 rice wraps
1/4 cup sliced cucumber
1/4 cup sliced carrots
1/4 cup sliced beets
1/4 cup sliced mango
3 thinly sliced avocado strips
3 leaves romaine lettuce
6 sprigs cilantro

Dipping Sauce

1 tbsp. soya sauce
1/4 cup seasoned rice vinegar
2 tbsp. grapeseed oil
1 clove minced garlic and ginger
2 tbsp. finely chopped green onion
2 tbsp. coconut sugar to taste

Optional protein

smoked salmon
chicken or beef strips
tofu

Place rice wraps on a counter or table top together with a large bowl of hot water.

Slip one of the rice wrappers in the bowl of water and allow 30 seconds to one minute for it to soften.

When the rice wrapper is soft, remove it from the bowl and place on a clean surface. Add 1/3 of sliced vegetables, 1 piece of avocado, and 2 sprigs of cilantro in the centre of each wrap.

Lift the long side of the wrapper and tuck it over the filling to create a log-like roll. Fold over one end. Continue by folding the other end over. Roll up the remaining rice wrap, pressing the end down to secure it.

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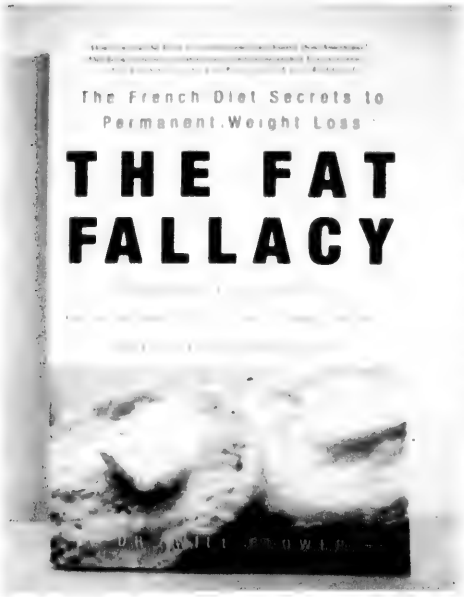
Don't get a diet, get a life

Beverly Levitt
Special to The CJN

If eating exquisite food is one of our favourite activities, why do we drive ourselves crazy at mealtime?

Are our proteins high enough? Our carbs low enough? We've become diet junkies, jumping from one trendy weight loss program to another, because as soon as we've shed our 15 pounds – in just two weeks –we relax, pop a potato or two, the weight comes pounding back.



"The net result of all this dieting is we've begun to hate mealtime," says author and neuro-physiologist, Dr. Will Clower.

He bemoans how diet gurus have convinced us that unless our food tastes like cardboard, as in the ultra low-fat, plant-based diet of Dr. Dean Ornish; or is saturated in fat but bereft of carbs, forbidding even rice, grains and bread, as in the South Beach or Atkins diets, or has us eating prodigious amounts of one food such as the cabbage soup, grapefruit or popcorn diets, we are destined to live life as a double digit (sizes 12 to 20 plus).

"The most successful way of eating I know is the Mediterranean diet as practiced by the French," he says.

In his first book, *The Fat Fallacy* (Crown Books) Clower demystified the French paradox – how the bon vivants – who eat a diet which is 35 to 45 per cent higher in fat than our average American fare – can be thinner and healthier than we are.

"One of the biggest differences is that the French eat real food; Americans eat food products. Others have written about it. Clower backs it up scientifically.

In his second book, *The French Don't Diet Plan: 10 Simple Steps to Stay Thin for Life*, (Crown Books) he disparages fad diets and dispels the American myth that you have to spend your life on a diet. He lists the toxic chemicals in many popular food products, beseeching us to read the labels of long lists of multi-syllabic, unfamiliar names, we don't dare try to pronounce, and have no idea why they're there in the first place.

"Shouldn't common sense tell us to put that package back on the grocery shelf rather than into your cart?"

According to Clower we don't have to micromanage our molecules (counting calories, carbs and fats, and weighing everything we put into our mouth) or consult a list of "approved" items every time we open the refrigerator. Instead we should learn to love healthful foods and avoid concoctions dreamed up in the chemist's lab.

Here are a few suggestions from Clower, whose favourite maxim is "Life is uncertain. Eat dessert first."

• Say no to food fundamentalists preaching shame to carb consumers, blame to back-sliding bread lovers, and guilt to pasta epicures. Avoid any authority that forbids healthful foods such as carrots, beets, berries, bananas, beans, whole grain bread and pasta.

• Learn to love natural, nutritious foods – fruits, vegetables, dairy, whole grains, fish and fowl – preferably organic and grown sustainably. Enjoy your favourite sweets and treats, in moderation. Consume your carbs and fats together to diminish the rise in blood sugar and surge of insulin which leaves you tired, hungry and prone to weight gain. Spread peanut butter on bananas and apples; spoon Greek yogurt over your peaches; dunk your favourite bread into olive oil.

• There is no honour consuming cardboard or saying "no, thank you" to your favourite foods. Choose high-quality delicacies so sumptuous you sigh at its fragrance and savour its taste. Mealtime becomes an antidote to stress and the stress hormone, cortisol, which accelerates hunger cravings and causes fat storage.

• Eat real foods. Our bodies have a nurturing relationship with Mother Earth and need fruit from the trees and vegetables from the fields. They rebel when they're fed additives created in a chemist's lab. Remember, that appealing apple in the Garden of Eden wasn't genetically modified.

• You don't have to finish first or feel stuffed to stop eating. When we gobble it up or gulp it down we can't taste it and don't enjoy it. And most of the 20 minutes it takes to achieve that full feeling is spent indulging in gluttonous, mindless eating. Savour fabulous food and sip wonderful wine. When you eat slowly your body will tell you when it's had enough. Listen to it.

The cascade of molecules that cause your brain to say, "I'm full" come from various points in your body. That awful stuffed state occurs because you're firing the stretch receptors in your stomach, extending the precious organ's walls and preparing it to receive even more food next time. Not our goal. The object of eating a great meal is to make us satisfied. What does stuffing ourselves have to do with it?

Like Rodney Dangerfield used to say, mealtime doesn't get enough respect. Dining should be a highlight of our day. Don't eat standing up, sitting in front of the television, out of a brown paper bag, or off a paper plate. And don't discuss controversial subjects.

Make dining a remarkable ritual you look forward to. Whether dining alone or with friends, create a sensuous ambiance with beautiful settings, sweet smelling flowers and soothing music. Eat small portions slowly, savoring every bite. Put down your fork between bites.

The smells, flavours, and textures engage your senses, awaken your awareness to the bubbling sauce, chattering sauté, or the heavenly scent of freshly baked bread. To live this flavoured and savoured life of the senses is to find joy in the everyday act of eating. Sparkling conversation, savoury delicacies and interesting groupings of friends around your table creates a communion – in the best sense. And the cherry on the cake, you'll forget to overeat.

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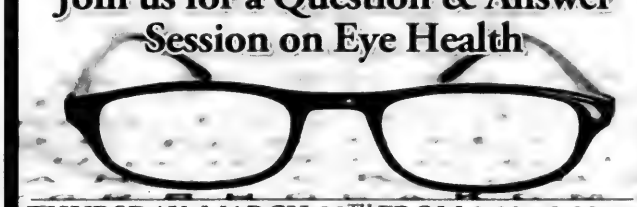
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Research team studying genetic component of Trigeminal Neuralgia

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

About eight years ago, Shushanik Abrahamyan began experiencing severe pain in her face. Conventional analgesics seemed to have no effect and doctors in her native Armenia were at a loss as to what was causing it.

When she would go to a party, the pain would commence as soon as the band began to play. She had to leave immediately.

Some physicians thought it might be some kind of severe migraine and her friends and family began to think she might be imagining it. "Nobody took her seriously," said Abrahamyan's daughter, Ana Nahapetyan.

The pain was like a severe jolt in her molars. Abrahamyan asked dentists to remove the teeth, but she was turned down. They seemed healthy. Finally she found a dentist who would do it for her and in the end, six of her teeth were pulled. The pain persisted.

A chance conversation at the offices of *The CJN* marked the first step to her getting relief. Ana was speaking to fellow employee and Ask Ella columnist Ella Burakowski about her mother's travails and Ella recognized immediately what she was going through. It was the same type of pain she herself experienced many years ago.

Have your mother take Tegretol for a few weeks and see if that helps, she advised.

Ana passed along the advice and her mom, desperate for anything that could spell an end to the agony, purchased the medication from her pharmacist (in Armenia you can get any sort of drug without a prescription, Ana said).

"She was desperate, she was living on pain killers, every kind, but they didn't help her," Ana said.

Abrahamyan took the Tegretol and within a couple of weeks the pain was gone.

When she was first stricken with Trigeminal Neuralgia in 1992, Burakowski experienced pain similar to what Abrahamyan went through. "It's like being shocked with an electric prod," she said. It could be brought on by brushing the teeth, touching the cheek or just having a meal.

Burakowski too approached her cousin, an endodontist, and asked him to remove her teeth. He could find nothing wrong with them and wouldn't do it. A trip to a gum specialist didn't help and after a time she was referred to a facial pain clinic at Mount Sinai Hospital.

On her first trip to the clinic, "the guy diagnosed me in two seconds," she said.

She was prescribed Tegretol, a medication used to treat people suffering seizures, and soon the pain subsided.

Ze'ev Seltzer knows what those suffering with Trigeminal Neuralgia are going through. A professor of genetics at the University of Toronto, Seltzer is part of an international team studying the illness. The project is headed by Dr. Marshall Devor, a Toronto native who is laboratory head and former chair of the Department of Cell and Development Biology at the Institute of Life Sciences at the Hebrew University and who founded the school's Center for Research on Pain. It is funded by the Facial Pain Research Foundation.

The team is exploring the genetic component of the illness – the predisposition of some people to suffer from the disease while others, who have the same nerve compression, seem to be untouched.

"This is a terrible disease," said Seltzer. "It is the most excruciating pain syndrome that exists."

Painful as it may be, only 70 out of 100,000 people suffer from it, making it extremely rare, especially when you consider that worldwide 20 to 25 per cent of the population will suffer from chronic pain sometime during their lifetime.

Ella Burakowski, four days after microvascular decompression surgery

In recent years, thanks to new imaging techniques, researchers have come to learn that 16 per cent of the population "have the congenital abnormality in which a blood vessel compresses on the nerve root," causing the condition, Seltzer said.

Researchers are investigating why only a small portion of that group actually suffer the excruciating pain, while most don't, he continued. They think there's a genetic reason for it, a gene or group of genes which predisposes some to experience the pain while others don't.

"We believe that the reason for the pain ... is a variant of one of the genes" or a number of genes that affects a patient's sensitivity to pain, he said.

Researchers are hoping to isolate the gene or genes involved so that a treatment can be developed, Seltzer said.

While there are currently treatments available, none are foolproof. Medication works, but it has nasty side effects. Vascular decompression surgery doesn't work for everybody while another surgery, which cuts the nerve, "leaves the face completely numb and sometimes even this doesn't work," Seltzer said.

Burakowski maxed out at 1200 mgs of Tegretol (Abrahamyan takes 800) but after 13 years, it stopped working. Even while on the drug, she hated the side effects. It made her sleepy and "you can't get out your words. It's nicknamed the stupid drug," she said.

Going without medication was not a solution. "You're left with very little quality of life. You couldn't move or talk. It's called the suicide disease" because some sufferers end their lives rather than continue with the constant pain.

Faced with the return of the pain, Burakowski opted for surgery. She interviewed six surgeons to find the one most familiar with the illness and in 2005 underwent microvascular decompression, a form of brain surgery.

Three months after the surgery, she was back to normal.

"I'm happy with how I came through," she said. "It wasn't nearly as bad as I thought it would be."

Continued on page TB15

Shushanik Abrahamyan with her granddaughter Anyuta

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Simple gizmos take frustration out of daily tasks

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

While many active seniors have varied interests and live independently, they may find it difficult to perform a number of daily tasks they formerly took for granted.

Rhoda Weiner, 75, a retired nurse, went to work, entertained and, along with her late husband, brought up three children. Now, managing alone in a two-bedroom condominium, she finds chores consume twice as much time. "For years I thought nothing of it, but now it's tough."

Dina Goldstein, 81, says she has lived with arthritis for about 18 years, but that she is lucky so far.

"I can still make Shabbat dinners and wow the grandchildren with my home-baked challah and mandelbroit."

She enrolled in jewelry courses at a senior centre and has crafted necklaces for both her granddaughters.

"They love the colourful stones and I am pleased with the results. It's ironic, I can make the jewelry, but I can't fasten the clasp on myself."

Some of her peers confessed they had the same problem.

Rosalie Goodman, 68, remembers vacationing at her parents' condominium in Florida. "I was in my 40s and my parents were in their late 70s. Most of the residents were about the same age or a little older. The owner of a ladies wear boutique had showcased a recent shipment of high-end blouses at 70 per cent off. She vowed to never again bring in garments with tiny buttons. Now, I'm also having difficulty with similar tasks, so I know what she meant. At the time, I thought it was just sales talk."

Although arthritis and other conditions affect seniors, cases differ. Arthritis is a broad term used to describe a painful, debilitating inflammation of the joint or joints. Although lay people use this label, health professionals recognize more than 100 types of arthritis. People are affected in different ways.

At a community handicraft group comprised of 23 women, ranging in age from late 50s to 91, the disparity is apparent. Several women 75 and over use canes and walkers, but they are able to perform wonders with their nimble fingers. They quickly crochet and knit beautiful garments using fine motor skills. Conversely, a few peers the same age or younger march into class at a brisk pace but plod along to complete simple projects because of impaired finger dexterity.

Fortunately, there are some low-tech, inexpensive gizmos on the market that can alleviate struggles at home. Numerous everyday chores demand finger dexterity, strength and agile hand and wrist manoeuvres. Pharmacies, department stores and rehabilitation centres are likely places to find them.

Many products can be ordered online, and the vendors are reputable. Nevertheless, Health Canada advises consumers to check out companies to avoid disappointment. A device may have parts missing, been recalled since posted online, or not have been stored safely. In some instances, the vendor may not live up to the warranty or still be in business.

Medical devices must meet Canadian standards. The majority must be licensed before distribution. However, some smaller devices are considered a lesser risk, and therefore do not have to abide by the same restrictions.

Here is a sampling of some inexpensive gizmos found in local stores that have proven to ease doing up buttons, fastening jewelry, gripping jars, prying open containers and simplifying other mundane chores.

Pens with writing grips enable users to retain a comfortable, strong grip for an hour or more. These grips also work for people with writer's cramp. Devices made of soft, smooth vinyl that slide over a pen or pencil are inexpensive and easy to find.

Jar grippers come in many shapes and forms. Some are metal hand-held gadgets that grip jar, bottle and other container tops, and other resemble rubber caps that fit over any size container. Although donning a rubber glove and running hot water over the bottle may work well, specially designed grippers are superior and cost less than $10. Suction cups on the bottom of cutting boards prevent the boards from slipping. Some are designed with stainless steel nails to hold fruit and vegetables for safe slicing or peeling.

The conventional oven is still prominent in many homes, and knob turners are the answer if it's hard to turn on and off the oven.

Have trouble swallowing jumbo pills? Pill-cutters are not costly and very efficient.

It's a nuisance to struggle with zippers, do up buttons or fasten jewelry clasps. Zipper pullers, button hookers, jewelry gizmos, key turners and door knob extenders are available to make these tasks easier. When surfing the Internet, scout out government sanctioned sites such as Health Canada.

Consumers will discover different types of inexpensive, efficient jar openers on the market. *[Elaine Cohen photo]*

Search is on for permanent cure

Continued from page TB14

Recording her experiences online and later on Facebook, she learned there were thousands just like her, going through the vagaries of the disease. She still updates her status on the anniversary of her operation, which has kept her pain free for nine years.

Not all surgeries work so well or last much longer than 10 years, said Seltzer. That's why an effort is needed to find a more permanent cure for the illness. The race is on to find the genes in question. When they do, it's likely not just Trigeminal Neuralgia patients who will benefit.

There could be application to others suffering chronic pain such as amputees or those experiencing post-surgical pain, even from knee or hip replacements.

The team is collecting a patient database of 500 Trigeminal Neuralgia sufferers in 10 or 11 medical centres. They are hopeful to have located the gene or genes in question within 10 years and develop a pharmacogenomic solution to it, said Seltzer, adding that the costs of the study are substantial. Contributions are always welcome.

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Hershel Ostropolier

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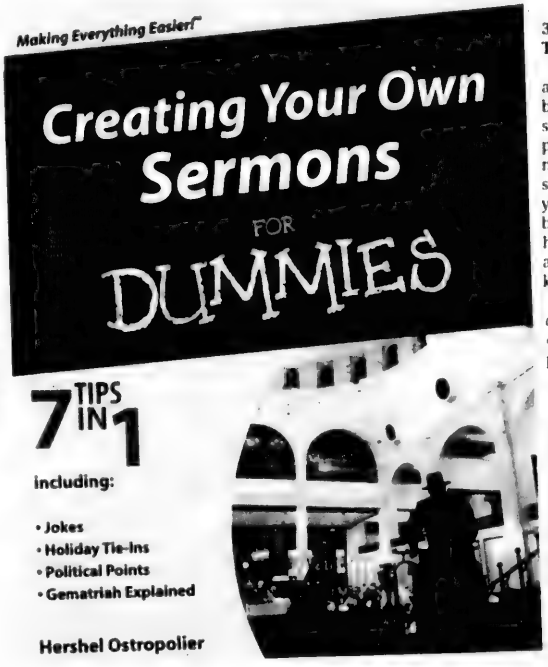

1. Find an opening joke

This is the most important part of the sermon. Find a good joke and the rest will follow. No off-colour jokes should be used, even if you do say the naughty words in Yiddish. If you really feel the need to tell an off-colour joke at shul, the proper place for it is at the kiddush club.

Try to make sure your opening joke does not shlep on too long, or someone will call out the punch line when you are only halfway done the telling.

How do you stop a dog from smelling? Hold his nose!

2. Create a neat holiday tie-in

Don't wait too long after the punch line is delivered and the laughter dies down to remind everyone that the serious business of sermonizing is taking place. The joke was just a clever ploy to deftly slip a message of a timeless, deep concept into everyone's head. This stage of the sermon signals to the listeners that they can doze off safely without fear of missing anything.

Indeed, like that proverbial pooch, sometimes we must hold our noses when we read about the evil of Haman in the Purim story.

3. Something vague from the Torah

Even if you don't know much about Torah, you can make a safe bet that the Torah probably says something, somewhere, about the point you are making. And isn't modern religion really what we say it is anyway? Cement the point you are making as the word of God by reading a bit in Aramaic. It may have nothing to do with what you are talking about, but no one will know or care.

Yukum purkan min shemaya china v'chisda…

4. Make a practical political point

Be careful, people wake up for this part. Try to make the point of your sermon something dull, safe and obvious. At all costs, avoid any politically unwise controversy. Many zealous young Maccabees have been trampled to death because they unwisely chose to address a rampaging elephant in the room. In most situations, it is safe to denounce Nazis and terrorists. Speaking positively about Israel is usually safe. It all depends on the synagogue.

5. Speak the vicissitudes of life's travails with soaring rhetoric

Nothing dresses up a dvar Torah like a whole bunch of fancy talking. It shows that you are not only a Torah scholar, but a worldly intellect as well. If you can also toss in a few words in Latin or Italian, all the better. According to a recent study conducted by *Popular Shmoozing* magazine, the word *Weltanschaung* has been consistently voted the most impressively pompous word to use in a sermon.

6. Who doesn't love some nifty gematriah?

Gematriah isn't the wacky hijinks it once was. When forced at gunpoint to give an opinion on the topic, many youngsters express strong distaste for Hebrew numerology (and an equally strong distaste for being questioned at gunpoint). It's tough to pinpoint why what was once all the rage in eastern Europe has fallen into disfavour. Perhaps once upon a time using gematriah showed that you were a math wizard. These days, with a good computer program, anyone can discover that the full name of the bride plus the Hebrew word for "cabbage" equals the name of the groom plus one.

7. The blessing-filled finish

Watch out! Leaving out or mispronouncing the name of the bar mitzvah boy's uncle in the final flourishes of a sermon is a serious mess-up. If you find yourself blanking out on a name, blame it on a drunken stupor. Oddly enough, it seems to work as a valid excuse these days. (See interview with King Achashverosh inside.) Your blessing-filled finish could be a wish that we all merit messianic times, or it could be a whole lot more. If you're Sephardi, you can skip all the previous steps and the blessing could be the entirety of the sermon. Amen.

And that's it till next Shabbat. Pat yourself on the back for a sermon well delivered. Kiddush will be served as soon as the pizza guy arrives. Shabbat shalom!

Hershel Ostropolier is the author of Sharks in the Mikva.

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CANADA

CJN Scribe Traded

TORONTO — In a trade deadline move that caught analysts completely by surprise, the Florida Panthers announced they've acquired the NHL rights to slick forward Paul Lungen. Contacted at his mid-Toronto home; where he was shovelling his driveway for the 432nd time this winter, the *CJN* reporter said he saw the move coming. "I was in Florida recently, and I believe one of the team's scouts lived in the same Del Boca Vista complex where I was staying. He saw me power walking and must have been impressed with my stride and speed. Also that I knew what Corsi and Fenwick meant." The middle-aged, out-of-shape Lungen said his last experience in the rink came during Game 5 of the 2011 Stanley Cup playoffs in Vancouver. "The Canucks' Tanner Glass whiffed on a shot into an open net and my friend immediately said, 'Even you could have scored that goal.' Before that I famously heckled a coach from behind the bench, telling him I had my skates in the car and I could suit up for the next period if he needed me." To complete the deal, the Panthers are sending Roberto Luongo to *The CJN*. Luongo is expected to increase the weekly newspaper's presence on Twitter, as well as provide a weekly recipe column.

WORLD

Cdn. Keeps Peace

JERUSALEM — Canadian Maj.-Gen. Denis Thompson was sworn in March 3 as head of the Multinational Force and Observers, a 1,600-person team of army, air and naval troops charged with keeping the peace in the Sinai Peninsula. Thompson was a brigadier general in the Canadian Forces prior to his new role, which lasts two years, *CBC* reported.

N.S. Newspaper Apologizes For Cartoon

TORONTO — A Nova Scotia newspaper has apologized after being condemned for an editorial cartoon that showed a Nazi swastika flag flying over the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill.

The text in the March 5 *Pictou Advocate* cartoon said, "Harpers [sic] Economic Action Plan."

The move came after both the Atlantic Jewish Council (AJC)and Justice Minister Peter McKay, the Tory MP for Central Nova, condemned the cartoon and demanded an apology.

"The tasteless and inappropriate use of the swastika to make a political point only trivializes the horrific crimes of the Nazis," AJC executive director Jon Goldberg said. "Such a cartoon is offensive to the Jewish community, to all who suffered during WWII, and to Canadian veterans who sacrificed so much to liberate Europe from Nazi rule."

In a March 6 statement on its website, the *Advocate* said it "was certainly not our intention to offend our readers." It said the "cartoon was simply meant as a satire, or exaggeration, on Harper's Economic Action Plan and its implications for some segments of the community.

"We regret that the cartoon was not received in the spirit with which it was intended."

The unnamed editorial cartoonist also commented in the statement: "The use of the swastika was simply aligning the Harper government's policies with the Nazis," the cartoonist said. "All Canadians, but especially the Atlantic Provinces, should be absolutely irate over the latest budget and announcements which are continuing to oppress the poorer provinces. That is why I used the swastika. There are no religious connotations, there is no anti-Semitism, there are no ethnic attacks, there is no racism… Just the suggestion that Canadian politics is heading toward fascism."

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Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

The federal government has formally recognized as refugees the hundreds of thousands of Jews who fled or were expelled from Arab countries after Israel's founding.

That means Ottawa will seek to have the plight of these exiled and dispossessed people taken into account in Canada's standing policy on Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

World Jewish Congress says 850,000 Jews were displaced from Arab lands in the years and, in some countries, decades after the State of Israel was established in 1948.

Current Canadian policy acknowledges the hardship of Arab refugees from territories that became part of the Jewish state, but makes no mention of Jews in Arab lands being persecuted and driven from their homes.

It's a breakthrough for Jewish groups in Canada and around the world who have been trying for decades to get governments to recognize the grave injustice done to Jews who had lived in countries including Egypt, Morocco, Yemen and Iraq for centuries, and even millennia.

They received no compensation from these regimes.

On March 4, the Stephen Harper government adopted the two recommendations made by the House of Commons standing committee on foreign affairs and international development in a report submitted to Parliament in November.

The committee says Canada should "officially recognize the experience of Jewish refugees who were displaced from states in the Middle East and North Africa."

MP Scott Reid

The all-party committee further recommended that this country should "encourage the direct negotiating parties to take into account all refugee populations as part of any just and comprehensive resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflicts."

The New Democratic Party, the official opposition, however, did not endorse the second recommendation, but it did not provide a reason.

In an addendum to the report, the NDP agrees the experience of Jews in Arab countries "must be better known by all Canadians," and condemned the "injustices and anti-Semitism experienced by many Jewish refugees."

The government's decision was applauded by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which made extensive testimony before the committee when it held hearings last May.

"[The] decision brings Canada one step closer to recognizing the otherwise forgotten persecution of Jewish minorities across the Middle East," said CIJA president David Koschitzky in a statement. "This is not only a matter of ensuring historical accuracy. Once implemented, it will correct a fundamental imbalance in a Canadian policy that acknowledges Arab refugees but makes no mention of Jewish refugees resulting from the Arab-Israeli conflict…

"We look forward to seeing the government's support integrated into Canada's standing policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, on the premise that peace can only be achieved through a balanced and honest examination of Jewish and Arab refugees alike."

Continued on page 20

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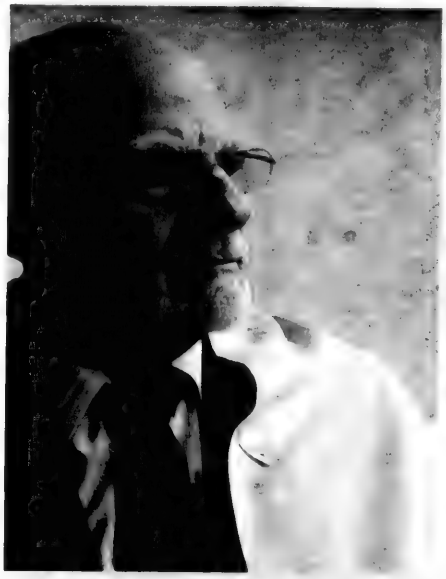

Purim's lessons for modern-day Quebec

Joannie Tansky
Special to The CJN

One of the basic tenets of Judaism is that nothing happens by accident, so it's no coincidence that Purim falls smack in the middle of the election campaign in Quebec.

Guest Voice

No matter how one looks at what's happening these days in our province, one thing is certain: both sides are fighting for the future. What transpires on election night will determine which direction this province will take. The stakes are high.

The festival of Purim is celebrated every year on the 14th of the Hebrew month of Adar, this year on Sunday, March 16. It commemorates the salvation of the Jewish People in ancient Persia from Haman's plot to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews, young and old, infants and women, in a single day.

Purim is a noisy festival. Every time Haman, the antagonist, is mentioned in the reading of the Megillah, children try to drown his name out with noise. He was the embodiment of evil. But why try to drown out his name with noise? After all, it's an old story that happened long ago.

Noise is a symbol of tension and conflict. Tension is a time of confusion when the lines between good and evil are blurred and an eroded value system invades our minds. And this is where we are in our beloved province of Quebec – in a time of loud noise, tension and conflict.

Most people strive for morality and inspiration, trying to create awareness of a higher purpose. They try to take the high road. They don't bend to the lowest common denominator, using devious means to achieve their end.

There are times in our lives when good is hard to see, when hope is clouded over, when our morale is down and it appears that evil will triumph over good. Purim comes to tell us that even in times of turmoil, tension and very loud, ugly voices, we must not lose hope

We drown out the noise of Haman even today, because as Jews, our Torah is not a history lesson. Nor is wearing a kippah. It's not a thing of the past, nor is it a meaningless piece of cloth. It is a constant reminder that there is someone higher than we are who runs our world.

Torah is a living, breathing entity. We run our lives by it. It gives us morality, purpose and shows us right from wrong.

Many empires have tried to destroy the Jewish People, a tiny minority in the world. They all failed, and those empires are nowhere to be found. Premier Pauline Marois may think she is building an empire, but if the initial foundation is built on negativity, using deceitful means, there is no foundation and the empire will, God willing, never materialize.

Marois may want a "secular" society to achieve whatever end game she has in mind, but she is forgetting a very important piece of information Nothing is happenstance. There is a God, and He runs the world. Therefore, we have nothing to fear but God Himself. Not Marois, and not cabinet ministers Bernard Drainville and Jean-François Lisée. We may be uncomfortable with some of the tests thrown at us, but we know that in the end, truth will win out. It has been proven over and over again in history, as it was in the story of Purim.

The true meaning and purpose in our world is peace and harmony, where illness will be eradicated and swords will turn into plowshares.

We must band together, take our present challenge and turn it into an opportunity to make our four cubits a better place to live. We must become stronger human beings with greater meaning and an even stronger purpose. We must take back our province and make it a wonderful, peaceful and honest place to live.

Joannie Tansky is the author of Girl Meets God, The Gift of Being a Jewish Woman, *published by Urim.*

We are an Orthodox family, so when our father died, it was important to have a service that strictly observed Jewish law. We chose Benjamin's because of their superior care. They helped us fulfil every sacred rite, from Shmira to Shiva. Our father was never left alone, and neither were we. Thank you Benjamin's for keeping the light alive.

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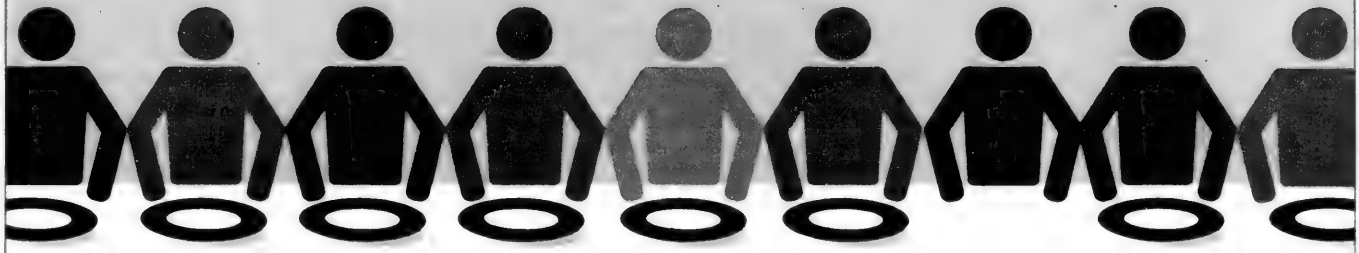
PASSOVER SHIPMENT

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto provide kosher for Passover food each year to the small Jewish community in Cuba. Kosher food is unavailable in Cuba, so the shipment is vital in helping the Cuban Jewish community preserve its traditions, observances and identity. It includes some 18,000 pounds of food for the 540 Jewish families (1,500 Jews) in Cuba. Pictured, from left, are Lisa Draper and Stephen Diamond, co-chairs of the 2014 UJA Annual Campaign, and Yael Karol, chair of CIJA Toronto's community advisory committee.

UJA's GLOBAL SEDER TO FIGHT HUNGER

United Jewish Appeal
UJA Federation of Greater Toronto



Can you imagine
a Jewish holiday without food?

Probably not. But that's the reality facing thousands of Jews living in Toronto, Israel, Cuba and the Former Soviet Union who can't afford the basic staples for Passover.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

Please give to United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto's Global Seder to Fight Hunger, to help Jews in need celebrate Passover in dignity.

globalseder.com

You will receive a special gift for making a donation of at least $100. Find out more at globalseder.com

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Sneak peak at the new CJN

I've got some good news to share: next month – on April 10, to be exact – *The CJN* will debut a brand new look. It's a bold step forward for this paper, and we think you're going to like what you see.

In the coming weeks, you'll hear more about the exciting direction *The Canadian Jewish News* is headed, but in the meantime, I thought I'd give you a sneak peak at some of the big things we've got planned. Here are just a few of the features we're working on:

• Ask a Gentile: Sometimes you've got a question the rabbi just can't answer, and your friends are way too judgmental to ever risk talking to them about it. Now you can confide in our resident non-Jew. Every week, he'll be taking your questions, and drawing on his uniquely un-Jewish experiences to help you find the right answer.

• Lashon Hara 24/7: When we polled *CJN* readers about what they wanted to see more of in the paper, the overwhelming response was, "GIVE ME GOSSIP!" Well, we listened, and starting April 10, Lashon Hara 24/7 will bring you the latest dirt from your Jewish community. Who's living in a huge house but secretly getting a day school subsidy? Which congregant does the rabbi's son really have his eye on? Who wore what to the latest Jew-do – complete with in-depth analysis from our panel of experts! Plus, who's hooking up with who at your favourite Jewish community institutions?

And the fun doesn't stop there! Log on to LashonHara.com for up-to-the-minute gossip, and keep the conversation going by tweeting us @therealcjnlashonhara. (Note to self: check w/rabbi 2 C if this is kosher.)

As for those of you who love *The CJN* just the way it is, don't worry – we haven't forgotten about you. And to show our appreciation for your longstanding support, here's what we're gonna do: 50 per cent more pictures of smiling day-school kids. Boom! You can thank me later.

But the changes aren't restricted to the print version of *The CJN*. We're hard at work reimagining what cjnews.com should look like, too. Here's a couple of ideas to whet your appetite:

• We're jumping on the online quiz bandwagon! Get ready to be inundated with arbitrary tests that will decide, once and for all, your most pressing quandaries. Which Canadian Jewish community should you actually be living in? What character from *Fiddler on the Roof* do you most resemble? There's only one way to find out!

• Traffic on the 18s: How long is it going to take you to get to school in time for carpool? Get there faster with our new video feature. And when there's an accident on Bathurst Street, we're on it – live on location with the CJN Traffic 18 Team ™.

• For all you Montrealers: personalize your cjnews.com experience by selecting from unique options like "Stop showing me news from Toronto."

Yes, it's safe to say that on April 10, *The CJN* will change forever. So stay tuned. In the coming weeks, you'll learn more about what the new *CJN* is going to look like. For real.

Oh, and one more thing: Happy Purim!

yoni

Dry Bones

PURIM IS WHEN WE'RE SUPPOSED TO GET SO DRUNK THAT...
WE CAN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORDECAI AND HAMAS!
"HAMAS"?... DON'T YOU MEAN HAMAN?
SLURP!
THERE'S A DIFFERENCE?

Purim miracle in Crimea

Just like the Purim miracle, when fortunes were reversed and the Jewish People subjugated their enemies, we recently saw a Purim-like miracle.

On Feb. 27, U.S. President Barack Obama, in an interview, blasted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for torpedoing the peace process. Everyone expected that when the Israeli prime minister came to Washington the following Monday, he would receive a very harsh welcome.

But something happened in between. On Feb. 28, Russia invaded Crimea. When Netanyahu met Obama on March 3, the welcome was quite friendly and cordial. Obama now needed support from Congress and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in order to confront Russia, and he could ill afford to offend the Israeli prime minister.

Yoseph Janowski
Thornhill

Purim greetings from the premier

On behalf of the government of Ontario, I am delighted to extend warm greetings to the Jewish community as you celebrate Purim.

Diversity is one of Ontario's greatest strengths. It is what gives us our character and heart. The Book of Esther speaks to us of the dangers of living in a society where multiculturalism is not valued, and where those with different faiths and traditions are feared and are forced to hide their beliefs. I am proud to be premier of a province where all people, regardless of their backgrounds, languages and histories, seek genuine and mutual understanding of each other's cultures.

Purim is a time to gather with family and friends to drink, feast, read the Megillah to re-tell this ancient triumph of the Jewish People, and to give mishloach manot and matanot l'evyonim. As you celebrate, please accept my best wishes for a joyous holiday.

Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario

Creating an activist

I was left shaking my head after reading Miriam Porter's piece ("My son, the activist," *The CJN*, Feb. 27). Nowhere is it more evident what impact we as parents have on the lives and opinions of our children than in the early and formative years. That is when it is incumbent upon us to expose them to all types of food, music, sports, books and cultures, especially if one is fortunate to be able to travel.

But in this instance, Porter is surely creating an activist in her own self-professed image, having brought her son to protests at the age of four, and hanging all 54 articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in his bedroom – what bedtime reading! And vegan at the age of five? Take vitamins, Noah.

I'm sure Noah will go on to "Free the Fishies," "Save the Dolphins," "Liberate the Coyotes" and "Preserve the Frogs." I only hope that he also learns along the way that there are conflicting views and interests in this world, that change comes more often from within and that hardened positions, on whichever side, tend to be ignored and exposed for their failings.

Len Shara
Cote Saint-Luc, Quebec

'Feed the Deed' with Ve'ahavta

We set out recently on a nighttime tour that took us no further than downtown Toronto, but in the words of our driver, Amit, it was to a parallel universe, a society of individuals from whom most of us almost instinctively look away. We volunteered to man the Ve'ahavta outreach van that prowls the night streets seeking out and providing food, warm clothing, and much else to the homeless. As owners of a family restaurant that has been in Toronto for more than a century, we thought we would join the Feed the Deed initiative and deliver some of our own hot soup to people downtown.

We were not disappointed with our reception, and, we're glad to report, neither were they with our soup. It was -15 C, but we took off our gloves again and again to offer a sandwich, a coffee, a pair of clean socks or underwear, a wool hat, gloves and even a couple of sleeping bags.

Since our gloves were off, we had an opportunity to shake a few hands and to pass a few minutes just talking. Each person told a different story, but each one felt the pleasure of being "seen," and all were grateful for the visit and for the goods. When we got to the vegetarian split-pea soup, we met some skepticism. But by the end of our four-hour run, we'd given away all but the bottom of the pot (which went to our driver, a hero in his own right). Some of our newfound friends came running back to the van for seconds, and even thirds.

Our hats are off to Ve'ahavta. By caring for the homeless, they are taking care of us all, and they invite everybody to lend a hand.

Philip, Ruthie and Nathan Ladovsky
United Bakers Dairy Restaurant, Toronto

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Unmasking ourselves at Purim

Will the real self please stand up

Noam Zion and Steve Israel

We dress up at Purim. Dressing up is indeed one of the most common and popular of all the customs associated with the holiday. In some communities, it is only the children who dress up, and dozens of little Esthers and Mordechais can be seen milling around, jostling with Superman, Barbie and a dozen other products of child fantasy.

In other communities, the adults, too, get involved, and parties and celebrations, often riotous, mark the coming of the holiday. One traditional manifestation that was once seen in many communities was the phenomenon of the masked ball. People would not only dress up, but they would hide themselves behind masks so that it was only possible to guess their real identity. Even today, in those communities where adults dress up, it is always possible to see some very entertaining (and sometimes scary) masks appearing with the costumes.

We tend to see all of this dressing up and masking as merely a colourful custom, a harmless piece of play acting that everyone enjoys to varying degrees. However, we have to ask whether there is not something deeper that's being expressed with this activity.

The great psychoanalyst Carl Jung talked about the phenomenon of masking, but he saw it as a most serious aspect of human activity. He linked it to his general belief that all human beings wear masks in their day-to-day lives. He called these masks the persona of an individual (from the Greek for mask), and he believed that all of us go around with an invented persona, a projection of the person we would like to be and society expects us to be. Jung believed that the role of the persona was to hide the real inner self of an individual, the inner self that somehow was seen to be inadequate for public presentation.

Shoppers look for masks at a Jerusalem market. Carl Jung believed that all humans wear masks in their day-to-day lives. [File photo]

As a result, rather than display the real self in interactions with society, people project an invented self, the persona, which they want society to accept as the real self. The persona, however, is, in fact, a projection of the self that the person wants to be, but believes that he or she is not.

Jung put it in these words: "The persona is a kind of mask, intended, on the one hand, to make an impression on another person, and, on the other, to hide the real nature of the individual. Society expects each person to fill perfectly the role that society has assigned them. A doctor should behave as a doctor and a teacher should conform to the expectations that society has for teachers... Society, too, demands conformity to certain polite standards of behaviour, and this is a motivation for a suitable mask. A person's inner life is lived behind a mask. At the same time that society tempts the individual to identify with his or her mask, the individual is also influenced from inside themselves. For example, a person will sometimes project a persona of being strong and capable, despite the fact that internally, he or she feels weak and inadequate."

Jung, then, suggests that our lives are lived behind masks. The real self is seldom, if ever, revealed. This, we suggest, raises fascinating questions regarding what happens to us when we formally dress up and adopt a mask, as on Purim.

Which self do we project at that time? Are we adopting a disguise and a mask, or are we actually dropping our normal disguise and letting our defences down in a way that we would normally fear to do, because it would "unmask" us in the eyes of society?

When are we more real? When we are formally disguised and thus released from the inhibitions of behaviour that normally constrain us, or when we are seemingly ourselves?

How does all this connect with Purim, an upside-down world that inverts the values of normal daily life? There may well be value in a society changing itself round and providing a sense of contrast to the normal way of life. This is something that can cause people to think about the values that inform their daily lives in a community.

If we follow Jung's ideas, we can suggest that far from dressing up and masks representing something strange and different from the normal self, there is a way that it can be seen as an "escape into self." In other words, if, during the rest of the year, what looks like our real self is actually a carefully constructed mask or persona that we choose to present to the world, hiding our real self, then the one day of the year when we dress ourselves up and behave in very abnormal ways – essentially reinventing ourselves – can be seen as a chance to reveal sides of ourselves that we normally hide. According to this idea, dressing up is a chance to reveal new and – to others – unsuspected sides of ourselves.

There are those who would argue, based on Jung, that these "true pictures of self" need to be revealed on a regular basis rather than hidden. It is the tension between hiding who we think we really are and revealing who we want others to think we are that's responsible for a lot of unhappiness and even mental illness.

By this logic, for a society to drop its normal social masks, necessary perhaps for the maintenance of that society as a social entity with defined cultural norms, and to express itself in a much more playful and spontaneous way at a given, defined time of the year, is a healthy gesture indeed. It might be seen as a necessary survival mechanism that allows the society to keep itself "mentally healthy" through the ability to blow off steam in well-defined and socially sanctioned ways.

Noam Zion is a senior fellow of the Shalom Hartman Institute of Jerusalem, and Steve Israel is a veteran Jewish educator.

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No free speech for Zionists

Gerald Steinberg
in Jerusalem

Should mainstream Jewish organizations – museums, educational organizations such as campus Hillels, or Jewish community centres – open their doors to speakers and events that promote boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS), demonize Israel or repeat Palestinian myths? Does turning away zealots who claim to speak in the name of universal morality, while singling out Israel for unique treatment, constitute censorship and a violation of free speech?

A number of pundits have argued the case for infinitely wide tents, presenting various claims to back their views. One columnist in *Ha'aretz* invoked the "slippery slope" cliché, alleging (without evidence) that any limits would inevitably lead to the end of all debate in the Jewish community. And in the progressive *Forward*, an author claimed that exposure to the extremists provides a form of inoculation, helping Jewish students to fight back against the rampant political warfare on university campuses.

While such arguments might sound reasonable in an ideal world, where every perspective has an equal opportunity to be heard, the reality is very different. No tent, no matter how big, is unlimited – there are boundaries to every debate. For example, Jewish institutions do not provide platforms for Holocaust denial and blatant anti-Semitism. And while each group draws the boundaries of legitimate debate on Israel along its own lines, attempts to erase all boundaries, such as the exploitation of the term "apartheid" or false allegations of "war crimes," is foolish.

Then there is the problem of ideological discrimination – on Israel, free speech is often a one-way street. When many of the groups that are exclusively critical of Israel, as well as the more radical anti-Zionist organizations, hold public events to promote their views, these are generally single-flavour experiences. Try to find someone who disagrees responsibly with the activities of the New Israel Fund (NIF) on a panel at an NIF event or as part of their tours in Israel. Indeed, in a few instances, NIF officials have used intimidation to prevent community institutions such as JCCs from sponsoring speakers that criticize their agenda, which itself is often harshly critical of Israel.

One-way free speech is particularly blatant in the various pseudo-academic conferences on topics such as "Palestinian human rights" (because Israelis are not entitled to rights), "apartheid," and "the one-state solution" (meaning no Israel) that are making the rounds on university campuses. And among small groups of church activists who focus obsessively on attacking Israel, no "balance" or debate can be found. Critics of these poisonous agendas are generally kept far away, while pro-Israel (and even neutral) voices are muzzled.

The second departure from the ideal world of free debate for all is that the anti-Israel agenda has a huge war chest to pay for travel by a long list of speakers. European governments alone provide at least $100 million annually to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that promote this agenda, enabling their officials (including a small but hyperactive group of alienated Israelis) to push their opinions on every available platform.

Much of this money is channelled through the Palestinian desks of government-funded European "humanitarian aid" church groups as in the cases of Ali Abunimah (Electronic Intifada) and Naim Ateek (Sabeel) – two of the most active Israel bashers in these venues. In addition, wealthy individuals such as George Soros and other foundations add tens of millions to NGOs involved in this one-sided political war, under the façade of promoting progressive and liberal values. And the campaign to divide the Jewish community promoted by the radically anti-Israel Jewish Voice for Peace organization, which is closely allied with the "Open Hillel" framework, is financed by a million-dollar budget provided by anonymous donors.

As a result, the waves of attacks against Israel and the multiple forms of demonization, particularly targeting young Jews and students, are unfolding on a battlefield that is far from even. And in many cases, ideologues from both extremes of the ideological spectrum – left and right, who invoke the language of free speech and "big tents" without boundaries – are often responsible for silencing those who hold more complex and nuanced views.

Lessons learned walking the dog

Yair Lootsteen
in Jerusalem

Two years ago, my wife and I got Natan, our son, a dog for his 12th birthday. Something he'd been nagging us for, for the longest time. He was smitten by a two-week-old Lab puppy we visited at a kennel not far from Ben-Gurion airport, and after reaching an agreement outlining his new responsibilities (I am a lawyer after all), the new addition to our family arrived home at the ripe age of six weeks.

Mooi, my Dad's apt suggestion for a name, meaning "beautiful" in Dutch and pronounced "moy," has changed our lives. She's brought much joy and unconditional love into our quarters as well as some new challenges. And now that she's two, we'll be replacing most of our living room furniture, having been told she's through the destructive stage of her life.

More than anything else, she has forced us out of our home. Three, four, five times a day. If you really want to get to know your neighbourhood, there's nothing quite like walking a dog, day in and day out. I'm now familiar with every nook and cranny and aware of any change that occurs in the geography.

Even more, I now know the neighbourhood characters – two of whom are a pair of wonderful, heavyset women originating from the former Soviet Union. One, from St. Petersburg, could be my mother; the other, from near Kiev, a considerably older sibling. They meet daily on different benches and just love Mooi. Turns out "moy" in Russian means "mine," and they're certain that's how we named her. They provide her with treats and she races to them upon catching their scent.

I would never have stopped to talk to these lovely babushkas were it not for Mooi. Nor would I have met Oscar.

At the end of our street, there's a large building, bigger than the others, which serves as a hotel cum residence, mostly for foreigners, here to get medical care at one of Jerusalem's hospitals. Almost all of them come from countries in the former Soviet Union.

Medical tourism has become an industry in Israel. According to an article published recently in *The Marker*, *Ha'aretz*'s financial section, it's currently bringing upward of a half-billion shekels into the Israeli economy annually. That's roughly $160 million Cdn. We compete with Germany for this trade.

The problem is this business is not yet regulated, and in the interim, doctors, hospitals, agents all seem to have gotten into the action. In December, Uvda, a leading investigatory TV program, screened a report in which three respected surgeons were surreptitiously filmed demanding exorbitant sums of money from someone posing as an agent for foreigners in need of medical help. The story sparked suspicion that desperately ill patients and their families are being exploited and that public hospitals are being used for private consultations and procedures, detrimentally affecting the medical care we Israelis are receiving.

So what does all this have to do with Oscar? He's a Russian kid under 10, who's been living in that residence on my street for the last several years. He was terribly disfigured in a fire back home in which his father was killed and his mother rendered incapable of taking care of him. Apparently, a wealthy oligarch heard his story and sent him to Israel to receive the best possible medical treatment. He lives here with two Russian women who've also been brought over to care for him while he's here.

Oscar has undergone many operations to try and repair his appearance and to create some form of manageable fingers and hands for him. During his stay, he has learned a bit of Hebrew, as have his caregivers. He walks with them round the neighbourhood and has become a fixture. Despite everything he's been through, he almost always seems happy and curious.

Sometimes we meet Oscar and his helpers when they're spending time schmoozing with our two elderly Russian women. He likes Natan and Mooi and always asks about both of them.

I don't know if someone in the medical industry has made too much money on Oscar's case. It's plain to see he's receiving excellent medical treatment, and while he still has a long way to go, he looks much better than he did when he got here.

He has also taught many of us in the neighbourhood to be happier with our lot.

PASSOVER LEARNING AT BETH TZEDEC

Guide to the Perplexed Seder Leader

with Noam Zion

Wednesday, March 19 at 7:30 PM

What did the rabbis really intend for us to do in creating a meaningful Passover seder?

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with Rabbi Harvey Meirovich

March 31 to April 5

Rabbi Meirovich shares different perspectives on Passover, exploring: the Jewish-Christian "sibling rivalry" detected in the Haggadah; how images in the *Haggadot* help forge a positive and creative Jewish identity; and whether the Exodus of Jews from Egypt really happened. No charge. *Sponsored in memory of Anne Firestone*[z"l]

Monday, March 30 at 7:15 PM
Jewish History Through the Lens of the Haggadah (Part 1)

Thursday, April 3 at 7:30 PM
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CIJA wants community to rate its performance

Interactive online tool allows for public input

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

In an effort to address community concerns that the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is not as transparent as it should be, the Jewish advocacy group released an online tool last week that allows members of the Jewish community to review its work and rate its performance.

The 2012-13 Impact Report summarizes CIJA's efforts, initiatives, progress and ambitions. The report is broken down into seven categories – Israel, the boycott divestment and sanctions movement, Iran, Jewish life, social justice, anti-Semitism and outreach – all of which have sub-categories and topics that can be rated individually.

"This comes in response to the kinds of messages we were hearing at the very beginning of the whole reorganization process, which was that people felt disconnected from the advocacy effort that was being made," said CEO Shimon Fogel.

In 2011, a restructuring plan that saw Canadian Jewish Congress, Canada-Israel Committee, the University Outreach Committee, the Quebec-Israel Committee, and United Israel Appeal Federations Canada merge into one new organization, now known as CIJA, had many Jewish community leaders worried that long-term relationships built by the individual organizations would be lost in the transition.

CIJA was also widely criticized for not being transparent throughout the restructuring process.

Fogel said he hopes this initiative will address some of those concerns and will build the community's faith in the organization.

"We hope and believe that it is going to provide a lot of new confidence in CIJA. It's not secret that the whole process over the last couple of years has been the subject of a lot of debate within the community," Fogel said.

Shimon Fogel

"There was dismay or disappointment with the direction that the organized community went in, and I think this is going to go a far way in reassuring people that we don't think we're aloof from our constituency. We believe we have an obligation to be directly and fully responsible to and responsive to what they feel is important and what they feel we should be pursuing and the ways in which we should be doing that."

He said the report, which can be accessed on the CIJA website, offers facts and figures to give people an idea of the kind of advocacy work that CIJA does.

But it's the ability for community members to rate the organization's performance that is unique, Fogel said.

"There are lots of organizations that provide annual reports, but we have not come across anything where they're providing this kind of detail and access and capacity for people to be informed and to be engaged," he said.

"When it comes to the specific issues, we identify what they are, what we have done or what our interventions have been, and then, what we've tried to achieve. They get to assess that and to report back on whether they think we've done a good job, made a good effort, achieved a result or ways in which they think we can improve on what we're doing."

Fogel said CIJA spent more than two months refining the feedback tool and making it as user-friendly as possible in order to encourage people to provide their feedback.

"We realized that there are a lot of people who are passionate about what it is that we do and that some were feeling frustration, and if we don't reach out to them and get their input into how we present it in a constructive, positive way, then we are missing the target," he said.

"I think that we're going to review all of the comments and if necessary, adjust to the patterns that emerge from the comments and reactions. I think we'll pay close attention to the issues that people are signalling are of paramount importance to them… and not least of all, it is going to give us an added pool of individuals who want to be involved and we can find a place for within the advocacy community so that they can become fully engaged."

Fogel said within the first 24 hours of the report being posted on CIJA's website, he received a number of emails and calls in response.

"I have to say they were universally supportive and positive. They loved the idea of what we're trying to do."

To see the report, visit http://www.cija.ca/impact/speak-up/report-card/

Que. authorities threaten to apprehend all Lev Tahor kids

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Uriel Goldman could not contain his anger and frustration. The latest development in the saga of Lev Tahor had him boiling over.

For Lev Tahor, he said "you're guilty until you prove you're not guilty."

Goldman, a spokesperson for the ultra-Orthodox sect, was seething at reports that authorities in Quebec were planning to seek the removal of all children in the community, which is based in Chatham, Ont. "They've been investigating for two years, police, child welfare, and they've found nothing," he said.

If authorities had evidence of wrongdoing, they should have laid charges and taken the case, or cases, to court, he said.

To read entire story, go to cjnews.com

Correction

The March 6 article "Doc reveals Jerusalem's compelling tale" incorrectly stated that the Toronto screening of *Jerusalem* was the film's Canadian premiere. In fact, the Canadian premiere took place Sept. 23 at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Que.

Chess more than a game at adolescent centre

JF &CS program teaches life skills to teens

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Jonathan, 16, a student at Jewish Family & Child's Jerome D. Diamond Adolescent Centre, a school for youth with educational, emotional or behavioural challenges, says when he takes part in the centre's chess program, he's playing much more than a game.

The Grade 11 student, who came to the school two years ago with a social anxiety disorder, says chess has given him skills that he can apply to his life. "I have played before, but this is different."

Stephen, a 12-year-old Grade 7 student who came to the centre in the fall because of family problems, said the chess program helps him find strategies to complete goals, and it helps him focus. "We all look forward to it. It's a great opportunity for me to socialize with the other students.

"Some of us get angry when we lose, but we learn that losing is part of life. When we do lose, we learn what to do next time."

Run by the Chess Institute of Canada, the program began last year with high school students but this year, thanks to a grant to JF&CS from the Azrieli Foundation, it has expanded to include middle school students as well. All 34 students at the school are now in the program.

Dena Libman, Azrieli's director of operations and compliance, said the foundation made a commitment to the initiative for this year because education is a major part of its work, and "I was very intrigued with the chess program. It teaches academics, and social and lifestyle skills, all in one package."

Robin Cohen, manager of the centre, said the chess program has been "so well received, it has become part of the school's curriculum. It helps build responsibility and executive functioning, helps students to plan ahead and set goals, and improves math and literacy. Students are also taught to adjust when a chess move doesn't go right or they lose the game.

"It is wonderful to see kids who often have trouble sitting still become so engaged in the game."

Tal Granite, the vice-president of the Chess Institute who runs the program, stressed that he uses the game to teach life skills.

"It's not just chess. I teach them to apply thinking strategies and how to set goals. They learn time management, how to deal with their emotions, how to plan and make decisions, and how to respect other students.

"They also take responsibility for their actions, and take the time to think about consequences."

As part of the program, he also has the students make a list of the goals they would like to achieve this year. "We're putting life skills into practice, and we've changed the lives of the students."

Ted Winick, founder of the Chess Institute, said the program's approach is personalized and child-centred.

"We consider as paramount the well-being and total learning experience of each child. Simply put, we are more interested in the personal growth, social interaction and thinking skills of the child than we are in how good he or she can actually play chess."

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Soccerthon planned for April 27

Israeli agency aids disabled Canadian children

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Beit Issie Shapiro (BIS), an Israeli organization that's a leader in the field of disabilities, is starting to partner with local companies to spread its innovative programs and services across Canada.

The non-profit agency has an appointed Special Consultative Status to the UN's Economic and Social Council. This allows BIS to share its work and innovations with other countries and help people with intellectual and physical disabilities worldwide.

"We're looking at Beit Issie as a light unto the nations," says Gilad Epstein, president of the Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro (CFOBIS). "We want to encourage the innovation coming out of Israel and bring it to the Canadian community."

Among these services is an inclusive, fully accessible playground that CFOBIS is trying to bring to Canada. In Israel, it's called Park Chaverim and allows kids with and without disabilities the chance to interact on the same playground.

By bringing together kids at these parks, those who are disabled and have special needs can further integrate into society.

"Using a playground as a platform so that children with and without disabilities can play together is empowering for families," says Benjy Maor, Beit Issie Shapiro's director of international resource development.

BIS' latest innovations are apps for iPads and other touchscreen devices that kids with limited cognitive and motor skills can use.

The idea to develop these applications came from a group of Israeli parents with disabled children. They explained to the heads of BIS that their kids had picked up their iPads and were figuring out how to open and close the apps on their own.

Instead of developing apps, Beit Issie Shapiro spoke with web developers to find which ones they could adapt to work better for children with disabilities, Maor says.

The goal is to make these kids' lives, as well as their family's lives, easier.

These games help children improve their cognitive and motor abilities, as well as their self-esteem.

"The iPad has something about it that elicits motivation of these kids," Maor says. "We had one girl who was not using her right hand. Through game playing with her therapist, with the iPad, she now uses her right hand."

BIS is also developing accessories to assist kids who are unable to hold or swipe the iPad, ensuring that more can benefit from these apps and games.

For instance, it's working on developing waterproof iPads. Some children with disabilities interact better in the water, Epstein says. They can play these games during hydra-therapy treatment, in an environment that suits them better.

"For me, Beit Issie represents Israel at its best: innovative, inclusive, dynamic, entrepreneurial," Epstein says.

CFOBIS has been involved with the non-profit agency for 20 years. For much of that time, the group has fundraised for BIS. Now, Epstein says he wants to foster more collaboration with companies in Canada so that ideas and innovations from Israel can have a tangible impact here.

On April 27, CFOBIS will host its fourth annual Soccerthon, a family charity event at the Trio Sportsplex in Woodbridge, Ont., that raises funds and awareness for the Israeli non-profit.

Soccerthon is a family event to raise money for Israeli non-profit Beit Issie Shapiro, which helps children with disabilities. This year's event is April 27th at the Trio Sportsplex in Woodbridge, Ont.

Last year's Soccerthon raised $15,000. This year's theme is, appropriately for 2014, the World Cup. Teams that sign up select a nation they will represent and each has a target fundraising goal of $1,000, Epstein says.

The money CFOBIS raises helps children with disabilities in Israel, as well as other countries that BIS shares its knowledge and innovation with – including Canada.

BIS helps some 30,000 children and adults in Israel every year. It is a world leader in Snoezelen (multi-sensory) therapy to help kids with intense sensory difficulties. It's also the first organization in the world to develop a higher education program for young adults with learning disabilities, in conjunction with Bar-Ilan University.

The non-profit also benefits Israel's Arab community. BIS works with imams and teaches them how the Muslim value system should support and help people in their congregations who have disabilities, Maor says.

Shabbat Itanu focuses on being inclusive

Carolyn Blackman
Special to The CJN

Shabbat Itanu, an annual event that invites synagogues throughout the Greater Toronto Area to reach out to, and include, people with special needs, takes place this year on March 21 and 22.

Itanu, a committee of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, was established in 2003 in the wake of the 2002 conference, Opening the Doors, hosted by the federations's Board of Jewish Education in partnership with Camp Ramah.

Robin Gofine, federation's vice-president of strategic community planning and engagement, said one key recommendation at the conference was the establishment of a standing committee at federation focusing upon strategies to create a more inclusive Jewish community for people with special needs.

Shabbat Itanu is one of those strategies, she said.

In anticipation of the weekend, which this year includes 26 synagogues, a brainstorming evening was held in the fall, led by Shelly Cohen, an advocate and founder of the Jewish Inclusion Project.

Cohen met with 20 rabbis from all denominations, as well as volunteers, to sensitize them to practical steps they can take to make their congregations accessible, inviting and open to people of all levels of ability.

Daniel Schild, a member of the Itanu committee and chair of Shabbat Itanu for the third time, originally got involved, he said, as a member of his synagogue, Darchei Noam.

"It is our hope that all synagogues include opportunities for people of special needs, who may have difficulties accessing synagogue and its programs," he said.

"We have this Shabbat to remind us to focus on the people who need to be included."

Robin Gofine

Weekend activities could include rabbis talking about inclusion from the bimah, and discussions about how synagogues can be made more accessible, he said.

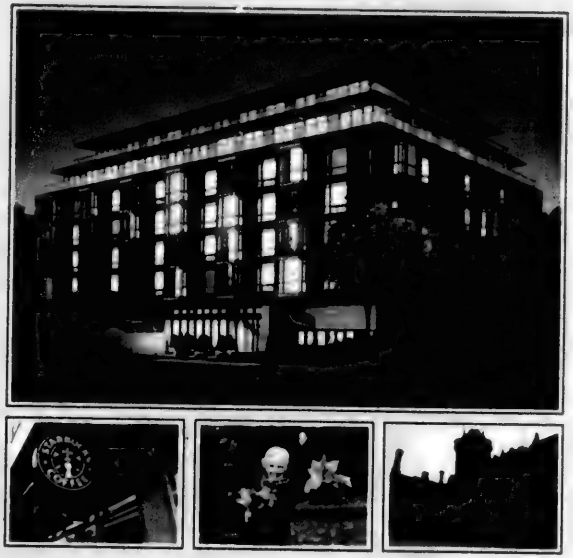
"This could include ramps, making sure there is room in services for wheelchairs or walkers, and making Torah classes and programs accessible by elevator."

Schild said his synagogue has a bat mitzvah that weekend, and the bat mitzvah girl is putting together a pamphlet to welcome her guests and tell them about the importance of inclusion.

"She has always been interested in working with people who have special needs, and her dvar Torah will focus on inclusion in her life. She was so excited when we told her that her bat mitzvah coincided with Shabbat Itanu."

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, spiritual leader of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, said his synagogue is bringing in Paul Rosen, a Paralympian sledge hockey goalie and motivational speaker, who will talk to young people as well as the rest of the synagogue community.

GENERATION TO GENERATION: Joe Dwek Ohr Haemet Sephardic School held its first intergenerational Grandparents/Grandfriends Day Feb. 25. It was a chance for grandparents to come see the school and enjoy a morning of activities with their grandchildren. The grandparents were welcomed with breakfast and making family trees, picture-taking and more. Pictured are Claude Bitton and his grandchildren, Yehuda and Eliana, working on their family tree.



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UJA event engages professional women

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Until recently, professional Jewish women in Toronto between the ages of 40 and 55 lacked opportunities to take part in community programs specifically targeted to their demographic.

An attempt to fill the void began Feb. 25, when the business and professional division of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Women's Philanthropy marked the beginning of a new chapter.

The inaugural event, held at the Lonsdale Gallery, featured guest speaker Simon Houpt, the *Globe and Mail*'s senior media writer and author of *Museum of the Missing: A History of Art Theft*.

"Professional women want to interact and network with other professional women, and they want content in their programming. We are hoping to fill that need through education and engagement," said Shira Lester-Cohen, senior campaign associate of the Women's Philanthropy division.

"Alison Himel, our incoming chair for 2015, often expresses that the primary goal of Women's Philanthropy is to engage women in order to increase our donor base so that we can better serve our over 100 partner schools and agencies."

Event chair Caroline Bokar said the idea to invite Houpt to tell the true story behind the blank spaces on museum walls was that of committee member Leanne Hazon, also a journalist.

"The history of art theft is, certainly, a very interesting one, particularly alongside tales of its recovery. Its current day relevance was glaringly apparent to our entire committee, particularly since more than 1,400 works of stolen art were just found last year at Cornelius Gurlitt's apartment in Munich and, more recently, another 60 or so in his Salzburg house," Bokar said. Gurlitt had inherited the artwork from his father, who was an art dealer.

Simon Houpt [*Cara Edell photo*]

Houpt's lecture highlighted the unfortunate reality of art theft around the world. In recent years, this theft has captured the public imagination more than ever before, spurred by real life incidents (the snatching of Edvard Munch's well-known masterwork *The Scream*) and the glamorous fantasy of such Hollywood films as *The Thomas Crown Affair*.

The truth is, Houpt said, according to INTERPOL records, more than 20,000 stolen works of art are missing, including Rembrandts, Renoirs, van Goghs and Picassos. Art theft is the third-largest form of illegal trade in the world, as there is a great deal of emphasis on monetary value.

Aside from shattering myths about the subject, Houpt touched upon the search for Nazi looted art and then addressed several audience questions.

Bokar said she was "absolutely thrilled" with the success of the event. "We wanted to create a special evening at which career women and their friends could gather at a lovely venue, get acquainted and learn about an interesting and relevant topic."

She said another important component of the event was that it encouraged attendees to bring art supplies that the committee could then donate to Jewish Immigrant Aid Services for distribution to children.

"I was so immensely touched to realize that everyone participated so eagerly."

The business and professional division of UJA's Women's Philanthropy will hold its next event on April 3. For more information, visit www.jewishtoronto.com.

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A special message for the Baycrest community

Community Matters

Bringing our Baycrest Vision to life

By Garry Foster, Interim President, Baycrest Foundation & Dr. William E. Reichman, Baycrest President and Chief Executive Officer

For those of you who are familiar with Baycrest Health Sciences, either as residents, clients, family members, employees or donors, you will know that a great number of changes are taking place on our campus—changes that will allow us to make a much greater positive impact on geriatric care, research, education and innovation in the coming years.

About a year ago, we consulted with hundreds of stakeholders to create a Strategic Plan for Baycrest that defines our vision for the future. This vision is bold, and is designed to meet the changing healthcare needs of seniors here in our community and around the world.

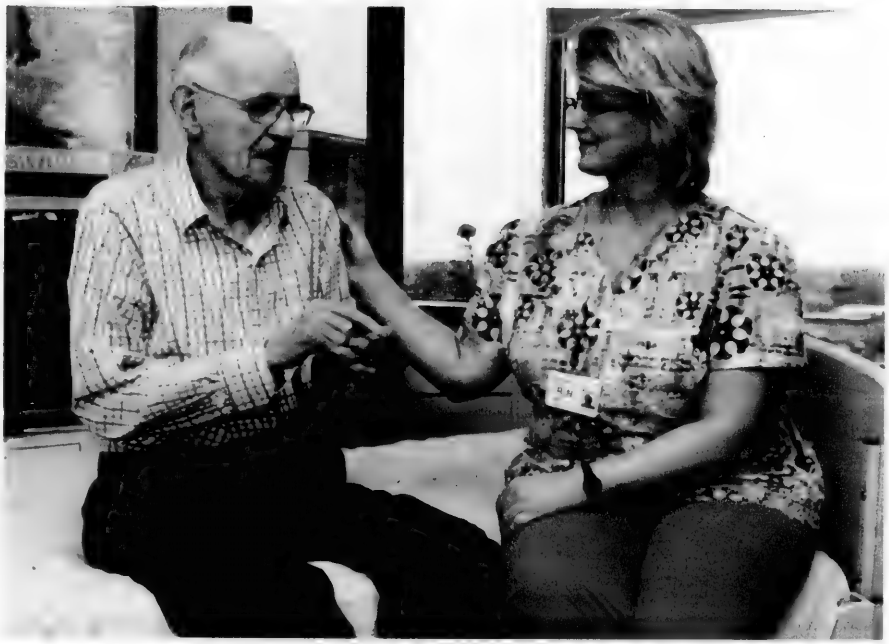
With our Strategic Plan as a roadmap to guide us, Baycrest will transform the experience of aging through leading innovations in brain health, wellness promotion and approaches to care that enrich the lives of older adults.

That's no small feat, but it's something we are committed to achieving. And already, we are making significant progress.

For instance, we are now providing group exercise and falls prevention classes in seven different retirement homes and community housing buildings, sharing our expertise with seniors who might otherwise not benefit from Baycrest's programming.

Baycrest is one of nine hospitals participating in the Transitional Discharge Model project, which provides professional and peer supports to clients who are discharged into the community from inpatient settings.

We are also leading the province's Behavioural Support for Seniors Program for the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, a program that takes a holisitic approach to care rather than relying on medications to manage behaviour. A mobile team of Baycrest's Registered Nurses and Personal Support Workers are now assisting 36 long-term care homes in managing residents' behaviours in our community. Additionally, a community outreach team is working with partners to deliver care, caregiver support and skills training beyond our campus.



Each of these initiatives helps us take our expertise to more seniors and align our programs and services with sustainable sources of funding.

In the coming years, we will also be harnessing the power of technology to help us achieve our vision. Through the use of telehomecare, for example, our experts will be able to diagnose, treat and monitor patients in their own homes—no matter where they live. No longer would our expertise be limited to our physical clinical space. Telemedicine in our Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged will bring on-call physicians right to the bedside using two-way videoconferencing, enhancing after-hours care and support for local clinical staff.

What remains unchanged here at Baycrest is our commitment to client-centred care, research and education that is deeply rooted in our traditional Jewish values. Even as we evolve to embrace new opportunities for revenue generation and to meet the changing healthcare demands of older adults, we will not lose sight of the legacy for Baycrest that has been passed down through the generations from our founders and long-standing community supporters.

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Windsor BDS referendum was a first in Canada

Ron Stang
Special to The CJN

WINDSOR, Ont. — The controversial boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) referendum at the University of Windsor was a first for a Canadian campus and designed to be a "more democratic" way of endorsing a campaign against companies that support the Israeli "occupation," a spokesperson for the yes side said.

The undergraduate referendum on the resolution to support BDS, which passed by a vote of 798 to 585, "would give a more legitimate statement" to the campaign, which up until now has seen motions passed only by university student councils, not campus-wide votes, at least at the undergraduate level, said Mohammed Almoayad of the campus Palestinian Solidarity Group (PSG).

"It's much more productive in terms of some of the main goals of the movement," he said.

These include to "spread awareness… so instead of just a few student representatives in a room discussing it and voting on it, now all students hear about it and have to decide how to vote and they look into the research and are involved in campaigning."

The referendum has been severely criticized for its "abuse of process," a charge initially brought by the campus Jewish Students Association (JSA).

Association vice-president Josh Zelikovitz castigated the vote for being "rushed through in a way that would minimize debate, minimize dissent." A JSA letter detailed a long list of alleged violations of the University of Windsor Students' Alliance's (UWSA) own constitution.

Officials from the UWSA, which ran the referendum, have not commented on the charges, except to post a letter stating that it was "aware" of complaints that were to be made to its election monitoring committee. The UWSA's chief returning officer (CRO) is slated to submit a report to student council March 13 on the referendum.

The UWSA appears to be ready to accept the report, despite a request from university president Alan Wildeman that it "defer" it and the "finalization of the referendum process" until both the UWSA and the university administration complete a review of the way the vote was held.

"Should you choose not to defer the tabling of the CRO report, and the complaints are proven to be valid, the University of Windsor will have to consider its options," Wildeman said.

He said the administration "cannot allow student organizations to compromise the university's commitment to provide a welcoming learning and living environment for each and every student."

But in its response, the UWSA said it would be up to its discretion to defer the report and not anybody else.

"This referendum and its results are not binding on the University of Windsor but on the University of Windsor Students' Alliance, which as Dr. Wildeman has noted, is an autonomous organization."

The reviews of the vote also come in the wake of vandalism when a Support Our Troops flag belonging to a UWSA vice-president was desecrated with the word "Zionist" and a Star of David spray-painted on it. Police are investigating the incident, which has received international coverage.

Meanwhile PSG spokesman Almoayad said he was "disappointed" by Wildeman's intervention.

"But it's not surprising," he said. "We totally expected the administration and the president and everyone to sort of put up as much resistance as possible," noting "pressure" from the likes of the media, politicians – "from all over the place."

Almoayad said prior to the vandalism, which he condemned as a "hate crime," there were "no incidents" and the mood on campus was "very quiet."

The flag desecration, however, "created a lot of hysteria, a lot of students were upset asking questions – the administration obviously had to react."

Asked about the fact only a little more than 10 per cent student body turned out for the vote, Almoayad said that, at first glance, that number might appear low, but compared to other similar votes, it attracted more voters. A referendum last year on what to put in the space of the former campus pub "didn't even reach quorum," he said.

Brent Farrington, internal co-ordinator for the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), said BDS has been a localized campus issue. And while the national student organization has taken stands on a variety of issues – from sexual assault to the Idle No More aboriginal protests – it has never debated a BDS resolution.

He said several years ago, a motion that wasn't about BDS but criticized certain Israeli government actions, came forward but there were "objections" because some of the clauses were not factually accurate.

Farrington said referenda, however, are widespread at the campus level and provide "a viable way" for students to make their voices heard to student councils.

Donald Sylvan, executive director of Hillel Ontario, said it's important to distinguish between student associations and university administrations, since the latter aren't affected by these resolutions.

"These are being done by student organizations that don't have any implementation authority," he said.

Sylvan also applauded university administrations for increasingly taking the initiative to ensure campuses remain peaceful and to protect freedom of speech.

"A lot of them are moving pre-emptively in advance to take steps to calm fears and make dialogue constructive," he said.

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Canada completes term as chair of IHRA

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

The agreement by 31 countries that Holocaust denial is an expression of anti-Semitism may be the most significant achievement of Canada's leadership of an international organization devoted to Holocaust education and research, its outgoing chair says.

Mario Silva, a former Toronto Liberal member of Parliament and city councillor, who was chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) during Canada's one-year chairmanship, officially handed over responsibility to the United Kingdom at a ceremony at the British Embassy in Berlin on Feb. 25.

He cited the *Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion*, adopted by the IHRA's member countries at a plenary meeting in Toronto in October, among the top accomplishments of the past year.

"This definition will help identify and address a growing manifestation of contemporary anti-Semitism," he said in his final address.

Under this legally non-binding definition, denying the Holocaust means not only saying it didn't happen or minimizing its extent, but also calling into doubt how Jews were exterminated, such as in gas chambers, and whether they were specifically targeted for genocide.

Canadian Mario Silva, left, hands over the gavel to his successor as chair of the International Holocaust Alliance, Sir Andrew Burns of the United Kingdom.

According to the definition, denial also includes blaming the Jews or suggesting they created the Holocaust for political or financial gain.

Distortion may include saying the Holocaust did not go far enough or excusing the responsibility of the Nazis' allies and collaborators.

Silva said progress has also been made in reaching out to non-members of the IHRA, an intergovernmental body started in 1998 by then-Swedish prime minister Göran Persson, which brings together political and civil leaders, and experts. Canada joined in 2009.

Ukraine, South Africa, Australia and Albania attended IHRA meetings this past year, Silva said. Uruguay joined as an observer and El Salvador has expressed an interest in becoming one, he added.

Silva, a legal scholar, also termed "successful" a recent visit to the Vatican.

A continuing issue is access to Holocaust-era archives, he said. The IHRA has found that research in some countries is inhibited by "legal obstacles, prohibitive costs and the closing of archives," he said.

Of specific concern is a proposed European Union regulation on data protection, which could have the effect of making Holocaust archival access more difficult, he said.

Silva's successor is Sir Andrew Burns, who was high commissioner to Canada from 2000 to 2003 and ambassador to Israel in the 1990s. Most recently, he was Britain's special envoy for post-Holocaust issues. Britain, a founding member, previously chaired the IHRA in 1999.

Among his aims, Burns said, is to deepen the IHRA's professional expertise and thereby enhance its reputation and influence, and to generally raise its visibility in the world.

Burns said he hopes the IHRA will "make a practical contribution to tackling the outstanding contemporary challenges of rising anti-Semitism and incidents of Holocaust trivialization and denial… and [to increasing] support for Holocaust survivors, education of the young and opening up of the historical record."

Andrew Bennett, Canada's ambassador for religious freedom, was named this country's new delegation head of the IHRA by Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney.

The federal government undertook a number of initiatives related to Holocaust awareness during Canada's year as IHRA chair.

These included funding the digitization of Holocaust survivor testimony, the National Film Board's "virtual classroom" project for schools to use in teaching about International Holocaust Remembrance Day, a guide to Holocaust-related holdings at Library and Archives Canada, research to identify the origin of Holocaust-era artworks, and an award for excellence in Holocaust education.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) congratulated Silva on his work and thanked Kenney for advancing IHRA's aims.

"All Canadians can be proud that our country has become a leading voice in global efforts to counter hatred and discrimination, including the world's oldest hatred – anti-Semitism," said CIJA president David Koschitzky in a statement.

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Quebec election campaign begins

Non-PQ voters 'angry and scared'

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Grassroots community activists in Montreal offered a gloomy perspective as the Quebec election campaign got underway last week, with the spectre of the proposed secularism charter hanging over the April 7 vote.

Businessman Gary Shapiro, founder and chair of CRITIQ (Canadian Rights in Quebec), described the mood among those who don't support the minority Parti Québécois government as "angry and, more importantly, scared" because of Bill 60, which was introduced fall.

"They feel they are being driven away. For most people their biggest asset is their home, and they are wondering how they will sell it and where they will live," he said

"The affluent will lose money, that's all, but for the less affluent, they are worried about making a livelihood. They live in fear."

A sense of helplessness prevails, Shapiro believes. "The answer is not the Liberals or the [nationalist Coalition Avenir Québec]. Anglophones and allophones were no better off under the Liberals. Both parties will bash minorities to appease the soft nationalists."

Nevertheless, Shapiro said he is happy the vote was called sooner rather than later.

"Uncertainty is the biggest killer," he said. "At least we will know who and what we are dealing with."

Shapiro doesn't think a PQ majority is a certainty. "I'm hoping [Premier Pauline] Marois has peaked too early and is counting too much on the charter. I'm hoping Quebecers will realize the economy is the real issue and that if they have no jobs, they have no life."

If the PQ does get a majority, Shapiro predicts the "quiet exodus" out of the province will accelerate and the economy will grind to a halt.

Jewish groups have consistently criticized the charter, which would prohibit public sector workers from wearing religious symbols, such as kippot and hijabs, while on the job.

In an interview about the election, Luciano Del Negro, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs Quebec vice-president, acknowledged the "apprehension" in the community in the wake of the charter debate and with polls indicating the PQ could form a majority government. "But it's an open race at this point," he said.

CIJA is keeping in contact with all parties to apprise them of the community's concerns, but he said it is equally important for all community members to "make their voices heard" and be involved with the party of their choice, including fundraising.

Norman Simon, founder of the anti-charter group Canadians for Coexistence, said there's a sense of foreboding as the campaign begins. "Everybody is very anxious," he said. "I'd call it a desperate atmosphere."

A PQ majority would be "absolutely devastating," he believes. "They will do whatever they want to harass the minorities and discourage us from staying here."

Like Shapiro, the retired teacher hopes this can be averted if Quebecers are persuaded the critical issue is the economy and not the charter. He also has no doubt that Marois, as head of a majority government, would trigger a sovereignty referendum.

"She doesn't care about the economy. In fact, she wants it to fail, because it would be another reason for anglophones and minorities to leave the province.

"I know people who are real estate agents and they say business is already bad. And it's not only [the value of homes]. Small and medium businesses are horribly affected as well."

On the day the election was called, Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal (CJDM) released two short French-language videos on YouTube aimed at "celebrating Quebec culture, while promoting tolerance, respect and freedom of conscience." The more-than-40-year-old interfaith group is opposed to the charter.

The first "Cher Québec" video reminds Quebecers of their capacity for welcoming immigrants and championing human rights, and urges them to reject the charter.

In the second, a father speaks of "what he discovered through the eyes of my daughter," when the now-22-year-old attended a preschool with children of diverse origins.

Also last week, the province's sole Jewish member of the National Assembly, Lawrence Bergman, announced he won't be seeking a seventh term as the Liberal member for Montreal's D'Arcy McGee riding.

At a March 7 press conference held at his constituency office two days after the election was called, Bergman, 73, said he was leaving politics after 20 years because he wanted to spend more time with his family. He avoided a question on whether his surprising resignation was asked for by Philippe Couillard, who became party leader last year.

"The only pressure on me was to return to my family," he said, denying health was a factor.

Bergman was acclaimed as the Liberal candidate last fall in one of the safest Liberal seats in the province. He usually got at least 90 per cent of the vote. The Liberals have announced that their candidate will be David Birnbaum, executive director of the Quebec English School Boards Association and, from 1998 to 2004, of Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region.

Bergman said he has full confidence in Couillard's leadership and believes the Liberals will form a majority April 7. He criticized the PQ for "dividing the population," and said he believes a Liberal government "will bring people back together again" to focus on the economy, health care and education.

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Addiction and recovery highlights conference

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Freelance journalist David Sheff understands the allure of addiction and its consequences.

While still a student at the University of California, Berkeley 40 odd years ago, his roommate and best friend died from a heroin overdose.

Even closer to home, Sheff's eldest child, Nic, struggled with an addiction to crystal meth for several years. Fortunately for Nic, David and the Sheff Family, there was a happy ending.

After several attempts at rehab – and close calls – Nic was able to shake his addiction.

Both father and son have written two books each about the struggle to deal with addiction – Nic from a former addict's point of view and David from the point of view of the parent of an addict.

On March 20 and March 21, the Sheffs, father and son, will be sharing their story with Winnipeg high school students, health-care workers in the field of addiction and members of the Jewish community attending the Jewish Child and Family Service's first time "Opening the Door – Conversations About Addiction" conference. (The other keynote speaker will be Paul Garfinkel, former CEO of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto.)

David Sheff admits that he did drugs as a teenager and while in university. "Because I experimented with drugs myself, I can understand the attraction, and I am also aware of the danger," he says.

He says he first learned that his son, Nic, was smoking pot when Nic was 12 or 13. The response of his teachers, David recalls, was that it was no big deal, that lots of kids were doing it and that Nic was a great kid.

By high school, Nic had graduated to more drugs and developed a particular addiction to crystal meth.

"Nic was addicted for about 10 years," David says. "He was living on the street. He overdosed several times. At one point, he faced the possibility of having his arm amputated."

There was also several attempts at rehab on Nic's part, always followed by a relapse.

"Nic's been sober for five years now," says his father. "He has been working with a doctor who diagnosed a bipolar disorder. Often, drug problems are connected to other psychological problems.

"The last time that Nic relapsed, he recognized what was happening and got help in time. The accumulation of treatment programs helped him in the long run."

Beautiful Boy: A Father's Journey through His Son Nic's Meth Addiction, David Sheff's first book on the family's ordeal, was released in 2008.

"I wanted to get across the message that what happened to Nic and our family can happen to any family," he says.

"I also wanted to write about the dangers of crystal meth. I had written an article on the subject for the *New York Times* and received responses from thousands of people all over America with their stories of going through hell.

"There is a real hunger for information out there. Readers need to understand that addiction is a form of mental illness that needs to be treated by professional addictions specialists rather than in treatment centres that emphasize morality and prayers."

At the same time that David's book came out, Nic's own recollection of what it's like to be a drug addict was released under the title *Tweak*.

"Nic's memoirs have helped parents who have read it to understand what their children are going through," David says. "It helps bring families together again."

Last year, both father and son published second books on the subject of drug addiction. David's new work is *Clean: Overcoming Addiction and Ending America's Greatest Tragedy*, while Nic wrote *We All Fall Down*, which tells readers that getting better is a struggle, that cravings and insecurity don't disappear overnight and that setbacks are no reason to give up.

David says Nic, 31, is now married and living in Los Angeles. He has just published a book of fiction and is doing some writing for television.

"Nic's ordeal brought us all closer together as a family," David says. (He and his wife have two younger children, Jasper, 20, and Daisy, 17.)

David says he and Nic are looking forward to speaking in Winnipeg. "Strong Jewish communities like Winnipeg's provide solid support for addicts trying to recover," he says.

'Great human tragedy'

Continued from page 3

As a first step in that direction, Ontario Conservative MP Scott Reid moved the report in the House of Commons on March 4, calling the Jewish refugee history a "great human tragedy."

"These refugees were driven from their homes," Reid said, "often at risk to their lives, and almost always with complete loss of property and the destruction of communities that had existed, in some case for two millennia."

He said the government would only accept concurrence by Parliament on the report in its entirety, referring to the NDP's dissension from the recommendation to include the plight of Jewish refugees in peace talks.

NDP MP Nathan Cullen of British Columbia responded to Reid, but without any direct reference to the report.

Sylvain Abitbol, co-president of Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC), which also testified before the committee in May, hailed Canada for taking the lead on this issue.

"For those of us who were personally impacted by the Jewish exodus from Arab countries, it is a matter of justice that any future peace accord acknowledges this painful, and widely neglected, chapter of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

He said that "despite its tolerant attitude," only 3,000 Jews remain in his native Morocco today out of a community of about 265,000 in 1948.

Stan Urman, executive vice-president of the U.S.-based JJAC, told the committee the estimated value of the lost assets of Jewish refugees is $6 billion.

While agreeing that Jews had suffered at the hands of Middle Eastern and North African governments during the 20th century, especially during 1948-49 and 1967, the committee, in its 17-page report, "underline[d] its belief that recognition of the experiences of Jewish refugees does not diminish or compete with the situation of Palestinian refugees."

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New self-advocacy group holds first meeting

Jews with intellectual disabilities speak out

Jennifer Tzivia MacLeod
Special to the CJN

A new Jewish self-advocacy group for people with intellectual disabilities held its first meeting on Feb. 16 at Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue.

Following the model of other self-advocacy groups, including non-Jewish groups in Canada, the new group will include a non-disabled "enabler" to help those with intellectual disabilities speak out for themselves.

Members of the group were addressed by U.S. disability-rights lawyer and professor Richard Bernstein, who has been legally blind since birth and has campaigned for years towards awareness and acceptance for the rights of all individuals.

The enabler is "helpful if they need help accessing resources, or anything too complicated," says Galya Ouanounou, on leave from JVS Toronto, who has 25 years of experience in special needs, both with JVS and with Yachad, part of the U.S.-based Orthodox Union.

One participant, Rachel Cohen, 31, has Asperger's syndrome, which makes socializing and employment difficult – and going to shul impossible.

"It's too stressful for me to go on my own," Cohen says. "If I had somebody in the community that I could go with, I'd be going to shul more often."

The term intellectual disability includes autism-spectrum disorders such as Asperger's, along with Down syndrome, and others.

It replaces older terms like "mental retardation" and "mental handicap," and helps differentiate these conditions from mental illnesses like schizophrenia or depression, said Ouanounou.

Intellectual disability has little to do with IQ – a person with an intellectual disability may have a high, low or average IQ, and a person with a low IQ may not have an intellectual disability, she said.

The goal isn't to stir up trouble, or to sit around and kvetch, Ouanounou emphasizes. "Self advocacy isn't going to tackle every issue that exists."

U.S.-based lawyer Richard Bernstein, legally blind since birth, speaks out for people with intellectual disabilities. *[Galya Ouanounou photo]*

The flyer for the Feb. 16 event invited participants to "explore your goals."

Ouanounou says it was an open invitation to "talk about what your life is like," rather than to air a laundry list of complaints.

For one thing, Cohen points out, everybody's needs will be different. "Someone with Down syndrome might have different needs from someone with autism or cerebral palsy. You can't just say … 'someone with a disability' and treat everyone the same."

Ouanounou agrees. Whether it's the chance to take a trip, find employment or volunteer in a field of interest, or develop relationships with the opposite sex, she hopes the group will offer a "window to realize what else is out there."

Expanding horizons can be tremendously exciting, she said. "People may be living in a group home… they've been in a supported workshop, doing the same kind of thing for 20 years or more," says Ouanounou. "They're not using their potential. They might not even know what they want to do with their life."

Following Bernstein's talk, he took questions about disability rights from participants, including one young lawyer with cerebral palsy who asked if he should mention his disability when applying for a job. Bernstein suggested he use his disability as a bonus, proclaiming "look what I've overcome, I've been to law school, I can overcome obstacles."

Ouanounou said, "people don't always think about using disability as a plus."

She plans to continue with regular meetings, a Facebook page, finding funding sources and building connections within the community. The group has already been endorsed by four local organizations: JVS Toronto, DANI, Yachad and Zareinu.

Cohen sees the group as an opportunity "to make suggestions for programs you might want to see. Or, if there's something that is not fair, to speak up against it, and get things that you dreamed of coming true to come true."

To the entire community, Ouanounou suggests embracing individuals with disabilities in any way we can. "Don't worry if you feel uncomfortable. Treat them as you would with anyone else, and you'll get to see the person for who they are. They are just so happy to be welcomed with a smile. That's what the Jewish community is about – reaching out to one another."

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Guest Voice

Wine can help bridge cultures

All those celebrating Purim are familiar with the story of the Persians (modern day Iran) who tried to destroy the Jewish People. Providing a twist on the traditional tale, Rachel Stern Siegman investigates how wine once united ancient Iran and Israel, and gives suggestions as to how your wine choice can reflect these ancient vino-loving cultures.

Rachel Stern Siegman
Special to The CJN

It has long been said that the earliest origins of wine date back to the Middle East. As the legend goes, a Persian princess who was part of the king's harem was depressed after losing favour with the king. As her depression culminated she desired to take her own life, and went out to the garden in search of the means. Blue cracked berries caught her eye and she quickly snatched up a fistful of what she believed to be poisonous fruit. As luck would have it, these blue cracked berries were really fermented grapes, and rather than take her life, they lifted the princess' depression. Once in better spirits she gained favour with the king, and the widespread fermentation of wine began.

Persia began to expand its wine- making abilities, cultivating the popular Syrah, otherwise known as Shiraz, grapes that were likely named after the Persian city of Shiraz. Over the border, ancient Canaan, or modern day Israel, too began to reap the benefits of its superior winemaking abilities.

Many believe that Chardonnay originated in Israel before making its way to Europe. In the midst of his departure back to Europe, a crusader noticed an interesting vine, and jumped off his horse to snatch it. Upon return home, the grapes were termed "Sha'ar Adoni", Gate of God, after the land in which the vine was first spotted. Due to common vernacular, Sha'ar Adoni became "Chardonnay."

Winemaking flourished in the Second Temple period and the historian Josephus Flavius wrote of the Galilee, in the north, as producing "fruits in a wondrous manner." He described the vine and the fig as "the kings of all the fruit trees" and to this day, archeological ruins of wine presses are found scattered across northern Israel, the country's winemaking capital.

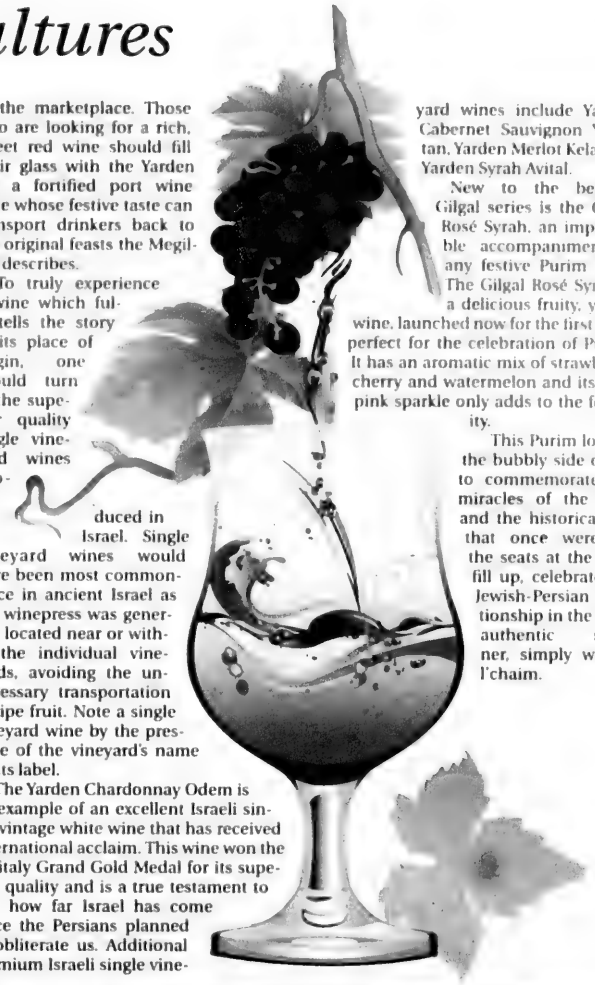
Up a camel-shaped cliff nestled in the hills of the Golan Heights lie ruins of the city of Gamla. This ancient town was a Jewish cosmopolitan hub, particularly famous for its lush vineyards. The wine and olive oil presses of this once thriving city can still be explored today.

During the rule of the Ottoman Empire, all winemaking in the reigning areas was strictly abolished and vineyards were utterly destroyed. Therefore, despite the fact that many wine varieties may have originated in Middle Eastern states, such as Iran and Israel, every contemporary Israeli winery had to begin the entire process of winemaking, including cultivating the land, anew.

With the resurrection of Israel's flourishing wine industry, this Purim it is possible to return to wine's ancient Middle Eastern roots. The Megillah describes Achashverosh's boisterous, lavish feasts in great detail, and our sages teach us that the Persian king drank out of vessels brought from Israel. Celebrate this year like the kings of yore by choosing wines from the ancient wine region, Israel.

Persians and Canaanites were known to have favoured sweet wines. One such wine, Yarden Muscat, whose grapes are grown in the southern heights of the Golan region, is considered to be one of the most popular and beloved sweet wines in the marketplace. Those who are looking for a rich, sweet red wine should fill their glass with the Yarden T2, a fortified port wine style whose festive taste can transport drinkers back to the original feasts the Megillah describes.

To truly experience a wine which fully tells the story of its place of origin, one should turn to the superior quality single vineyard wines produced in Israel. Single vineyard wines would have been most commonplace in ancient Israel as the winepress was generally located near or within the individual vineyards, avoiding the unnecessary transportation of ripe fruit. Note a single vineyard wine by the presence of the vineyard's name on its label.



The Yarden Chardonnay Odem is an example of an excellent Israeli single vintage white wine that has received international acclaim. This wine won the Vinitaly Grand Gold Medal for its superior quality and is a true testament to just how far Israel has come since the Persians planned to obliterate us. Additional premium Israeli single vineyard wines include Yarden Cabernet Sauvignon Yonatan, Yarden Merlot Kela, and Yarden Syrah Avital.

New to the beloved Gilgal series is the Gilgal Rosé Syrah, an impeccable accompaniment to any festive Purim feast. The Gilgal Rosé Syrah is a delicious fruity, young wine, launched now for the first time, perfect for the celebration of Purim. It has an aromatic mix of strawberry, cherry and watermelon and its light pink sparkle only adds to the festivity.

This Purim look to the bubbly side of life to commemorate the miracles of the time and the historical ties that once were. As the seats at the feast fill up, celebrate the Jewish-Persian relationship in the most authentic manner, simply with a l'chaim.

PURIM CARNIVAL FUN: Robbins Hebrew Academy students joined in the fun at the Miles Nadal JCC Purim Carnival March 2. Middle school volunteers, from left, Leah Good, Jillian Abramsky and Lily Librach made Purim puppets with children from the downtown Jewish community.

UNDERWATER ADAR: Netivot HaTorah Day School's Adar II Purim hall installation was created by Netivot's B'not Sherut and students under the direction of Netivot's director of arts and special activities, Rochelle Diamond, centre. This year's theme was "Under the Sea." Pictured with Diamond are Yael Kranzler, left, and Saral Robinson.

King Achashverosh

Just in time for Purim, we talk to the ruler

KopShtick
Special to The CJN

In honour of Purim, *The CJN* spared no expense, rented a time machine and travelled thousands of years back to historic Shushan, Persia, to get this exclusive interview with King Achashverosh. Amazingly, everything he said was word for word what another famous leader of ours has said a lot more recently.

Your Highness, thank you so much for allowing us to meet you here. We hope it's not too difficult.
Absolutely not.

Well, there was the last time that our reporters came to your castle and tried to get a word in with you.
Hey, I don't go to your front door, don't go to my front door!

But they were there to ask you about recent allegations.
Bunch of maggots… Sorry maybe I shouldn't have said that.

So, let us put you on the spot, then. Is it true, did you have your wife, Vashti, killed?
Probably in one of my drunken stupors.

And you decided to marry anew. How were you able to alleviate your new wives' concerns that you may kill them too?
Women love money. You give them a couple thousand bucks and they're happy.

Reports are coming in that you've married every girl there is, leaving no girl for anyone else!
It's just lies after lies and lies. And I've called you pathological liars, and you are, so why don't you take me to court?

You own the courts, Sire.
I am a role model!

So, is it not true you married everything not nailed to the ground?
Contrary to what many people said, I am not married to a casino.

And you've recently appointed the evil Haman as your viceroy.
I am taking accountability and receiving advice from people with expertise. I am accepting responsibility for the challenges I face.

But he wants to kill all the Jews.
It's a great day for democracy.

How do you think your Jewish constituents feel about the promotion. You just had them at your recent party.
I'm not conceited, but I had sort of a rock star status there.

One of your new wives is rumoured to have a campaign to get Haman's decrees about the Jewish People retracted.
That's very sad that she's a racist.

You do recall that it was a Jew, Mordechai, who saved you from a plot on your life. How did you feel knowing that your most loyal servants wanted you gone?
That hurt, man. When it hits you in the face, you don't expect it, right?

Absolutely, so you must have had a lot of appreciation for his rescue.
He's a great guy.

You had so much appreciation for him that you threw a parade honouring him. Why weren't you in attendance?
I was at my cottage in Muskoka.

Well, we have pictures from the event if you want to see.
This looks like all girlie stuff.

Our apologies. And I don't want to keep you from this lovely party Esther has invited you and Haman to. The steaks look a bit too juicy, though.
We're going to put an end to this gravy train.

Good idea. How do you feel about your queen inviting not just you, but Haman as well to this party?
He's a friend, he's a good guy, I don't throw my friends under the bus.

But there he is on a couch with Esther now!
I'm very surprised!

So are we.
I'll make sure that [guy]'s dead. I'm going to kill that %$#? guy. I'm telling you it's first-degree murder. He dies or I die, brother.

Wow, your Highness, such a drastic change.
When he's down, I'll rip his #$%# throat out!

Well, don't let us get in your way. But what about those harsh decrees about the Jewish People?
I sincerely, sincerely, sincerely apologize.

No problem. Wow, this has been quite an interview. Here, have a cookie.
I have more than enough to eat at home, thank you very much.

No problem, just thought we'd offer.
KopShtick is a Jewish entertainer in Toronto. www.KopShtick.com

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Guest Voice

History will vindicate him

David Levine
Special to The CJN

Even as the evolution of communications technology continues to destabilize and redefine the geopolitical landscape, we still find ourselves shocked, from time to time, as the institutions that form our social bedrock are suddenly, violently uprooted.

I refer, of course, to this very newspaper, and the recent change of leadership it has undergone, in the person of Yoni Goldstein.

I have known Goldstein since his adolescent days – when he was a carefree young Marxist, idly dreaming of subverting a national Jewish publication to re-educate the population to his will and whim.

Those dreams would not stay idle for long.

At 16, after seizing control of our high school paper in a bloodless coup, Goldstein rededicated the publication to Noam Chomsky, Edward Said, and unyielding criticism of the State of Israel. One early article bearing Goldstein's byline even described the political situation there as "complex". Goldstein has repeatedly apologized, calling the piece "a youthful indiscretion" – but his true stripes were revealed, and they remain visible to this day.

Now, through a series of deceptions so complex it makes *House of Cards* look like a game of tag, his boyhood dreams have come to fruition: Yoni "Che" Goldstein (he insists on the nickname) now helms our dearest ship, his eyes firmly affixed on the rocks.

What Goldstein fails to realize is that this hallowed weekly is more than just a newspaper – it is a blunt instrument, to be wielded in defence of our community. While our new editor-in-chief is preoccupied befriending J Street and Queers Against Israeli Apartheid, who will protect our interests? Who will warn us of resurgent anti-Semitism? Who will feature pictures of our grandchildren at a food drive?

I am not prone to overstatement or overreaction – it is my careful, reasoned opinion that this newspaper's recent subversion is a threat more dangerous than Iran's nuclear program. The transfer of *The Canadian Jewish News* into the hands of a communist vegan hipster like Goldstein is an affront to the morals, values, ethics, beliefs, principles – and, most importantly, the midot of our community.

In Pirkei Avot, our sages tell us to judge each man leniently. Clearly, our sages never met Yoni Goldstein. I call on the leaders of our community to take a stand – intervene editorially in the workings of *The Canadian Jewish News*, boycott all news journalism in protest, and declare a *cherem* on the elitist few who wish to broaden our horizons so excessively.

Some people will reject my theories as paranoid, closed-minded, or neo-McCarthyist – but anyone who says so is a self-hating Jew.

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The Director's role includes oversight of our one day/week Religious school, midweek Hebrew program, and family holiday and Shabbat programming, corresponding to approximately 25 hours/week. Our Bnei Mitzvah Coordinator and our Teen Engagement Coordinator report to the Director. The hours are flexible. Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest, resume and two references to DirectorSearch@templeemanuel.ca. We will begin reviewing applications on March 25, 2014, and will consider candidates till the position is filled. For further information please contact Rabbi Debra Landsberg-Hirschy at Rabbi@templeemanuel.ca

Personal Purims

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

What does the story of Purim have in common with a woman driving the wrong way on a freeway, a man trying to flee Iran in 1979 and an allegedly poisonous batch of plum jam? More than you'd think. Improbably, these near tragedies all ended safely. But rather than just breathe a sigh of relief, each of the people involved declared a "personal" Purim to acknowledge their own miracle, similar to the hidden one that saved the Jewish people in the time of Esther and Mordechai.

How do you commemorate a personal Purim? Rabbi Daniel Yaakov Travis explains that a thanksgiving feast is appropriate and that the day acquires the status of Purim for the survivor and his descendants. This tradition hits home for the rabbi. Years ago, while on the way to buy food in honour of his newborn daughter, he was involved in what appeared to be a fatal car accident. "HaShem had other plans for me and, in an act of infinite kindness, He graciously spared my life. Chai Sivan (the 18th day of Sivan), the day that I was saved, became a personal yom tov for me and my family." **[bit.ly/personalpurim3]**

Back in 1731, David Brandeis, a Jewish grocer from Bohemia, was imprisoned along with his family for selling some plum jam (*povidl*) blamed for causing the death of a gentile. An investigation revealed tuberculosis was the culprit and the Jews were released. Descendants of Brandeis celebrate Purim Povidl on the 10th of Adar. **[http://bit.ly/personalpurim1]**

Rabbi Barry Leff's personal Purim occurred not too far from Haman territory. On Feb. 16, 1979, Rabbi Leff was trying to flee Tehran just after the fall of the shah. "One of the Revolutionary Guards in the lead car was riding on the trunk, on the outside of the car. The car hit a little dip, and his gun went off, shooting out the back window of the car." You can read the rest of his journey to freedom on Rabbi Leff's blog. **[bit.ly/personalpurim2]**

Sonia Levitin found herself travelling in the wrong direction as cars barrelled at her on Los Angeles' 405 Freeway. When she survived, she realized something inexplicable had occurred. She was also determined to prevent those feelings of gratitude from wearing off, as typically happens. Once a year Levitin holds a celebratory dinner for eight to 10 friends. She cooks everything herself, uses the best china and invites guests to share their own moments of gratitude. She calls it "the Freeway Purim." **[bit.ly/personalpurim4]**

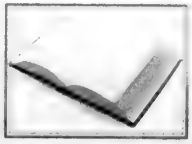
In his *Personal Purim Miracle*, Rabbi Benjamin Blech writes how his appearance in a stranger's home set off an improbable chain of events that helped prevent someone from forsaking Judaism. But Rabbi Blech doesn't take any credit

"I was just a prop used in a larger, cosmic drama." **[bit.ly/personalpurim5]** "Ever since then, I've become attuned to noticing the small miracles that surround us so often in life. They're the ones that should make us reflect on why we happened to be precisely in a certain place at precisely a certain time. They're the ones that should remind us that there are occasions when we are merely messengers in a divinely orchestrated story, witnessing God's hidden miracles."

highway@rogers.com

The lesson of Purim

Rabbi Yisroel Bernath



Rabbinic Reflections

This Saturday night and Sunday, March 15 and 16, we will celebrate the Jewish holiday of Purim. Who could not love Purim?

Masquerading in costumes, swinging noisy greggers and having an excuse to eat, drink and be merry makes for one great holiday. However, the story of Purim is a story of Jewish survival and perseverance in the face of the threat of annihilation.

When Mordechai heard about Haman's decree to totally annihilate the Jewish People, he donned sackcloth and ashes, the clothing of mourning. Then he gathered 22,000 Jewish children and began to teach them Torah, imbuing them with a renewed love for our heritage. He implanted within their hearts such a burning self-sacrifice that they all declared that they would remain with Mordechai and Torah, for life. The heartrending, sincere pleas for salvation of these Jewish children penetrated the heavenly gates. Thus, the evil decree was annulled and the miracle of Purim evolved.

Today, we ought to be inspired by Mordechai's example and realize the supreme importance of educating our young. A lofty position, a life heavily burdened with awesome responsibilities, or a hectic schedule doesn't make it easy for us to devote at least part of our time and energy to teaching Torah and transmitting our heritage to the next generation. Yet, it is our sacred duty to inspire all Jewish children with a love and awe of God.

On a deeper level, there is actually a profound idea "hidden" behind the masks we wear on Purim. Our masquerading commemorates the fact that the miracle of Purim was not blatant, but rather hidden and masqueraded in natural events. Purim wasn't like the miracle of Chanukah, where a supernatural thing happened – a small cruse of oil lasted for eight days. Nobody would mistake that for a natural occurrence.

But on Purim, nothing wacky took place. Esther became queen, she had access to the king, Mordechai happened to overhear the plot of the two guys who wanted to kill the king, he went to her, etc. All these events could be misinterpreted as natural events, "coincidence," if you will. Of course, they were all orchestrated by God to save the Jews – but it wasn't in your face. He was working things out behind the scenes.

Queen Esther's role in the story of Purim also highlights this idea of "hidden," while showing the incredible power and strength of the Jewish woman. Even the name Esther comes from the Hebrew word *hester*, which means hidden. She was reserved, modest, quiet and humble, but she was the true heroine in this story. It was she who put the plan in motion and who influenced the king to annul Haman's decree to annihilate the Jewish people. By keeping her identity hidden until the perfect time to reveal herself, Esther saved the Jewish People.

Purim is the story of all mankind and, more specifically, the story of the Jewish nation. History repeats itself, and we must therefore take a lesson from the past as a means of dealing with the present. We must learn from Mordechai that the way to destroy the "Hamans" of today and bring light and joy to our people is by gathering the Jewish children and teaching them Torah and the eternal values of our people.

Rabbi Yisroel Bernath is the spiritual director of the Rohr Chabad NDG & Loyola Campus, associate chaplain at Concordia University and founder of JMontreal.com.

Tikkun olam soars

From the Reut Institute
Michal Kabatznik

The concept of tikkun olam (repairing the world) has been one of the foundations of Judaism since the days of the Mishnah. We are taught that it is our responsibility to look out for those less fortunate than us in our communities and around the world.

Jewish communities worldwide operate service projects in their communities, while, at the same time, international Jewish organizations operate in poor and developing countries in an effort to improve the world's most impoverished populations.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel, the government has taken its tikkun olam responsibilities very seriously. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Agency for International Development Co-operation, MASHAV, works to co-ordinate and implement the country's development programs. Since the 1950s, Israel has operated programs and provided training in more than 132 countries, and many Israeli technologies, including water and agriculture innovations, have been implemented in developing nations through MASHAV.

In addition to the government's work, many Israeli non-governmental humanitarian and development organizations operate around the world in the aftermath of natural disasters. Groups like IsraAID set up aid operations in Haiti and Japan to help rehabilitate those countries after the devastating earthquakes. In the years since the natural disasters, the organizations have shifted from post-disaster aid to development work that's helping to change the country from the ground up.

On the global level, the United Nations launched the Millennium Goals in 2000 and created a blueprint that has set the tone for the improvement of conditions for the world's most underprivileged populations. The eight millennium goals cover a wide array of topics from extreme poverty (individuals who live on less than $1.25 a day) to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015. Following the tone of the UN's goals, aid organizations, non-profit groups, and governments from developed nations around the world have turned their attention to the least fortunate and begun to focus on these nations.

Beyond governments and non-profits, businesses and corporations around the world are also turning their attention to the developing world. New ways of thinking are paving the way for the developing world to have access to products adapted to their unique circumstances and available at relevant price points.

By approaching the populations of the developing world as new consumers, companies around the world are designing products and solutions aimed at consumers in these countries, a step that ensures revenue while, at the same time, improving the lives of millions living in extreme poverty.

In Israel, groups like IsraelDev are working to harness the ingenuity of the startup nation by encouraging Israeli companies and entrepreneurs to focus on and work with the developing world.

In the global interconnected world we live in today, more attention than ever before is being paid to the most underprivileged populations by governments, non-profit organizations and businesses. By working across industries toward a shared goal, we have a real chance to improve the lives of the world's poorest populations, to truly make an impact that will embody tikkun olam.

Weights or wings?

From the Bimah
Rabbi Joe Kanofsky

A phrase that always irks me is "the constraints of Halachah." It appears in writing and in public presentations given by rabbis and teachers in North America and in Israel, and whenever I hear it (OK, I may be a little thin-skinned), I feel that it tells me all I need to know about the attitudes of the speaker or writer.

Whether talking about innovations in prayer or other areas of Jewish life, the speakers will try to have it both ways –modern and traditional – by saying they are doing all they can, or as much as can be hoped for "within the constraints of Halachah." (To me, use of the phrase usually indicates someone who is pushing the envelope just *beyond* the parameters of halachic norms, but that's just my as-yet untested theory.)

The use of this phrase gets under my skin so much because the not-too-subtle subtext is that Jewish law and tradition are a confining and limiting set of rules and regulations which effectively hold us back from self-fulfilment and realization of our best selves. This is a tremendous error in perspective.

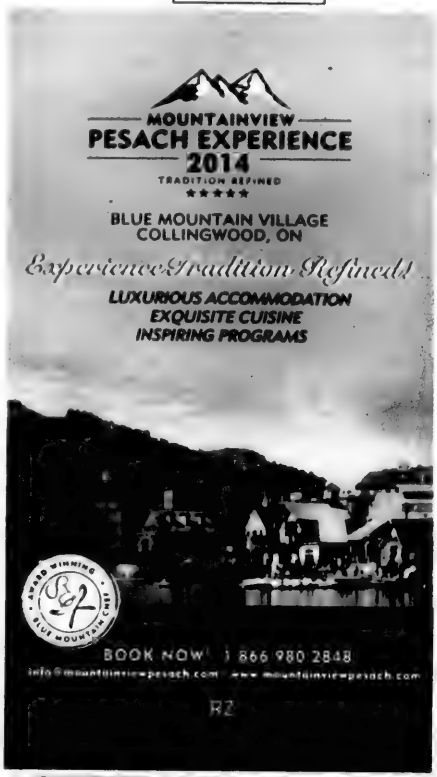
Imagine a musician in the Toronto Symphony Orchestra feeling "constrained" by the notes of Mozart or Beethoven. Imagine a pharmacist "constrained" by the rules, regulations and standards of the Ontario College of Pharmacists, or by what he or she learned in the course of professional training. The standards, guidelines and "canonical" texts of those fields are not "constraints" at all, but rather the template against which the craft is practised, out of which excellent and completeness grow.

Jewish law and custom are not "constraints" that hold us back from doing what we want to do; they are the warp and weft of the tapestry of our lives, the notes of the music we make with our daily existence, the tools and the techniques for elevating the mundane to the holy.

When I hear how people struggle against the "constraints of Halachah," I imagine (Purim Torah alert!) that we, as a community, would have something like that of the Amish of Lancaster County, Penn., my hometown, who release their teenagers from community norms and standards for a period of time, called *rumspringa*, to allow them to walk on the wild side and decide on their own whether to return to the community and accept its norms and customs for life. Some 95 per cent of teens do accept it and return, even though they have tasted life outside the community. (I'd hope we'd call it "*frumspringa*.")

Framing the depth and majesty of Torah as an onerous burden is really a self-fulfilling prophecy. I would rather see it as 613 opportunities to connect to the Divine, to maximize the potential for holiness in whatever situation I encounter. Grander than any musical composition, more life-giving than any medicine, Torah opens doors onto palaces for us. It invites us to grow even as it challenges us.

When we find a disconnect between Torah and our values or habits, let's see it as a moment of humility and growth, rather than a confining straitjacket. Rather than weights around our ankles, let us rather see mitzvot as the wings and the wind at our back.



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Jewish MP in Ukraine addresses issue while in Jerusalem

Israel's silence on Crimea slammed

Raphael Ahren
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israel isn't doing enough in word or deed to help the Jewish residents of Ukraine during the current crisis occurring in their country, a Ukrainian member of parliament and senior member of the local community charged Sunday in Jerusalem.

"We did expect a clearer stance on everything that's going on. There are 400,000 Jewish citizens in Ukraine, and we did expect a little bit more of Israel," said Oleksandr Feldman, a lawmaker in Kiev since 2002.

"I'm a bit disappointed by [Foreign Minister Avigdor] Liberman," he added, referring to a rather toothless statement the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem released March 5, reportedly after American pressure.

"Israel is following with great concern the events in Ukraine, is anxious for peace for all its citizens, and hopes that the situation will not escalate to a loss of human life. Israel hopes the crisis in Ukraine will be handled through diplomatic means and will be resolved peacefully," the ministry's statement read in full.

Feldman, a member of the centrist Party of Regions since 2011, said that no meetings with senior government officials have been arranged for him during his present visit to Israel. During his last trip to Israel, about two months ago, he met with Liberman and Deputy Foreign Minister Ze'ev Elkin, he said, and "appealed to the Israeli government to take a clear stance on what's happening in the Ukraine."

At the time, pro-European demonstrators were taking to the streets across Ukraine, protesting the government's decision to forgo rapprochement with the European Union in favour of closer ties with Moscow. Russian troops had not yet invaded the Crimean peninsula.

Oleksandr Feldman
[Flash90 photo]

Eduard Dolinsky, director general of the Kiev-based Ukrainian Jewish Committee, who was accompanying Feldman on his Israel trip, also criticized the government for its bland statement regarding the present standoff between Ukraine and Russia.

"As the Jewish community of Ukraine, we are very frustrated by the reaction of the Israeli government on the current crisis," Dolinsky said at a press conference with Feldman, organized by the Jerusalem Press Club.

"It is so soft that I didn't even understand what they are talking about. This is such diplomatic language, it is simply disappearing in words." He urged the Israeli government to issue a "clear statement of support for people who are struggling for their freedom, strong support for a country that is struggling for its sovereignty and independence."

The kippah-wearing Feldman, who has served as the Ukrainian Jewish Committee's president since 2008, said the Israeli government "could do much, much more" to assist Ukrainian Jewry and to fight anti-Semitism. For instance, he said, nine Ukrainian citizens who were injured during the violent protests in Kiev's Maidan Square had been flown to Israel for medical treatment but had not received any additional financial support.

"It is not a lot of money. Israel could afford to make a humanitarian act out of that," said Feldman, speaking in Russian through an interpreter.

"People from all parts of Ukraine asked us, shall we stay [in Ukraine] or shall we [leave, for fear of violence], and all these questions could have been prevented if Israel had taken a clear stance on what's happening in Ukraine," Feldman said. "Everything we do in Ukraine we always present as a joint venture with Israel."

Dolinsky said that so far, the Jewish Agency has only provided $5,000 to the Jewish communities of the Crimea region "to help with security." But a few weeks ago, during the Ukrainian Jewish Committee's last visit to Israel, it had asked the Israeli government to send to Ukraine a team of Israeli security professionals, which would "inspect the situation, with the community infrastructure — first of all synagogues and Jewish schools — and come up with a plan what we can do about security," he said. "This request has not yet been implemented," he said.

TimesofIsrael.com

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Group sets up stand before International Women's Day

Women of the Wall take on tfillin

Ben Sales
JTA

TEL AVIV — They were standing in a public square in a major Israeli city, helping women lay tfillin amid shouts of protest and quizzical looks from nearby men in black hats.

It's become an occasional morning routine for Women of the Wall. Except this time, they weren't at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. They were at the entrance to Shuk Hacarmel, the boisterous central market in Tel Aviv.

The women's prayer group achieved something of a coup this year when a district court legalized their monthly services at the Western Wall, effectively ending years of periodic arrests and detentions of its members.

Women of the Wall isn't allowed to bring a Torah into the Kotel's women's section, and it's still negotiating with the government over the expansion of a pluralistic prayer site at the Robinson's Arch section of the wall. But the court ruling and ensuing police protection have allowed the group to pray in relative peace in recent months, without fear of prison or counter-protest.

So, in advance of International Women's Day on March 8, the group came to Tel Aviv the morning of March 7 and set up a small stand at Star of David Square, so named because crowded, noisy streets shoot out of it in six directions.

Then they started asking women if they wanted to put on tallit and tfillin. Most ignored the offer or politely refused, but a handful said yes to one or the other, repeating the blessing word for word along with a Women of the Wall member.

Men who walk through the square get the same offer every day from Chabad Chassidim. But when the women started wrapping willing passersby in a tallit, though, it elicited an outcry. U.S. Orthodox day schools such as SAR Academy and Ramaz in New York may allow women to don prayer shawls and leather straps, but at least some Israelis apparently think the same behaviour should not take place in the streets of Tel Aviv.

A crowd formed as one young man in a white shirt and large, black, knit kippah began to scream.

"Really? What else do you want to do? Have a circumcision?" he yelled before two friends pulled him away. "Maybe you'll do that one day."

By the time the women were ready to close up, the Chabad tables had opened, flanking Women of the Wall's booth on either side. Each side, for the most part, left the other alone, but perhaps the Chabadniks were a bit jealous. Never in recent memory had a tfillin table in central Tel Aviv gotten so much attention.

An Israeli soldier wears a prayer shawl while carrying her weapon as she dances together with Women of the Wall at the Western Wall on March 3. *[Flash90 photo]*

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For Lou Wasser, it was his appetite—for both food and life—that brought him to Kensington Place. After losing his wife, Lou found cooking for himself a challenge and wasn't eating well as a result. The fact that Kensington Place offered Kosher dining attracted Lou. Add to this the friends he's made and Shabbat services which make Lou feel like *"I am part of a Kensington Place family"* and he was sold. Kensington Place satisfies Lou's appetites in every way. *"Now I don't stress about making my meals; I can focus on making new friends and participating in all of the activities."*

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Autism specialists meet in Jerusalem

Jennifer Tzivia MacLeod
Special to the CJN

JERUSALEM — Researchers and others involved with autism found many commonalities at the three-day Canada-Israel Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Symposium this month at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem while addressing challenges such as geography, ethnicity and autism as a lifelong condition.

The three-day symposium, from March 2 to 4, was sponsored by organizations from both countries: Hebrew U along with its Institutes for Advanced Studies (IAS) and Medical Research Israel-Canada (IMRIC), Canadian Friends of Hebrew University (CFHU), the Ontario Brain Institute and NeuroDevNet, a Canadian network of Centres of Excellence.

It was a long time in the making, according to Toronto mother Connie Putterman, one of four organizers. Putterman and her husband, David Golden, among the few lay participants, were drawn into the complex world of autism research in 2000, when their 17-month-old son Ely was diagnosed with autism.

With little information available to parents at the time, Putterman said, clinical research projects gave them access to "the best minds" but also let them participate in the process, continually re-evaluating their son. "It was a big teaching tool… to be more observant, to describe our observations and articulate them."

Putterman, a member of CFHU's Toronto chapter, told *The CJN* how meaningful the symposium was to her. "Growing up as a Diaspora Jew… I'd dream about Israel and its survival." Supporting Israel is not only about giving money but "about building relationships… teaching each other about the best ways of doing things." While in Israel, Putterman and Golden took a day off to run the Tel Aviv half-marathon to raise funds and awareness for autism research.

The first two days of the symposium were open to professionals only, with presentations on genetics, prenatal development, diagnosis and epidemiology. Canadian organizations from coast to coast were represented, including Toronto's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), the Hospital for Sick Children, McGill University, the University of Manitoba, the University of British Columbia, Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto, and Queen's University.

On its final day, the symposium was opened to the public, and its focus shifted to explore the effects of autism on families and communities, including sessions on early diagnosis, services in Israel and Canada, and new treatments.

The day began with a talk by Lihi Lapid, wife of Israeli Finance Minister Yair Lapid and the mother of a 17-year-old girl with autism.

At first, Lapid said, she thought her daughter had a hearing problem. "They realize there's a problem. They give us an appointment for another checkup… I realize it's maybe not only the ears. I pray, 'Please give me a deaf child.' All the other possibilities, I realize, are much worse."

Lonnie Zweigenbaum and Connie Putterman, are running the Tel Aviv half-marathon for autism awareness and research.

Lapid acknowledged the importance of research and medical treatment, but said she herself was now focused on finding balance and happiness within her own family, a theme also addressed by Putterman, who said, "Hold on to those high expectations… If you keep raising them, they'll keep meeting them… Your child will rise to them in their own way, whatever their capacity is."

Presentations explored accomplishments and challenges in both countries.

"We've come a long way, but there's still a lot of gaps," said Wendy Roberts of Sick Kids in Toronto.

In Ontario, services for children with autism are often provided in "blocks" of six to eight weeks, followed by months of no treatment. Regular, consistent treatment would probably result in better outcomes for children and families.

Several participants spoke about dealing with autism throughout an individual's entire lifespan. Roberts told *The CJN* that despite some negative developments in Canada – like Ontario's denial of services to autistic adults with normal IQs – she's hopeful that things will change soon.

Last week, the federal government allocated $20 million toward autism, of which Roberts hopes much will go toward helping autistic adults transition from school to university and later into meaningful, paid employment. "We need to get a whole lot better at developing those services."

The biggest issue in diagnosis and treatment is probably money, despite the fact that autism may be disproportionately well funded compared to other conditions. Conference chair Asher Ornoy of Hebrew U said Israel may spend more than $500,000 for a child diagnosed with autism before the age of 18, compared to under $300,000 for kids with other neurological disorders.

Offering services outside of major centres is a problem for both countries. In Canada, given geographical distances, rural family doctors may not see many patients with autism or be up to date on the latest research and options. Israel, too, has fewer services available outside major cities, Ornoy said.

In some provinces, Roberts said, parents with an autistic child are given money annually to spend on services of their choice. This has spawned an industry of "people getting into the money-making business," including unethical service providers who may not be backed by a professional college.

Finally, ethnic diversity remains a hurdle, said co-organizer Lonnie Zwaigenbaum of the University of Alberta, who also ran the Tel Aviv half-marathon with Putterman and Golden.

Among native Canadians, for example and among Arabs in Israel, diagnosis and treatment may lag far behind. "It's a challenge to come up with culturally sensitive diagnostic measures and therapies."

In his wrap-up session, Zwaigenbaum said he was thrilled that participants had discovered "a real sense of the commonalities," and also by the emergence of "natural partnerships" between Canadians and Israelis working in similar areas.

Both countries are clearly moving in the right direction. As Zwaigenbaum told *The CJN*, "It's not just about treating the symptoms of a disorder… it's about helping an individual and their family find dignity and be part of society."

Israel will not evacuate settlements: Netanyahu

JTA

JERUSALEM — The Israeli government won't evacuate West Bank settlers from their homes in a peace deal with the Palestinians, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu said some West Bank Jewish settlements will remain outside of Israel's permanent borders under a peace agreement, but he won't force Jews to leave their homes.

"There won't be an evacuation. I don't intend to do this. I've said this," Netanyahu told Israel's Channel 2 on Friday night in his first interview with the Hebrew-speaking media in more than a year.

The Israeli leader said he would provide security to any Israelis living outside of the nation's borders.

Netanyahu said that under any peace agreement, the Palestinians would have to recognize Israel as a Jewish state. He said he did not believe the Palestinians were ready to sign a peace agreement.

Benjamin Netanyahu

"First let's see if they are even willing to negotiate. From what I see, they are very far from this," he said.

"They think they can continue with their acts of refusal – to go with demands to the United Nations and to distance themselves from the question of what their concessions are, how will they recognize a Jewish state."

He called his meeting last week in Washington with U.S. President Barack Obama "positive."

Obama is scheduled to meet with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas next week.

Abbas told youth activists of his Fatah party March 7 that there is "no way" he will recognize Israel as a Jewish state, the Palestinian news agency *Wafa* reported.

Cooking school delivers family friendly recipes

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

As both an accomplished chef and busy mother of three, Carolyn Tanner-Cohen, owner of Delicious Dish Cooking School, incorporates her passion for family home cooking with healthy foods, along with nutritionally balanced cuisine.

Founded by Tanner-Cohen in 2002, Delicious Dish Cooking School offers lessons at her kitchen studio, and hosts private groups and one-on-one in-home culinary lessons.

Delicious Dish integrates both kosher and gluten-free options, and presents recipes and menu ideas for celebrating Jewish holidays.

"My maternal grandmother, who is 93, and all the women in my family are superb cooks. Each Passover, there would be a competition for the best honey cake, best Passover nut cake and best Passover gefilte fish," said Tanner-Cohen.

Delicious Dish shares a favourite kosher for Passover recipe with *The CJN*.

MIXED BEETS WITH MAROR VINAIGRETTE AND CHOPPED PISTACHIOS

1 bunch yellow beets
1 bunch red beets
1 heaping tbsp. chopped fresh flat leaf parsley
1 heaping tbsp. chopped fresh mint
1 heaping tbsp. chopped fresh chives
1/4 cup shelled pistachio nuts (roasted optional) coarsely chopped
small piece fresh horseradish, peeled
cracked black pepper
coarse sea salt for sprinkling
1 tbsp. prepared white horseradish
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tbsp. finely chopped shallots
1 tbsp. honey
2 tbsp. white wine vinegar
4 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

Remove beets from the greens. Place unpeeled beets in a pot covered in cold water (cook the two different colour beets separately), bring to a boil, reduce the heat to a simmer and cook covered until the beets are fork tender. This can take 35-40 minutes. When cool enough to handle, peel (the skins will slip off). Cut each beet in half and then cut into 1/2-in. wedges. Set aside, keeping colours separate.

Make the dressing by combining the horseradish, garlic, shallots, honey, vinegar and olive oil. Can be done by hand, or in a blender or mini food processor. Set aside. (This step can be done several days ahead.)

Keeping the beets in separate bowls, toss with a few tbsp. of dressing.

Assemble the salad on the platter. Arrange both colour dressed beets on platter, sprinkle with herbs (parsley, mint and chives), sprinkle the pistachios around. Using a vegetable peeler, shave some fresh horseradish and then cut into thin strips. Sprinkle fresh horseradish pieces on the salad. Spoon more dressing over and around the salad, sprinkle freshly ground pepper and coarse sea salt.

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Company helps adults with ADHD end the chaos

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Do any of these symptoms apply to you?

You find that your life is chaotic, unmanageable. You are easily sidetracked from the task you started on. You flit from job to job. You can't follow through on a project.

If so, chances are you're part of a fairly substantial segment of the population who have been diagnosed with ADHD, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder.

Often associated with children who face learning challenges at school, adults experience the condition as well. Shanna Pearson, who was diagnosed with the disorder eight years ago, started a business one year later to help people cope with the condition.

Called One Focus Total Success, Pearson's company provides coaching assistance to people who want to get their lives under control. It does so by having its coaches direct clients to focus on one specific task at a time. With a coach on the phone, the chance of an ADHD sufferer procrastinating or getting sidetracked is reduced and the coach can verify through a number of means that the client is following through on the advice, she said.

Shanna Pearson

The advice is tailored to meet the needs of each client, Pearson continued. If a person is hamstrung by a messy, disorganized desk, the coach will give specific instructions on getting it cleaned up – not later, right now. Instructions will be given and the client is expected to photograph the desk, before and after, and email the images to the coach while they're still on the line.

That way, the client stays on task and implements the very practical advice they receive. "That's what we do that people love us for," she said.

If cleaning a garage is a problem, the instructor helps create a system for storing, and monitors its implementation. It could be storing like objects together, or perhaps – especially for women – keeping things together that share the same colour.

"The system has to be easy for the client to implement. Everything is simplicity," Pearson said.

For people with ADHD, getting organized can be a problem, Pearson continued. Prioritizing is an important element in that clients are advised to schedule their most important tasks at the time of the day they're most productive; save less important jobs, like checking email, for less productive times of the day, she advises.

"We're teaching them how to create a system and to implement the system," she explained.

Clients are billed at a rate of $99-$149 per week. They receive one coaching session per week, along with a follow-up text message or email.

Most clients stay with One Focus for six months. They pay by the month, and they're able to cancel at any time.

Coaches, who are mostly based in the United States, receive one-third of the fee. Of the company's 22 coaches, only one is from the Toronto area.

At any current time, One Focus has more than 400 clients and that number is doubling every year, Pearson said.

Surprisingly, only a small percentage of clients are Canadian. Like the coaches, many are American, but One Focus has clients across the world.

"The hardest part of the business is hiring people," Pearson said. "These people have to be the best coaches on the planet. They need to be motivational, quite good at prioritization and they have to go deep into people, who've been living lives with ADHD."

Coaches have to really understand their clients, who often "have issues of commitment. A lot get overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task and they become paralyzed and go do something else."

Most of her staff are counsellors, psychologists, social workers or teachers. Surprisingly, she's had no success recruiting personnel from a U.S. school that specifically trains ADHD counsellors.

Those people follow a different model in which the coach listens to the client and tries to get them to come up with a solution to their problems.

"We stimulate their brains. [Clients] learn by doing, not by talking," she said.

Given her personal history, Pearson understands the challenges people with ADHD face. She worked for years for a number of non-profits in the Jewish community, but kept on leaving after a relatively short time.

She also worked for the Ministry of Health Promotions, designing large health wellness programs for career counsellors.

Nevertheless, she found that her life was chaotic and tumultuous, and she wasn't meeting her career and relationship goals. "I was very quick and ambitious, but I was not able to follow through," she said.

Over time, "I created a system for myself and found that it's the basis of all our coaching."

Completely self-taught, Pearson designed the One Focus program based on what worked for her.

It seems to be working for others as well. The company is so busy, she is currently hiring three new coaches. And she no longer has time to do any coaching herself.

She's delegated that task and set her priorities. Looks like that part of her business life is firmly under control.

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El Al frequent flyers aid three charities

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

El Al Israel Airlines, the official carrier of Taglit-Birthright, last month donated enough frequent flyer points to the organization to enable 125 young people to fly to Israel.

The airline, which has carried more than 50,000 Birthright participants to Israel over the years, supports Taglit-Birthright along with The Lone Soldier program and Make-A-Wish Israel.

Birthright is an international program that brings young people between the ages of 18 and 26 to Israel for a 10-day trip that aims at strengthening the bonds between Israel and Diaspora Jews.

Under El Al's GlobaLY program, the airline donates five per cent of the Matmid points accumulated by its registered frequent flyers, said Laura Parski, office administrator at El Al's office in Canada.

That subsidizes the airfare costs of the three charitable organizations, she added.

The points can also be exchanged for El Al tickets to fly lone soldiers abroad to visit their families or to fulfil the wishes of children with life-threatening illnesses.

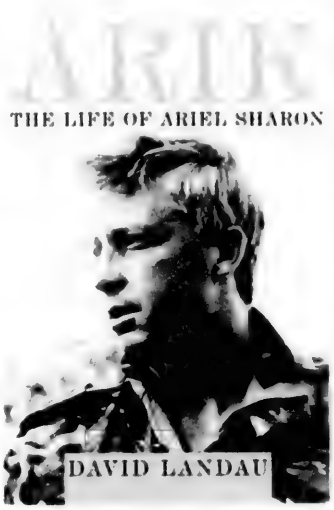
Anyone who wants to become a Matmid frequent flyer/GlobaLY member and have El Al donate points to the charities is asked to register on the El Al USA Facebook page.

Matmid members can contribute additional points from their personal accounts, in addition to the amount donated by El Al.

A superb recounting of Ariel Sharon's life

Arik: The Life of Ariel Sharon
David Landau
Alfred A. Knopf

Reviewed by Mordechai Ben-Dat



Few are the modern men who can be said to have been Shakespearean in their nature, their ways, their work and their legacy. The term, however, would apply to Ariel Sharon.

Revered as a hero, reviled as a villain, militarily skilled, militarily reckless, compassionate, brutish, a careful tactician, an uncaring bulldozer, a builder, a destroyer, an inspiring leader, a betrayer of promises, coarse, tender – all these descriptions and many more have been applied to Sharon, one of Israel's – and the Jewish people's – most compelling figures of modern times.

The famous general and prime minister died on Jan. 11. Even in illness, as in his life, Sharon confounded his friends and foes. He "fought" to stay alive for nearly eight years after he fell into a coma in January of 2006.

Thus it was a propitious coincidence of publishing that this biography by the Israeli journalist David Landau appeared just as Sharon's suffering was reaching its humane end.

Landau has written a highly informative work that chronicles the more than eight decades of Sharon's life. He paints a portrait of the grand figure with vast detail, paying meticulous attention to the myriad facts and opinions of the man that served as Landau's canvas. The result is a superb recounting of episodes and incidents – on the field where armies clashed or in the Knesset where politicians did battle – that leave one shaking one's head and catching one's breath. Needless to say, those battles were the very same struggles and profoundly affecting upheavals that have shaped the Jewish state.

Landau brings to his subject considerable experience as a writer and a visibly patent dedication to his craft. He has a law degree as well as a yeshiva education and has been writing for more than four decades after starting with the *Jerusalem Post* in 1970. Since then, he was the founding editor of the English edition of *Ha'aretz* and then the newspaper's editor-in-chief from 2004-2008. He still serves today as correspondent for *The Economist*. Landau has collaborated with Shimon Peres on his memoir, *Battling for Peace*, and on the book *Ben-Gurion: A Political Life*.

At the outset, Landau makes plain his left-leaning ideological orientation. It is the lens through which he views, assesses and explains the Israeli government's policies toward the Palestinians, especially the frequently vaudevillian but always woebegone process of discussions, negotiations, cold shoulders, warm embraces, polemics, posturing, debating and hectoring that we have euphemistically called the peace process.

For example, in the introductory pages, Landau refers to the return of the Jews to parts of the West Bank after the Six Day War as "Israel's misguided colonization of Palestinian territory." He deliberately chooses a loaded and pejorative term to ensure the reader knows precisely where he stands on the issue of the "settlements." Frequently, however, he sacrifices nuance and accuracy to make the more stinging political point compelled by his conscience.

There is no doubt that the Jewish settlements have become the sharply sharded scythe slicing away at Israel's standing, even among its friends, but Landau's blanket condemnation is excessive and unfair.

Setting aside for the moment the demographic, political, practical, ethical and moral concerns regarding Jewish communities in the heart of the West Bank, were Israelis not justified to return to the Old City of Jerusalem from which they were evicted? Were they not justified in returning to the hilltop south of Jerusalem that had been Kfar Etzion until 1948?

These questions are not merely rhetorical. They cut to the core of the century-old heartache that is the Israeli-Arab conflict: the rejection by the Arab League and the local Arab leadership of the right of Jews, as well, to be sovereign in the Middle East. However painful it might have been for them, the Jews did not reject the Arab right to sovereignty. The Jews did not launch a war against the local Arabs. The Arab League and the local Arab leaders launched a war of genocide against the Jews and their nascent state. Too often, Landau diminishes or evades the responsibility of the Palestinian leadership for the predicament of their people.

And yet, despite Landau's up-front political stance, the book is a praiseworthy achievement. At 635 pages, nearly 100 of which are original source documents, footnotes and index, it is massively researched, superbly organized and heavy with information.

As both praise for Sharon and lamentation for his country, Landau tells us why he undertook to write this biography.

"What he began during the dramatic years of his prime ministership (2001-2006), contradicting a lifetime of military extremism and political obduracy, entitles him…to a place of honour in Israel's annals. … When he was elected prime minister, many proud and patriotic Israelis talked seriously of leaving the country. His accession to power was the stuff of nightmares. The future seemed to hold only war and bloodshed. When he collapsed, less than five years later, we wept. Not just for him: for ourselves."

In one of his last addresses to the Knesset during the debate on the Gaza withdrawal, his heart crying, the bold, enigmatic prime minister explained what he had come to believe was the best way to protect his beloved Israel.

"This decision is unbearably hard for me. In all my years as a military commander, as a politician, as a minister, and now as prime minister I have never had to take such a hard decision.

"I know full well what this decision means for the thousands of Israelis who have been living in the Gaza region for so many years …who built homes there and planted trees there and grew flowers and raised boys and girls who have known no other home. I know full well. I sent them…I feel their pain, their fury, their despair.

"But as deeply as I understand what they are going through, I believe in the need to take this decision for disengagement and I am determined as deeply to carry it out. I am convinced in the depths of my soul and with my entire intellect that this disengagement will strengthen Israel's hold on territory vital for its existence, will win the support and appreciation of countries near and far, will reduce enmity, will break down boycott and siege and will advance us on the path of peace with the Palestinian and our other neighbours."

Nearly a decade after Sharon spoke these words and made the fateful decision to unilaterally withdraw Israel from Gaza, the peace he so determinedly sought is no closer at hand.

Landau's book helps us better understand the man who was felled, alas, before he could walk the final way on that path of peace.

RABBIS IN CONVERSATION
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Rabbi John Moscowitz
Holy Blossom Temple
@ Beth Sholom Synagogue
Wednesday, March 12, 2014 - 7:30 pm
1445 Eglinton Avenue West Toronto, ON M6C 2E6
t: 416.783.6103 | f: 416.783.9923 | www.bethsholom.net | @bethsholomsyn

AMY SKY, AVIVA CHERNICK, NESHAMA CARLEBACH & THERESA TOVA HEADLINE CONCERT

Beth Sholom Synagogue presents the Kol Isha (Female Voice) Concert, a breast cancer awareness evening featuring leading female vocalists including **Amy Sky**, **Neshama Carlebach**, **Theresa Tova**, **Aviva Chernick** and cantors **Magda Fishman** (Los Angeles), **Arianne Brown** (Washington) and **Alisa Pomerantz** (New Jersey). Hosted by CTV medical correspondent **Dr. Marla Shapiro.** Free BRCA genetic kits available with admission. Beth Sholom Synagogue, 1445 Eglinton Ave. W. March 27, 7:30 p.m. 416-783-6103, ext. 228 or www.thefemalevoice.net

• • •

Koffler on Stage: *Benedictus* is a riveting political thriller by **Motti Lerner** that focuses on events before an American attack on the nuclear facilities of Iran. The Koffler Centre of the Arts presents Volcano Theatre's staged reading of the play starring **Levon Haftvan**, **Richard Greenblatt**, **George Masswohl** and **Michael Rubenfeld**; directed by **Ross Manson**. Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St. Thursday March 20, 7:30 p.m. Free but registration required. www.kofflerarts.org

• • •

Koffler Music: Koffler Chamber Orchestra under the direction of conductor-violinist **Jacques Israelievitch** performs *From Europe to Israel*, featuring works by **Julius Chajes**, **Dmitri Shostakovich**, **Odon Partos** and **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**. Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd. Sunday March 23, 3 p.m. General $20, students $15 (advance) or $25 and $20 at the door. 647-925-0643, ext. 229.

• • •

Two Takes on Sondheim: Tarragon Theatre's production of *Marry Me A Little* featuring rare songs by **Stephen Sondheim** runs to April 6 in Tarragon's Mainspace, 30 Bridgman Ave. This "revusical" presents a bittersweet love story told entirely through songs written early in Sondheim's career or cut from his Broadway musicals. $21 to $33. 416-531-1827, www.tarragontheatre.com

Alex Samaras and **Sophia Perlman**, whose most recent album is *A Sondheim Jazz Project*, perform the songs of Sondheim. Hugh's Room, 2261 Dundas St. W. Tuesday March 18. www.hughsroom.com or jazz.fm

• • •

Two Yiddish Lectures: UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish presents two lectures in Yiddish by **Dr. Miriam Trinh**, Polish-born Israeli authority in Yiddish literature. "The Life and Work of Avrom Sutskever" is on Sunday April 6, 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St. "Poetry from the Ghettos and Concentration Camps" is on Monday April 7, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor. Free admission, everyone welcome. 416-635-2883, ext. 5189.

• • •

Names in the News: Retired engineer and author **Vladimir Rott** is to receive an award from Hungary's minister of culture and that country's ambassador on March 18 for his contribution to Hungarian culture. Born in the Soviet Union to a family of Hungarian immigrants some seven decades ago, Rott defected to Toronto in 1974 and eventually brought over his wife and family. He has written several books about his experience and, as was reported in *The CJN* last October, is in the midst of restoring an old Jewish cemetery in Siberia.

• • •

Jews in Film: The Beth Tzedec Max and Beatrice Wolfe Library presents a series of four Wednesday-afternoon lectures on "The Image of Jews in Film". On March 19 and 26 the topic is "The Exciting and Provocative Cinema of Israel"; film clips, short movies and discussion provide a window into the lives of Israeli immigrants and sabras, the religious divide, Arabs, straight and gays. On April 2 and 9, a look at "International Jewish Cinema" offers an examination of how Jewish issues, societies and conflicts are portrayed in films from Europe, South America and other parts of the world. Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst St. Wednesdays, dessert 1:30 p.m., lecture 2 p.m. $20 for four sessions or $10 at the door. Registration, 416-781-3514, ext. 225 or 416-781-3511.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• The Polish Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada presents *The Rite of Return: Canadian-Jewish Artists and Contemporary Poland*, works by photographer **David Kaufman** and a round-table discussion with Kaufman, filmmaker **Francine Zuckerman**, theatre artist **Michael Rubenfeld** and curator-producer **Evelyn Tauben**. Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst St. Wednesday, March 12, 7 to 9 p.m. Exhibition tours start 7 and 7:15 p.m. $10, PJHF members $8; reception.

• Movie maven **Shlomo Schwartzberg** continues his series of lectures with film clips on director **Steven Spielberg** with a look at *Saving Private Ryan*, *Schindler's List*, *E.T.* and *War Horse*. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday March 17, 7 to 9 p.m. Drop-in $11.25, students $6.

• Active 55+ presents "Opera Appreciation: Viva Puccini!" featuring opera educator **Iain Scott**. Three-part series runs Tuesdays March 18, March 25 and April 1 at 1:30 p.m. Miles Nadal JCC. Series $36, drop-in $14. 416-924-6211.

• Silversmith **Zahava Lambert** discusses "Judaica Through the Ages", a tour through the rich history of Jewish artifacts and ritual objects used in home and synagogue. Miles Nadal JCC, Active 55+, Thursday March 20, 2 p.m. (doors open 1:30 p.m.) Drop-in $4. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

A clean look at the city of sin

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

Take kids to Las Vegas and there's no question, you have to work a little harder to keep them away from lewdness, profanity and the vulgarity for which Sin City has earned its reputation. But there's plenty of great activities for children along the strip and beyond, and a selection of shows and unique experiences that together can compose a memorable, fun family weekend.

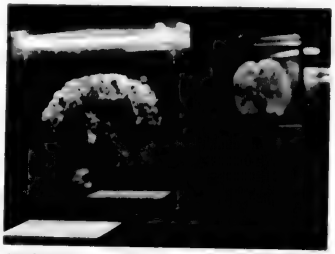
Drawing with the Dolphins

The bottlenose dolphins at the Mirage Resort have no qualms about inscribing their artwork on canvas and gladly wrap their mouths around a paintbrush in exchange for fish. The resort offers a "painting with dolphins" activity where guests get close to the mammals, help direct their leaps and dives and come away with a canvas on which the dolphins have inscribed their unique signatures. Later, in a behind-the-scenes VIP tour of the dolphin habitat, guests are guided through the dolphins' kitchen and their healthcare room, where their daily vitamins are housed and later concealed inside fish.

"If we taught them to swallow pills, they'd swallow other small things that landed in their pools," explains Andi Leff, a dolphin educator. www.mirage.com

Sharks on the Strip

The Shark Reef Aquarium at Mandalay Bay is a phenomenal facility where the sharks swim in domed tanks around and above visitors, taking centre stage. But the many other salt and freshwater species are given great exposure, too, including crocodiles, piranhas, swordfish, jellyfish and more. Far from pure entertainment, the aquarium delivers an amazing educational experience about the ocean and its pollution by humans, as well as on fishing and sustainability. Educators positioned throughout engage children and help convey information in a fun way, while the touch pool gives kids an opportunity to feel the contours of manta rays that flap happily to the periphery and are thrilled to be petted. www.sharkreef.com



***Bodies* is one of two exhibits at the Luxor**

Luxor Highlights

Luxor is home to two permanent exhibits that sit side by side next to each other: *Titanic* and *Bodies*. The Titanic exhibit recreates the grandeur of the old sunken ship, exhibiting its silverware and crystal dishes, its beautiful staircase, its outdoor deck and some of the personal artifacts that were dredged up from the ocean floor. The exhibit also tries to recreate the final moments on the ship prior to its piercing by the iceberg. One of the final rooms houses a boulder-size block of ice to represent the iceberg. Most rooms contains photographs of the passengers on board, describing how they came to travel on the Titanic, what their destination was and where they were in their respective lives. Those pictures are powerful in humanizing the sinking and leave visitors with a better appreciation of some of the lives that met their end in the chilly Atlantic waters on a dark night in 1912.

The exhibit on *Bodies* can be a fascinating, empowering or difficult one for kids, depending on each one's individual psyche and ability to cope with the information and the actual bodies presented. Each body was once a live human being, preserved in such a way so as to highlight muscles, tendons, blood flow, organs, sexuality and health. Visitors are shown the difference between a healthy, pink-coloured lung and one blackened by years of smoking, while cancerous organs are also on display.

Arguably the most impactful room contains embryos and fetuses at various stages of in utero development, showing their growth from a pea-sized object into a fully formed infant. Some kids come away from the Bodies exhibit excited about what they've learned about the complexity of the human body while for others, like my daughter, the blackened lungs, cancerous organs and the knowledge she was staring at human corpses were downright freaky. Parental caution advised. wwwLuxor.com

AdventureDome at CircusCircus

Visit CircusCircus and you quickly start to appreciate the newer hotels on the strip. Make your way through this relic from the past and eventually you reach the AdventureDome, a large indoor playground with a rollercoaster and 24 other rides for kids age four and up. The dome is a warren of games, vendors, rides, mini-movies and activities, not all of them covered by the entrance fee ($27.95 for adults, $16.95 for kids). Try and time your departure to coincide with one of the free circus acts at the hotel, where individual performers demonstrate their talents. Be warned, the small viewing area fills up quickly. www.adventuredome.com

After Dark

Dancing with the Jabbawockeez: This all-male dance group delivers a high-energy, fun, entertaining performance filled with audience participation, humour, great music and skillful moves. Without a word being spoken, the boys in Jabbawockeez keep the show clean, lively and just the right length. www.luxor.com

Kings in Combat: Tournament of Kings is Vegas' entertainment at its most bizarre: A show set in medieval times that has kings on horseback competing with each other at breakneck speeds. The audience, divvied up to represent the various kingdoms, is encouraged to cheer their king in a full-velocity game that's like a fairytale come to life. The costumes are convincing, the actors never stop playing their parts and the chicken dinner delivered to each guest is consumed without a single piece of silverware. www.excalibur.com

The Human Circus: Cirque du Soleil's Mystere is showbiz at its finest – a combination of unique music, jaw-dropping acrobatic, balance and strength skills, dancing and lighthearted banter that's perfect for families. An ideal night out on the town, this is a show that captivates young and old, with an ingenious array of props, costumes and sets and a show that highlights creativity at its finest. www.treasureisland.com

Play chronicles events leading to Spinoza's expulsion

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Aris Athanasopoulos stars as Baruch de Spinoza in The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company's presentation of David Ives' courtroom drama *New Jerusalem, The Interrogation of Baruch De Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27 1656.*

The play is based on the actual interrogation and *cherem*, expulsion, of Spinoza, a young merchant and the heir apparent of Saul Mortera, the chief Rabbi of Amsterdam.

Although no written record exists of the interrogation on that fateful day, Ives succeeds in taking the audience back in time.

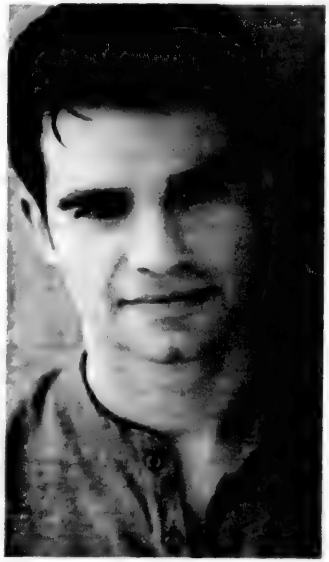
"Baruch was a 17th century philosopher of Portuguese descent," says Athanasopoulos. "The Inquisition in Spain and Portugal forced a lot of Sephardi Jews into Amsterdam. It was the only city in Europe at that time to allow them to live under certain provisions yet still be able to practise their religion somewhat freely and not be bothered.

"[Baruch] questioned a lot of things. He had the capacity and the intellect to come up with his own ideas. His questions included asking if God handed down the laws to Moses and if Moses actually heard them from God and wrote them down. The play is about whether to excommunicate him from the community or not."

Athanasopoulos says good theatre should ask questions but not always provide solutions. He hopes that people will talk about the play, debate the ideas and hopefully provoke some interesting thoughts and questions.

Athanasopoulos, who is Greek Orthodox, sees similarities in the Greek and Jewish communities. "I can definitely relate to this character because we come from very strong cultural backgrounds," the actor, who calls Toronto's Roncesvalles area home, says.

"There is a very strong diaspora of Greeks in Toronto and Mississauga, which is where I grew up. It is a very tight-knit community as well. Going to church on Sundays and to Greek school on Saturdays was something we did. My parents were very conscious and aware of losing their culture if they don't pass it on to their kids."



Aris Athanasopoulos

This is Athanasopoulos' first experience with the HGJTC. He is joined by actors Sascha Cole, James Graham, Michael Hanrahan, Amy Keating, Alon Nashman and HGJTC's co-artistic director David Eisner.

"The company has been wonderful, the group of actors are excellent and professional. Some of them have been working for a very long time and it shows. It has been a great experience for me."

Athanasopoulos' theatre credits include *This Is It Romeo and Juliet, The Railway Children, A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Finer Noble Gases*. He has also acted in the TV shows *The Strain, Rookie Blue, Change of Plans* and *The Firm*, and a Canadian/Irish feature film *Love, Rosie* starring Lily Collins.

New Jerusalem is directed by Mitchell Cushman, the founding co-artistic director of the Toronto-based company, Outside the March.

New Jerusalem runs from March 15 to April 13 at the Studio Theatre in the Toronto Center for the Arts. For tickets call 1-800-985-2787 or online at www.hgjewishtheatre.com or at the box office.

Purim books for kids

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

Kar-Ben Publishing has just released four new Purim titles geared to a spectrum of ages from infancy through age seven. All try to explain facets of the Purim story in different ways.

For infants and toddlers, the hardcover book *When It's Purim* by **Edie Stoltz Zolkower**, with illustrations by **Barb Björnson**, focuses entirely on the act of making hamantashen. Using a raccoon family as the main characters, it describes the tools you need to make these Purim treats and how to form them from the dough, and suggests sharing them with family, friends and teachers.

At the end of the eight-page book all the animal characters are holding greggers and are dressed in costume – but that's as close as we get to the Purim story in this tot-focused story.

Author **Tilda Balsley** aspires to tell the whole story of Purim in *The Queen Who Saved Her People*, a book beautifully illustrated by **Ilene Richard** and written entirely in rhyming couplets. For kids who want to act out the story, she suggests her book be performed as a theatre script with five parts, each of which has been thoughtfully written in a different colour so kids will easily recognize their part.

Balsley does a good job of covering all the bases of the Purim story in her book, which is best suited to children ages five through seven. At times, however, the rhymes feel a little forced. For instance, when King Achashverosh instructs his staff to search the land for potential brides, Balsley has him say they should come only after you have "Given them clean underwear/And treated them to free health care." Still, kids will enjoy play-acting *The Queen Who Saved Her People* and most of the time, the rhyming works just fine.

Sammy Spider's First Purim gives kids a glimpse of the Purim traditions from the eyes of a spider in the corner of a room, looking down on Josh and his family's preparations for Purim.

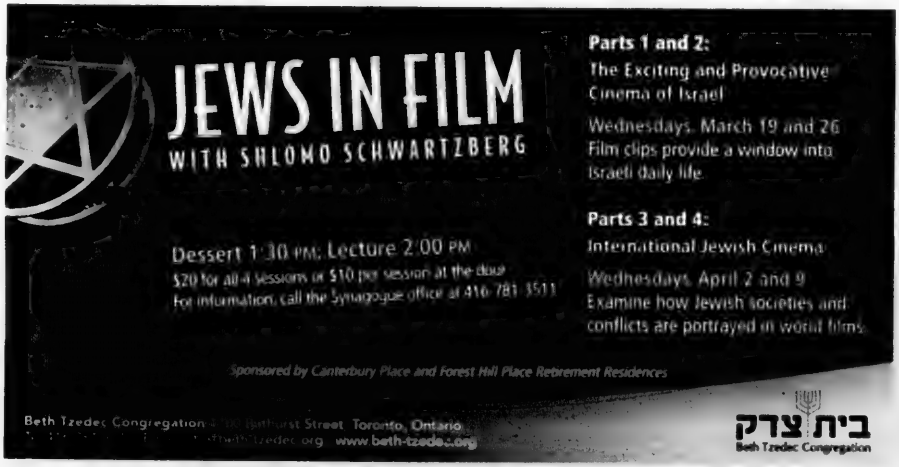
Sammy Spider asks his mother to interpret what's going on below and over the course of the book she explains how Josh is making a costume and gregger to take to synagogue that night, and how his mother is baking hamantashen.

Desperate to join in the fun, Sammy Spider has to be reminded that he's a spider and "spiders spin webs." When his curiosity gets the better of him he finds himself trapped inside the gregger and must call on his mother to rescue him. This is the 17th Sammy Spider book in the series and author **Sylvia A. Rouss** has partnered with illustrator **Katherine Janus Kahn** to deliver a quick, easy read with bright pictures and a mother-child dialogue that kids ages three through six will easily identify with.

Finally, in *Barnyard Purim*, **Kelly Terwilliger** describes a group of barnyard animals who, under the stage direction of Chicken, decide to put on their own Purim play.

Chicken assigns each of them a role and spends the rest of the book trying to assuage hurt feelings and distinguish between the role they are playing for the Purim play, and who they truly are. When a real fox creeps into the barnyard and hopes to eat Duck for his next meal, the animals are confused, thinking he is in costume. When they realize he's a real fox they spring into action to save Duck.

The story of Purim is a lively one with many characters – but by folding those characters into barnyard animals Terwilliger creates the potential for lots of confusion among her smaller readers. The illustrations by **Barbara Johansen Newman** are beautiful, though, and for those kids who understand the dynamics of the story, *Barnyard Purim* helps explain the differences between assuming an acting role and who you truly are beneath the costume.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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Brothers make suits that are Made2Measure

Netaniel Lichtenstein, left, and his brother Hillel will come to your home to fit you for a custom-made suit.

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Back when they were high school students at Yeshivat Or Chaim in Toronto, Netaniel and Hillel Lichtenstein were already known for their entrepreneurial skills.

If you wanted to buy a baseball cap, a polo shirt, last year's BlackBerry, or maybe get a cellphone unblocked, they were the guys to go to.

Things haven't changed much. The 23-year-old fraternal twins – Netaniel is three minutes older – are still doing business, cutting deals, satisfying customers. This time, however, it's not a sideline they run out of their lockers at recess. The two brothers are the principals behind Made2Measure, a full-service custom clothier they founded in 2007, which offers suits, shirts, slacks and jackets at competitive prices.

It's a full-time occupation for the boys, to which they bring their formidable personal skills. Hillel is the tech-savvy guy, the one who runs the business' back office operations, but who can still get out on the road and fit a client. Netaniel is the one with the gift of the gab, or, as his brother said, "he's good with his mouth. He knows how to work a sale."

They've divided up business operations, but some sibling rivalry may have crept into their business relations. "He's older by three minutes," quipped Hillel. "He'll never let me live it down. When I get to his age, I'll understand."

The brothers Lichtenstein, Netaniel left, and Hillel, right.

But they each bring something important to the venture. Last week, Netaniel was in New York on business. When asked what was the most difficult obstacle in selling custom suits to potential clients, he said his clients simply can't believe they can buy a high-quality suit made of fine wool from prestigious manufacturers, for the same price you'd pay for something off the rack.

"People say, 'Why are your products so cheap when you say it's so good?'" he recounted on the telephone from New York. "I have to convince them we're giving them that product at a much better price point" than the competition.

Hillel said Made2Measure's suits run between $500 and $600. An equivalent item from a prestigious clothier would cost from $1,500 to $2,000, he added.

So how do they do it?

Made2Measure outsources its suit production to a factory in China, in which the brothers own a minority stake. That way, they can ensure that quality remains high and the supply chain provides the goods on time and on budget, said Hillel, who put his bar mitzvah gift money into the venture, along with profits from his many teenage ventures.

Besides price, Made2Measure competes on service, Hillel continued. "We're a service industry. Call us anytime... Let us come to you, anytime, anywhere."

The brothers, along with their six salespeople, will come to your office, boardroom or home, at your convenience. They bring along their sample suitcase with 600 swatches of cloth, and they'll measure 35 different points on the human body, to make sure the suit fits perfectly.

A lot of the guys who wear suits don't have the time or the patience to visit retail outlets. What could be better than getting fitted in your office or boardroom, or better yet, in the comfort of your living room after a hard day's work? he asked.

Although they maintain a website to publicize the enterprise, they get most of their business through word of mouth. They have 200 to 300 customers. Most come back for a second suit or another clothing item.

Since they started selling suits, the business has expanded tenfold. And Hillel believes the sky's the limit.

It was a serendipitous turn of events that got Hillel into the fashion business.

Near the end of high school, he asked his father, Robert, if he could accompany him on a business trip to China.

Hillel tapped into his earnings for the $1,800 ticket. While in China, he accompanied his dad to a fitting for a custom dress shirt. While his father was getting fitted, he struck up a conversation with the Indian-born tailor, from a company called New Bolwin Tailors, who was planning to visit New York on business. One thing led to another, and he invited the tailor to tack on a trip to Toronto for a couple of days to fit possible clients for hand-made suits.

Hillel didn't know if the man would follow through, but late one night he received a call from New York saying the tailor would be in Toronto soon.

Hillel quickly had 500 flyers printed, which he distributed to shuls and businesses along Bathurst Street. The flyers invited people to a fitting at a hotel north of Toronto.

A good number showed up, ready to plunk down the full cost of the suit, which would be manufactured in China and shipped back to Canada in a couple of months.

"We were skeptical if it would work out," worried that the tailor would just take the money and run, he said.

To his delight, the 30 suits that had been ordered started arriving, and customers were satisfied. Hillel donated his share of the proceeds to a pair of Toronto charities.

A year studying in a Jerusalem yeshiva put an end to that venture, and when he returned to Toronto, he enrolled at York University, where he took a double major in business administration and IT.

He took a job with an aerospace company, and while working in his new career, he continued to receive calls from former customers, inquiring about the next suit fitting.

Eventually, he made the decision to get back into the suit business full time. "It's now or never," he said. "You can build your own dream or get hired to build someone else's.

"I don't want to wake up in 10 years, married with kids, with expenses and a standard salary that doesn't cut it.

"I decided I wanted to take a risk. I'm still young, and together we can grow the businesses into a revolution in the way people shop," he said.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of March 27 is March 17. The deadline for the issue of April 3 is March 24. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 13

IRON AGE RELIGION

Shua Kisilevitz of the Israel Antiquities Authority discusses "A Monumental Iron Age Temple Near Jerusalem: New Evidence for Religious Practices in Judah," 7:15 p.m., University of Toronto, Bahen Centre, 40 St. George St., Room 1130. www.utoronto.ca/cims.

DAVY THE PUNK

Folksinger **Bob Bossin** launches his book *Davy the Punk*, a memoir of his father's life, 8 p.m. at the Pages Festival +Conference. Tickets and location available at Eventbrite.

Saturday, March 15

TORAH LECTURE

Lou Vandelman discusses the Torah portion of the week at morning services, Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom, a Conservative egalitarian congregation serving Halton-Peel, meets today. 905-901-9889.

Monday, March 17

JEWISH TORONTO HISTORY

Jack Lipinsky discusses "The History of Jewish Toronto," in 3 sessions, 7:15 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. March 17, "The Framework of Ethnic Survival: Institutions as Diverse as the People They Serve."

Wednesday, March 19

FAMILY LAW WORKSHOP

Lawyer **Brahm Siegel** discusses "Custody and Access." Call the Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women to register, 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Tema Gentles presents an illustrated talk about "Torah, Stitch by Stitch: 9 Months Later," 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai, pomegranateguild.wordpress.com.

ISRAELI FILMS

Shlomo Schwartzberg discusses "The Exciting and Provocative Cinema of Israel," with film clips and discussion in four sessions, starting today, Beth Tzedec Congregation. Dessert at 1:30 p.m., lecture at 2 p.m. $10 for 1 session; $20 for 4 sessions. Call 416-781-3511.

Thursday, March 20

KENSINGTON CHILDHOOD

Kensington Market Historical Society and Friends of the Osborne Collection, Toronto Public Library, present a discussion with **Leslie McGrath, Owen Shime** and **Alan Rakoff** on growing up in Kensington Market, Lillian H. Smith branch, Toronto Public Library, 239 College St. Doors open at 6 p.m., lecture at 6:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

MORASHA CLASSES

Yehudit Shier Weisberg teaches a 5-week course on "Jewish Prayer: A Gift for Living," 10 a.m., starting **March 26.**

Jerry Fink teaches a 5-week course on "Western Art Music from a Jewish Perspective," 11:15 a.m., starting **March 26.** To register, call, 416-789-7400.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 6-week bereavement group for men and women who have lost a spouse, starting **April 24.** Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10 for more information.

VENDORS WANTED

Beth Avraham Yoseph Toronto Congregation is seeking clothing and accessory vendors for its pre-Pesach fashion sale on **March 23**. Call **Rich Winkler** 905-886-3810, ext. 135, or email rich@bayt.ca.

JEWISH YOUTH CHOIR

Harmonia, a Jewish youth choir, is now accepting registrations. Rehearsals start **March 30**, 4 p.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC. Email harmonia@mnjcc.org.

HEBREW CLASSES

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering conversational Hebrew ulpan with **Yael Lev.** Intermediates meet Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.; Advanced Thursdays at 1:30 p.m. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Continued on page 41

Are you for us?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am is seeking an Executive Director to lead the day-to-day operations of its vibrant family-oriented egalitarian conservative synagogue. You will develop new membership initiatives, manage all administrative functions and related personnel, oversee house and property, supervise finance and accounting, oversee communications, and take an active role in fundraising activities.

Your strong interpersonal skills, business and organizational experience, combined with your Jewish literacy, participation in synagogue life, and a desire to implement new ideas, are important qualifications. Your ability to work collaboratively with the clergy, board of directors and committees will lead to your success. If you think you are for us, please submit a cover letter and resume no later than April 4, 2014 to search@bethdavid.com.

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All applications will be kept in the strictest confidence. We thank all candidates; however, only those to be interviewed will be contacted.

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Continued from page 40

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

Temple Emanu-El presents its spring lecture series. March 31, **Rick Phillips** discusses "Leonard Bernstein,"; April 7, **David Mulroney** discusses "Dealing with the Dragon,"; April 28, **Katherine Barber** discusses "Bachelor for Rent: Surprises in Canadian English,"; May 5, **Elizabeth Legge** discusses "Chagall,"; May 12, **Mike Daley** discusses "Bob Dylan." $45 for the series/$12 per lecture. Call 416-449-3880.

AJAMI

Beth Tikvah shows the Israeli film *Ajami* **March 30,** 7:30 p.m. All films have subtitles. $5/$10 Call 416-221-3433.

EVENING OF JEWISH SONG

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation presents an "Evening of Jewish Song" to benefit Jews for Judaism, featuring **Netivot HaTorah Choir, Shul of Rock Band, Arbah Kolot Barbershop Quartet, Rabbi Moshe Meirovich** and **Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, March 23,** 6:30 p.m. $25/$39.

PURIM FUN

The Toronto Partnership Minyan will hold a Megillah reading with both men and women reading, followed by a festive celebration, 8:45 p.m., **March 15,** Toronto Heschel School, 819 Sheppard Ave. W. Email torontopartnershipminyan@gmail.com.

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents *The Megillah According to Disney,* **March 15,** after Megillah reading at 8:15 p.m.; **March 16** at 1:30 p.m. Purim carnival March 16 at 2:30 p.m. Call 416-633-3838 for tickets.

Temple Sinai holds a Purim party, **March 15,** 7 p.m. For tickets, call 416-487-3281. **March 16,** Temple Sinai and Leo Baeck Day School celebrate Purim at the Toronto Zoo, 9:30 a.m.-noon.

Temple Har Zion's Purim shpiel and Megillah reading start **March 15,** 7 p.m.

Temple Kol Ami's Purim spiel and Megillah reading begin at 6 p.m., **March 15.** 905-709-2620.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue's Purim parade starts at 8:15 p.m., followed by Megillah reading, **March 15. March 16,** Megillah at 8 a.m., carnival starts 11:30 a.m.

Bnai Torah holds a Purim carnival **March 15** after Megillah reading, about 9:30 p.m.

Congregation Nachat Ruach holds a Purim carnival, Megillah reading, **March 15,** 8:30 p.m., Council House, 4700 Bathurst St. 416-638-9375.

Danforth Jewish Circle holds its "Purim Learning and Celebration," **March 16,** 2-4 p.m., 310 Danforth Ave. Email info@djctoronto.com.

Morris Winchevsky School holds a Purim celebration **March 16,** 11 a.m. at 918 Bathurst St., featuring entertainer **Sarah Sheps.**

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham presents a Purim adventure in Costa Rica **March 16.** Megillah reading at 4 p.m., Thornhill Community Centre, (Bayview and John). RSVP 905-886-0420, ext. 221 or www.chabadmarkham.org.

Am Shalom congregation, Barrie, holds a Megillah reading and party, **March 16,** 10 a.m. 705-792-3949.

Beth Torah Congregation holds a Purim carnival and Megillah reading **March 16,** starting at 11 a.m.

A women's Megillah reading will be held **March 16** at 10 a.m. at Shaarei Shomyaim Congregation.

Rabbi Shaanan Scherer discusses "Megillat Esther and Archeology," at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation, **March 17,** 7:30 p.m.

PASSOVER SEDERS

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Passover Seder, April 14. Register by March 17, 416-221-3433.

Temple Har Zion is holding a seder April 15. Register by March 28. Call, 905-889-2252, ext. 232.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Beyond the Chupah: Becoming A Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group, starts March 12, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2-10. Starts March 18, 7 p.m.

High-Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents in a high-conflict situation, not for individuals in an abusive situation. March 20, 6:30 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila,** 416-665-3333, or **Marcia,** 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mahjong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Opera Appreciation: Viva Puccini with **Iain Scott,** 3-part series starts March 18, 1:30 p.m.

Judaica through the ages with silversmith **Zahava Lambert,** March 20. Doors open at 1:30, program begins at 2 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. March 18, **Lynda Fishman** discusses "The Wonder of Human Resilience," 10 a.m.; March 19, Post-Purim Persian Party, 1 p.m., with concert, belly dancing and food; March 20, lecture on "Nutrition for Bone Health," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Barber/hairdresser on site March 20, 10 a.m. Casino Woodbine March 26 (register in advance); Dance with live music, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise starts April 22; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George,** 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Purim Tea Party with princesses and superheros, March 16, 4-5:30 p.m. $12. Call ext. 4235.

PJ Plus is a 10-week parent and child program for active Jewish learning for children ages 1-1/2 to 3 years. Starts March 23.

Nanny Robina presents a workshop on how to get your baby to sleep through the night, March 18, 7 p.m. $15. Call ext. 4235.

Spring and summer programs for children are open for registration. Call ext. 4235 to register.

Women's only fitness classes: cycling, zumba, yoga and core conditioning are offered. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com.

The Prosserman JCC goes to Buffalo for a day of shopping, March 25. $75.

Registration for the 2014-2015 school year for the daycare and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Sisters in Resistance, paintings by **Harry Tiefenbach** of women resistance fighters from World War II is at the gallery until March 24. A reception will be held March 13, 6 p.m. **Sara Ginaite-Rubinson,** the subject of one of the paintings, will attend.

Shlomo Schwartzberg discusses the work of director **Steven Spielberg,** 7 p.m. March 17, "Artist/Entertainer."

Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. ext. 250.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Wednesdays to March 26, 11 a.m.

Introduction to healthy breast yoga, April 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

מזל טוב

Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Happy birthday to my beautiful wife Theresa. All my love Jose

Barbara & Josh Israel announce the engagement of their daughter Jennifer to Dr. Joshua Charles, son of Sylvia & Michael Charles. Proud grandmother, Charlotte Shainbaum.

Mazel tov on your bat mitzvah Michelle. With love, David & Inessa Schwartz, Bubbie Esther Schwartz, grandparents Gngori & Ella Kurman.

Mazel tov on the bat mitzvah of Stephanie, daughter of Janice & Chuck Rothman and sister of Chelsea. Family and friends celebrated at Beth Radom.

Happy 90th Sylvia Ungerman! You look half your age. Much love, your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

Happy 90th birthday to Rose Bregman-Greisman from your children Barry, Paul (Suzanne), Sandy, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on "**Family Moments**"

Age-old persecutions and the Holocaust

Senior Side of Life
Michael Gordon

Since I am a geriatrician, all my patients are elderly, many of them in their late 80s or 90s, and a few over 100. Because I work in the Baycrest geriatric care system, many are Jewish, and as might be expected from the history of immigration to Canada, a good number are Holocaust survivors.

Many of my patients and their families assume, because of my deep interest in their Holocaust histories, that I am likely a child of Holocaust survivors. I am not, and really had little exposure to survivors until my adult years, despite having grown up in Brighton Beach, a very Jewish part of Brooklyn, N.Y. My maternal grandmother, with whom I shared our one bedroom along with my younger sister, was a pogrom survivor, having come to the United States as a teenager in the early 20th century.

I was amazed by the fact that she seemed to understand and speak many languages, which she explained in one of the many stories she told me about her life in Lithuania: "[The people] in charge changed all the time, so you had to figure out what was the right language to speak so that you would be left alone – Yiddish was not one of them."

My first recognition that there was something unusual about some of the people from Europe my grandmother knew came one summer when I was six or seven, and we went to Catskill's farm for a week's vacation.

My grandmother enjoyed her time very much. She was a singer in Yiddish choirs, and she and the other guests gathered in the common room in the evenings and sang songs in a multitude of eastern European languages and Yiddish. I noticed that most of the people had blue numbers on their forearms, the meaning of which I did not yet understand.

I was more taken with the young daughter of the people who owned the farm/guest house. She taught me how to catch flies by quickly running an open hand across a table or railing. We then took the fly, which was jiggling in the hand, tossed it into a beautiful spider web in the porch railing and watched the spider wrap the fly for some future meal. It was fascinating, but of course I did not get close to understanding the irony of subjecting a living thing to a trap and to death by another living thing, but this one was "nature" and not "human nature."

My adolescent years opened up the historical aspects of the Holocaust for me. I was very interested in the history of Nazi Germany, and with that, came the story of the Jews, although often not as the primary focus.

But during my medical school years in Scotland, I decided to spend a month as an exchange medical student in the obstetrics and gynecology department in Rambam Hospital in Haifa. The trip became an epiphany in my life, and led to my recognition of my place in the world and in the history of the Jews.

Most powerful was my working with Prof. Aharon Peretz, head of the department, who did a weekly German reparations clinic for those who qualified because of gynecological afflictions. I asked him after one clinic why he indicated on the necessary forms that virtually all the problems he saw in these patients he attributed to their Holocaust experience.

He looked at me and said, "As far as I am concerned, all of these conditions have their source in these women's Holocaust experience."

It was years later that I discovered that he was a key witness at Adolf Eichmann's trial: he had provided medical care in the concentration camps. Because of his aura and influence on me, my world changed. I eventually moved to Israel, but most importantly, my eyes and soul were opened to the Holocaust.

During my more than 37 years at Baycrest, I have been involved in the stories, fears, flashbacks, recountings of horror and heroism and survival that come with the survivors' repertoire. For that experience, I am forever grateful that I could somehow participate in that epoch and in our collective history.

My own family's experience of persecution predated the Shoah, but was part of the continuum that we must always remember as we honour those who came before us.

SHARE YOUR HAPPY MOMENTS

UPLOAD YOUR PHOTO TO www.cjnews.com/mazeltov

Creative hamantashen from the 'Queen of Kosher' Jamie Geller

JNS.org

We all recognize that poppy seed or jam taste when we bite into hamantashen on Purim every year. But given the right filling or dough, the traditional pastry has a lot more to offer.

Hailed as the "Queen of Kosher" and the "Jewish Rachael Ray," best-selling author Jamie Geller is the founder of the Kosher Media Network, publisher of *Joy of Kosher with Jamie Geller* magazine and JoyofKosher.com. Geller's online cooking videos have garnered more than one million views.

The following recipes, edited by *JNS.org*, were recommended by Geller and have appeared on JoyofKosher.com and in *Joy of Kosher with Jamie Geller* magazine.

CARDAMOM SCENTED HAMANTASHEN WITH PEAR AND GOAT CHEESE FILLING

By Pessy Haskelevich, writer for *Joy of Kosher with Jamie Geller* magazine

For a pareve version, simply replace the butter with canola oil and omit the goat cheese.

Pastry:
2 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 stick butter, or 1/4 cup canola oil
juice and zest of 1 lemon
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
2 1/2 cups flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1-2 tsp. cardamom
pinch of salt

Filling:
1/2 cup water
1/8 cup sugar
juice of 1 lemon
1 tbsp. fresh ginger, peeled and minced
1 lb. firm but ripe pears, peeled, cored and cut into 1/4-in. diced pieces
3/4 cup apricot jam
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
8 oz. soft goat cheese (optional)

In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well. Divide the dough in half and chill in plastic wrap for half an hour.

Preparing the filling:

Combine the water and sugar in a medium saucepan and simmer over low heat until sugar has dissolved. Add the lemon juice, ginger and pears and simmer for an additional 10 minutes, or until pears are tender. Set aside to cool.

To assemble and bake:

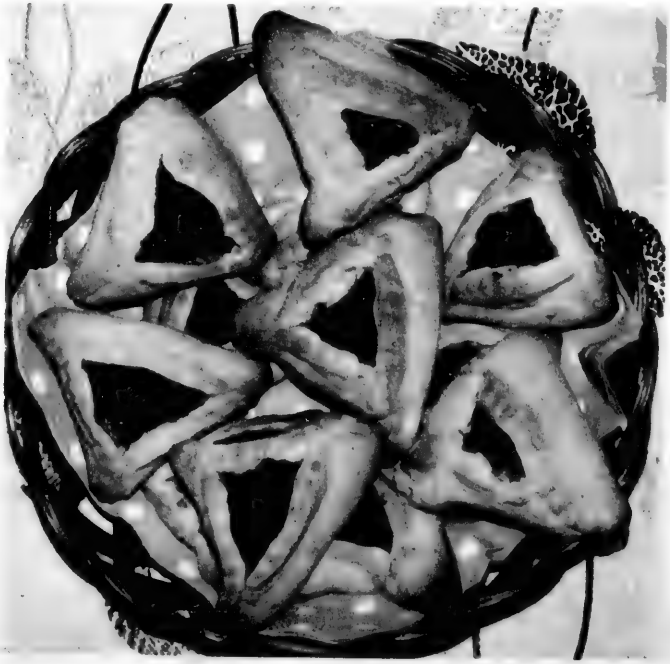
On a generously floured surface, preferably on baking paper, roll out the dough to a quarter-in. thickness. Roll once, then pick up the flattened dough and turn it 90 degrees.

Sprinkle with more flour if necessary and roll it out again. Repeat until dough is of sufficient thickness (this procedure helps prevent the dough from sticking). Use a round cookie cutter or glass with a 2-3 in. diameter to cut out circles of dough.

Smear a very thin layer of apricot preserves in the centre of each circle. Sprinkle 1/2 tsp. walnuts and a small piece of crumbled goat cheese. Top with 1 tsp. of pear jam.

Lift up the edges of the circle to form a triangle. Pinch the corners securely so that they don't open in the oven. Line a cookie sheet with baking paper and place the assembled hamantashen on the cookie sheet.

Chill the hamantashen in the freezer for about half an hour. Repeat with second half of dough. Bake the hamantashen in the oven at 375 for 20-24 minutes or until golden. Cool on rack. Makes 2 dozen.



GINGERBREAD HAMANTASHEN WITH SPICED APPLE FILLING

By Tamar Genger, executive editor, Joyofkosher.com

Cookie dough:
2 cups whole wheat flour
1 cup all purpose flour plus more for dusting
1 tsp. baking soda
1/4 cup brown sugar, packed
3/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
1/2 tsp. ground allspice
1/2 tsp. ground cloves
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. freshly milled black pepper
8 tbsp. unsalted margarine, room temperature
1/4 cup vegetable shortening, at room temperature
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
2/3 cup unsulfured molasses
1 large egg

Filling:
6 tbsp. margarine, cut in 1-in. pieces
1/2 vanilla bean, cut lengthwise and scraped of seeds
3 large or 4 medium apples, peeled, cored and cut into eighths
1/4 cup brown sugar, packed

Gingerbread cookie dough:

Sift the flours, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, allspice, cloves, salt and pepper through a wire sieve into a medium bowl. Set aside.

In a stand mixer, beat the margarine and shortening on high until well blended, about 1 minute. Add the brown sugar and beat until the mixture is light in texture and colour, about 2 minutes. Beat in the molasses and egg.

Using a wooden spoon, gradually mix in the flour mixture to make a stiff dough. Divide the dough into two thick disks and wrap each disk in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until chilled, about 3 hours. (The dough can be prepared up to 2 days ahead.)

Filling:

In a large skillet over medium heat add the margarine and vanilla bean and seeds. Cook about 5 minutes.

Add the apples and let them caramelize on one side, then turn and cook until they begin to caramelize. Sprinkle the brown sugar over the apples and cook, turning occasionally while they soften, about 10 minutes.

Remove from heat and remove vanilla bean, then puree in food processor and cool until ready to use.

When ready to assemble and bake the cookies, position the racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven and preheat to 350.

To roll out the cookies, work with one disk at a time, keeping the other disk refrigerated. Remove the dough from the refrigerator and let stand at room temperature until just warm enough to roll out without cracking, about 10 minutes. (If the dough has been chilled for longer than 3 hours, it may need a few more minutes.)

Place the dough on a lightly floured work surface and sprinkle the top of the dough with flour. Roll out the dough 1/8-in. thick. Cut out 3-in. circles and use a spatula to place circles on a baking sheet lined with parchment.

Spoon a tsp. of filling into the centre of the circle of dough and fold together to form a triangle. Bake for 8-10 minutes, remove to wire rack to cool, and enjoy. Makes 36.

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Never again will I be complacent

Evelyn Tauben
Special to The CJN

Recently on the pages of *The Canadian Jewish News*, a question has been debated regarding the meaning of the statement ubiquitous in Jewish circles: "never again."

Some say it has lost its charge, that these words, born out of the greatest human disaster, no longer rally us to the cries of the disadvantaged and troubled in our cities, countries or globally. Others maintain that "never again" was never intended as the slogan driving Jewish social justice, as the bumper sticker for a people who are supposedly a light unto the nations. No, it is a "force field of language," a Jewish watchdog, a constant reminder to be vigilant to impending threats to the Jewish People.

Comment

Rather than having evaporated, perhaps the substance of "never again" was never there. Do we mean "never again" just for the Jewish People or for humanity? In fact, it is not clear, and is further muddied by our collective trauma.

Until reading this unfolding conversation in *The CJN*, I sincerely (and apparently naively) believed that, generally speaking, all Jews abided by the notion that it is our shared responsibility in the wake of the Shoah to look out for the plight of people around the world. Elie Wiesel himself asserted in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech: "Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion or political views, that place must – at that moment – become the centre of the universe... And action is the only remedy to indifference, the most insidious danger of all."

If one abides by Wiesel's position, then the mantra of "never again" is not working, neither galvanizing nor substantively connecting us. In fact, this phrase is bandied about with such casual, ever-present usage that it dishonours the very victims and survivors of the Holocaust that it was intended to recognize. Furthermore, it is being misappropriated through misguided gestures.

Last fall, a documentary film about survivors of Auschwitz got an unusual amount of media coverage – not about the survivors themselves, but about some of their descendants who have taken to marking themselves with commemorative tattoos replicating their parents' or grandparents' Auschwitz prisoner numbers. And why?

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Greater Toronto Area

Charoset's great after the seder
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CANADA

Book Sign Removed

TORONTO — A midtown Toronto Indigo outlet took down a sign hawking a large Holocaust volume with the slogan "Oy Veh! Can't believe I read the whole thing!" The sign had been placed over racks holding the 768-page *The Holocaust Chronicle*, about the Jewish war-era experience in Europe, published in 2000. Journalist Marni Soupcoff launched a debate about the display when she posted photos of it. "I'm not sure Indigo has struck quite the right tone here," she tweeted. Indigo replied, "As soon as the sign was brought to our attention, it was removed."

WORLD

Diary Arrest Made

TOKYO — Tokyo police arrested a city resident in connection with the vandalism of hundreds of copies of *The Diary of Anne Frank* in the Japanese capital's libraries. The suspect, identified in the March 12 announcement of his arrest as an "unemployed man in his 30s," admitted to some involvement in the vandalism of the books last month. Police arrested him March 7 for entering a bookstore in the Ikebukuro district to hang a poster without permission. It's not known what the poster said. Security footage from the store reportedly showed the same man wandering back and forth through sections dealing with the Holocaust, including the day some of the damage occurred. Police spotted the man in security footage from other locations where vandalism occurred. Pages were ripped from at least 265 copies of the diary and other Holocaust related books in libraries and bookstores.

Visa Policy Clarified

NEW YORK — Israeli tourists can enter Tunisia with pre-arranged papers, and Jews especially should feel comfortable attending a major Jewish festival in May, Tunisia's tourism minister said. Amel Karboul contacted *JTA* after 20 Israeli tourists aboard a Norwegian cruise liner were denied entry earlier this month. The story came to light after B'nai Brith Canada was contacted by a Jewish Canadian passenger on the ship. "We are open to all visitors," Karboul said March 13 from Paris, where she met with Jewish groups. Hundreds of Jews of Tunisian descent, including Israelis, attend annual festivities on the island of Djerba for Lag b'Omer, which is in May this year. "I want to use this occasion to invite the Jewish community to come and celebrate this pilgrimage with us." Norwegian Cruise Lines said the pre-arranged visa policy was a new one and that the denial of entry to the Israelis aboard its Jade ship was discriminatory. It cancelled stops in Tunisia until the country resolves the matter. Karboul said the policy was always in place, and that she was trying to reach company officials to explain what happened. She said visitors from countries such as Israel that don't have visa waiver agreements with Tunisia must arrange visas beforehand. She named Egypt and Brazil as being similar.

'Greatest Jewish Warrior Since Bar Kochba'

JERUSALEM — Courageous and controversial Israeli war hero Meir Har-Zion, a man Moshe Dayan once called "the greatest Jewish warrior since Bar Kochba," died March 14. He was 80 years old.

Meir Har-Zion

Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon said he was "one of the greatest warriors in the history of the IDF – an audacious, distinctive commander whose influence in molding generations of fighters and units was pivotal."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called him "one of our greatest heroes… [who] was steeped in love for the nation and the land."

Har-Zion, who rose to fame as a leader in Israel's first commando force, Unit 101, was born in Herzliya. He was drafted in the early 1950s and began his service in the Nahal Brigade. He later joined a commando unit led by a young Ariel Sharon that engaged in combat on a near-daily basis, and he led many cross-border raids. He later helped found Sayeret Matkal and fought in the Six Day War.

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Israeli-Arab teen promotes coexistence

Camp Shomria program helps 'tear down walls and stereotypes'

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Lina Jamal Medlij, a Palestinian girl from Haifa, was in Toronto last month to spread her message that she's living proof Jews and Arabs can coexist peacefully.

Medlij, who turns 18 this month, is an alumna of a program called Heart to Heart, which for the past four years has brought 20 Israeli youth between grades 7 and 9 – 10 Jewish and 10 Arab-Israeli – to Camp Shomria in Perth, Ont., for three weeks of dialogue and coexistence programming.

The program is offered through Givat Haviva Educational Foundation, an Israeli-based non-profit organization that promotes Jewish-Arab dialogue.

Medlij said she wanted to participate in the program to address any misconceptions she may have had about a group of people she knew so little about.

"I'm aware of the fact that even if I'm not connecting right now with Jews, when I grow up, in about three or four years, I will get the chance to talk to Jews and work with them, and I'm going to go out into the real world and I'm not going to stay in my home and in my village," she told *The CJN*.

"You hear a lot of stereotypes about a lot of subjects... and you don't have a perspective of your own. This was another thing that I wanted to know, to create for myself."

Medlij said her involvement with Heart to Heart exposed her to many new experiences.

"In Israel, we don't have camps, so it was a whole new experience for us, to be in Canada, and to live at a camp and also living with each other – Jews and Arabs – which is an opportunity we didn't have before," she said.

Continued on page 17

Lina Jamal Medlij, right, with Camp Shomria staff member Rebecca Hirsz

The time had come for my wife's unveiling. My kids and I wanted a monument that honoured her memory and captured who she was. A stone of lasting beauty, so that when we visited her grave, we felt close to her. The monument counsellor at Benjamin's Landmark designed a custom stone at a price we could afford. They truly took the utmost care.

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'Jewish state' issue lingers — with good reason

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The lead editorial in the March 6 *New York Times*, "Israel's Choice," is instructive by inadvertently capturing precisely what's profoundly – and so commonly – wrongheaded in many people's comprehension of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and how to resolve it.

Placing the onus for progress squarely on Israel, the editorial starts with the premise that the Palestinians, led by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, genuinely want a two-state solution and that, despite his oft-declared support, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is blocking it.

The *Times* criticizes Netanyahu for the seemingly unreasonable demand that the Palestinians recognize Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish People, while failing to acknowledge that, according to the latest polls, about 80 per cent of Israeli Jews (including a majority of those on the left) believe such recognition is important.

The *Times* writes that the Palestinians already "recognize Israel as a state, but not as a Jewish state, because they believe that would undercut the rights of the Palestinian refugees."

Precisely. Yet, the *Times* then fails to connect the dots: the Palestinian claim of a "right of return" for millions of Palestinian refugees to Israel would eventually mean both the elimination of the State of Israel and the creation of another Arab state in its place. (It was the UN itself which in 1947 recommended the creation of two states for two peoples – Arab and Jewish.)

In short, the *Times* fails to understand that the Palestinian refusal of what is an Israeli consensus, not a "right-wing" demand, amounts to the rejection of the genuine "two state" solution the paper insists Abbas and the Palestinians support.

So, in an absurd inversion of logic, the *Times* faults those supporting the essential condition for a genuine two-state arrangement, namely, that the Palestinians accept the right of the Jewish People to national self-determination – just as the majority of Israelis accept that the Palestinian people have a right to their own state: two states for two peoples.

The *Times*' self-refuting inability to grasp what's at issue is breathtaking.

As the liberal former MK Einat Wilf wrote in the *Jerusalem Post* during German Chancellor Angela Merkel's visit to Israel last month: "Palestinian recognition of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish People is not a condition for peace – it is the very essence of peace… Israel does not need Palestinian recognition in order to know what it is [but rather] the Palestinians need to recognize Israel as the Jewish state for their own sake and dignity and for the cause of peace."

The only chance for real progress toward peace is mutual recognition. Minority Israeli factions on the right who deny the Palestinians are a people with a right to statehood are the (less numerous) mirror opposites of Palestinians who deny that Jews are a people with the same rights. In April 2008, the *Economist* magazine, which is generally unsympathetic to Israel, observed: "It is ironic that the fundamental disagreement between Jews and Palestinians today is not about whether there should be a Palestinian state; most Israeli Jews accepted that long ago. It is about whether there should be a Jewish one." Sadly, since then, this "acceptance gap" has not diminished. Indeed it may have expanded.

In the past few weeks, Abbas has insisted that recognizing Jewish statehood is "out of the question" and that "There is no way. We will not accept [it]."

He was then joined by the Arab League, which ostensibly stands behind the Saudi/Arab Peace Initiative when it comes to Israel, but which declared in Cairo on March 9: "The council of the Arab League confirms its support for the Palestinian leadership in its effort to end the Israeli occupation over Palestinian lands, and emphasizes its rejection of recognizing Israel as a 'Jewish state.'"

U.S. President Barack Obama, among other western leaders, understands what's at stake. Meeting with Abbas in Ramallah on March 23, 2013, Obama declared: "We seek an independent, a viable and contiguous Palestinian state as the homeland of the Palestinian people, alongside *the Jewish State of Israel* – two nations enjoying self-determination, security and peace" (emphasis added).

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

KNESSET ADDRESS

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, and British Prime Minister David Cameron shake hands in the Knesset March 12. Cameron told MKs that "his commitment to Israel's security will always be rock-solid" and that Britain backs U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's efforts to negotiate a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, saying the opportunities peace would bring are enormous. [*Israel Sun photo*]

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Two out of three ain't bad

Last week, the Knesset passed three important bills presented by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's governing coalition. Two of them are strong pieces of legislation that empower the Israeli voting public. The third risks quite the opposite occurring.

The most historic of the new laws will see the vast majority of Israel's ultra-Orthodox be drafted into the army, or face the prospect of imprisonment. I have previously advocated in favour of the haredi conscription law because it is, in a word, fair. Sure, Torah study may very well be a useful tool in the defence of Israel (though it's a difficult metric to track), but that doesn't mean Israel's ultra-Orthodox shouldn't share equally in the responsibility to fill the ranks of the Israel Defence Forces. But don't take it from me: most Israelis feel the same way.

Netanyahu's coalition also pushed through a bill that promotes a 2010 law – which subjects land-for-peace deals to a public referendum – to the level of "basic law," or quasi-constitutional status. The bill is not without flaws – it won't apply to the West Bank, where ceding territory will almost certainly be part of any peace deal with the Palestinians – but it is inherently good. If and when the time comes for Israel to decide whether to give up land for peace, all Israelis should have their say. It's the only way every citizen will be able to live with the result, whichever way the vote swings.

The last of the three laws passed by the Netanyahu government raises the electoral threshold from two per cent to 3.25 per cent. Put plainly, if a party does not receive enough votes to earn at least four seats in the 120-seat Knesset, it will get no seats at all. As a result, smaller political parties will be forced to merge or be folded into one of the major parties. The government and its supporters argue that raising the threshold will make the process of forming coalition governments less chaotic by reducing the number of parties with representation in the Knesset. But if the smaller parties don't, or can't, find partners, there is the risk that some Israelis' votes will effectively count for nothing.

Still, as the great vocalist of our time, Meat Loaf, once said: "Two out of three ain't bad."

• • •

Last week in this space, I wrote about this newspaper's bold new direction. While the specific features I outlined were fake – a Purim gag – the central premise of the column was true: on April 10, *The CJN* will debut the results of our redesign project. Look closely through this week's issue, and you'll find two hints about the future of *The Canadian Jewish News*.

As a bonus, I'm also revealing one of the features you can actually expect to find beginning April 10. It's called "Rabbi2Rabbi," wherein two Canadian rabbis will engage in a written conversation about current events, community issues, cultural quandaries or Jewish law. Who's right? That, my friends, is up to you to decide.

Next week, I'll tell you more about what you can expect in the new *CJN*, including "Back Story."

yoni

Dry Bones

Purim issue fails good taste test

Proper style and esthetic standards should characterize *The Canadian Jewish News*, even when the newspaper offers its readers a funny "Purim Torah." A Purim Torah may be irreverent, bold and even risqué, but while it must be clever, it must also obey the rule of good taste. A Purim Torah may puncture the inflated balloon of pompous sacred platitudes, but good taste must still be respected. Your lead article in your Purim issue ("Write your own sermon in 7 easy steps," *The CJN*, March 13) on how to make your own sermon is neither clever nor in good taste. You may lampoon sermons – that is certainly permissible – but your writer brings no honour to his pseudonym, Hershel Ostropolier, the legendary Yiddish jester.

Your editorial, too, promising new features in the future *CJN*, is in poor taste. I hope it is only an attempt at a Purim Torah and an April Fool's joke.

Rabbi Erwin Schild
Toronto

Obama just 'doesn't get it'

U.S. President Barack Obama is actually isolating the United States from the world by his actions. It's sad that Obama doesn't get it, nor does he learn from history. ("Obama warns of fallout without peace deal," cjnews.com).

Prime Minister Stephen Harper does get it, in his concrete actions against terrorism, such as with full sanctions and not just tough, dramatic words.

Obama, why don't you talk tough to Iran, Syria and Russia instead of to your "best ally, Israel"? Israel needs your support right now, not your threats.

If it's your legacy as president you are worried about, how about focusing on your best ally, Israel, to forge a mutual friendship and gain from each other's talents and resources.

I'll never forget how you said before your first election, standing in Sderot, "If I had rockets in my backyard, I'd defend myself."

And now you're pushing Israel to give away more land, after giving back Gaza has caused untold disaster. This will only cause more rockets to be launched and encourage more terrorism in Israel.

If you call yourself a great friend, act like a friend and put the pressure on countries like Iran, Russia and Syria instead.

Rabbi Yirmi Cohen
Toronto

Harper's trip to Israel

It's so good to hear that we have Bernie Farber's tepid approval of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit to Israel ("Harper's Israel trip worth the $239,000 price tag: CIJA," *The CJN*, Feb. 27). I find it pathetic that the former leader of our now-defunct Canadian Jewish Congress criticizes out loud our prime minister for his audacity in wasting money on visiting Israel.

There is a reason that the Canadian Jewish Congress is no longer, and that reason can be directly traced to its former leader. As a Jew and as a supporter of Israel, I think it's imperative that we support our prime minister on this. If not us, who will?

On another note, Farber never misses a chance to attack and smear the good name of the Jewish Defence League, even on unrelated issues such as Harper's visit to Israel. Meir Weinstein, the JDL's national director, has risked his life for Jewish and Israeli causes and is recognized by our prime minister as a valued friend of Canada.

Leon Kushner
Toronto

How to aid Jews in Ukraine

It is well known that in any political war, invasion or fighting, although everyone is at risk, Jews are usually more so.

Before aiding Ukrainian Jews in their hometowns, where they will become targets ("Jewish Agency steps in to aid Ukraine Jews," *The CJN*, Feb. 27), it would be wise for us to offer them land and freedom in Israel, especially in Judea and Samaria, where more Jews are needed.

Looking at the Ukrainian situation, it seems that Jews will likely become targets. If Ukrainian Jews are given the opportunity to emigrate to Israel, their lives will probably be saved, and Israel will be better able to defend Judea and Samaria. So Israel and the Jewish community can win both ways.

Jonathan Usher
Toronto

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Is criticism of Israel anti-Semitic?

Andrew Griffith

Over the past few years, the Jewish community and many governments have paid attention to a resurgence of anti-Semitism. The Canadian government, most recently in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Knesset speech, framed anti-Semitism in broad terms, including virtually any criticism of Israel.

But is such a broad definition helpful to understanding what is anti-Semitism and what is not? More importantly, does it help engage other communities, or does it risk undermining support for anti-Semitism measures?

Anti-Semitism is one form of hate and intolerance and shares many of the characteristics of other forms of prejudice and non-acceptance. In many cases, people who demonstrate hatred or intolerance to Jews also do so with other groups.

However, anti-Semitism is unique in a number of ways. Viewing Jews as a "collective" that controls society, is unique to anti-Semitism. Characterizing Jewish advocacy groups such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) or the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) as "controlling" also has anti-Semitic overtones, but criticism of their particular positions is not.

Holocaust denial and distortion are intrinsically anti-Semitic, just as denial of other genocides and atrocities expresses hate and intolerance.

Accusing Canadian Jews of dual loyalties can be anti-Semitic. Dual attachments are common to most ethnic communities, and it is no different for Canadian Jews and Israel.

The link between anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment is more complex. Not all criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic in nature, whether with respect to Israel itself (e.g., resettling of Bedouin from the Negev, the proposed Israeli law banning the use of "Nazi") or in the occupied territories (e.g., settlements, use of collective punishment). The lively debate within Israel illustrates this.

How do we judge whether criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic or not?

Questioning the legitimacy of Israel itself has, at the very least, anti-Semitic overtones if it's not explicitly anti-Semitic, given the reasons for Israel's establishment, that the vast majority of its population is Jewish and the implications of acting upon such questioning.

FORMER SOUTH AFRICAN PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA ON ISRAELI APARTHEID:
APARTHEID:
WRONG FOR SOUTH AFRICANS, WRONG FOR PALESTINIANS
END ISRAELI APARTHEID!

A woman protests against "Israeli apartheid" in Washington D.C. Labelling Israel as an apartheid state has anti-Semitic overtones, Andrew Griffith says. *[File photo]*

Labelling Israel as an apartheid state and the boycott, divestment and sanction campaign (BDS) have anti-Semitic overtones when applied to Israel itself. While Israel has its internal integration challenges, it in no way resembles South African apartheid. There are no racial mixing laws, and Israeli Arabs have voting rights and are represented, albeit imperfectly, in a wide range of Israeli institutions.

However, the BDS campaign as applied to the occupied territories is not necessarily anti-Semitic, as the campaign can be viewed as legitimate pressure on Israeli policies and activities. Singling out companies like SodaStream or institutions like Ariel University is not anti-Semitic; boycotts on Israeli companies and universities within Israel are a different matter. However, much of the messaging of Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) and BDS campaigns neither distinguishes between Israel itself and the occupied territories, nor is careful about language with anti-Semitic overtones.

Similarly, singling out Israel for criticism is not necessarily anti-Semitic. Israel is rightly held to a higher standard given the reasons for its founding, its democratic character and its membership in the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) and the UN Western group. Language is important here. In the UN context, this can cross into anti-Semitism, given the disproportionate focus on Israel compared to other countries with worse human rights records.

How should we deal with anti-Semitism?

First, we must recognize that increased anti-Semitism is a legitimate domestic and international concern, and not dismiss raising the issue as a way to blunt criticism of Israel. However, we also need to engage a broader range of Jewish groups than CIJA and B'nai Brith (e.g., organizations such as JSpace, the New Israel Fund and the Jewish Refugee Action Network) to ensure a more nuanced understanding of what is and what is not anti-Semitic. The credibility of the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition on Combating Antisemitism suffered from its lack of inclusiveness.

Secondly, we must strengthen messaging on the commonalities between anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred and intolerance. Some of the pioneering work by Jewish communities is being lost in the focus on anti-Semitism. More express links among all forms of hatred, racism and discrimination can help combat anti-Semitism through engagement of a broader range of communities. The activities of the Holocaust centres in Canada in educating our increasingly diverse population are good examples. Perceived exclusive government focus on anti-Semitism may undermine understanding and support among other communities.

Thirdly, more clarity between criticism of Israel proper and Israeli policies in the occupied territories may be helpful in separating out what can be perceived as anti-Semitic and what should not. A large part of criticism of Israel is based upon its actions and politics in the occupied territories. While it is naive to think that such a distinction would by itself reduce anti-Semitism, clarity in language and objective would be helpful. It would force critics of Israeli policies to declare themselves. IAW and BDS have often been fuzzy in this regard. The same applies to defenders of Israeli policies. Just as many critics of Israel give the impression that Israel can do no right, many supporters give the impression that Israel can do no wrong.

The politics of the Middle East will always colour discussion about what is anti-Semitism, as will the continued need to recognize the concerns of the Jewish community. However, a broader discussion of anti-Semitism in relation to other forms of racism and discrimination, recognizing both the unique experience of the Jewish community and the shared experience with other communities, is needed.

Andrew Griffith is the former director general for citizenship and multiculturalism at Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). He has worked at Canadian Heritage, Service Canada, Industry Canada, the Privy Council Office and Foreign Affairs Canada.

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Food helps us remember lost communities

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

Food is our final frontier. Go where no cook has gone before – especially between Purim and Passover, I seem to think of nothing but food.

Our annual Torah reading begins with the most famous fruit tree of all, the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the primordial garden, the supposed cradle of humanity and origin of evil. Sort of a foodie Jewish Pandora's box.

Eve's snack, "the fruit of that forbidden tree which brought death into the world and all our woe" (Milton), is the first indication of the importance food will play in our tribal future. Recall the honey that Samson scoops out of the lion as he trots toward his doom at the hands of Delilah. It's enough to make you go on a diet.

The Land of Israel is pictured as flowing with milk and honey, prolific with the seven species. Liberated Israelites longed for the cucumbers, leeks, melons, garlic and onions they left behind in Egypt. Even then, they were creating a cuisine.

I learned the craft of kosher cooking from books and cooks. A Pennsylvania German background wasn't useful. I had mentors who set up our kosher kitchen and helped me acquire recipes to guide me. My matzah balls are still lopsided, however.

Claudia Roden's cookbook *The Book of Jewish Food* is alive with the history and cultural meaning of her recipes. She points out that the mobility of the disbursed Jewish communities across the globe gave them access to a huge variety of cuisine, which they adapted to their own needs and dietary restrictions. She calls it "a culture within a culture, a nation within a nation."

Food is "a link with the past, a celebration of roots, a symbol of continuity."

Yet most of the communities she writes about are now restricted to the few countries – including Israel, of course – where Jews now live. Upheavals of the 20th century forced a rearrangement of these communities. Recipes that evoke, say, her Egyptian roots, now are cooked by families in other lands. They're family dishes that are a symbol of that homeland, no longer food created in a place where Jews flourish.

A stark example of displacement is found in the recipes in *In Memory's Kitchen*, collected in Terezin. As the introduction notes, "cooking, both doing it and talking about it, was central also to the societies from which many of the women of Terezin... came. It was also among the chief activities that defined them as wives and mothers." The book is not a cookbook that one might turn to in preparing a dish. It is instead a tribute to the courage of the women who created it, determined to retain their dignity in the face of horror.

I said at the beginning that I had to learn to cook for a kosher household. Perhaps my festival dishes represent a mash-up of the people I have met over the years, and the foods they prepared. So at Rosh Hashanah, we read the Iraqi seder before beginning the meal. A family favourite is the verse about leeks – translated as, "With these leeks may your luck never lack."

For Purim this year, my granddaughter and I made sand tart cookies to go into mishloach manot – sand tarts being a Pennsylvanian Dutch recipe for that winter holiday. We will also add red velvet cupcakes, which I discovered in New York City.

At Pesach, we will savour *huevos haminados* (recipe from the *Sarajevo Hagaddah*), potato kugel from my mother-in-law (Poland), a brisket (Russia? Ukraine?), a loaf of carrots, apples, raisins and honey (Nina Rousso), and a chocolate mousse cake that seems to be a local invention. We also use both horseradish and a date mixture on the seder plate, although the latter seems too sweet to bring bitterness to mind.

For the vegetarian meal, a Sephardi Passover pie, eggplant mina. For a breakfast treat, leek-cheese pancakes (Sephardi) and sugared matzah from Morocco.

What we eat can take us, as Roden tells us, on an "odyssey from Samarkand to New York." It's a delicious journey, somewhat like Shakespeare's audience for *Henry V*, asked to imagine "within the girdle of these walls confined two mighty monarchies." Rather, all our lost kingdoms are confined within our tables. Thus we reconstitute whole communities, from the farthest east to the farthest west.

Saying Kaddish *again, but still invisible*

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

I'm saying *Kaddish* again, and this time it's harder!

I thought it would be easier the second time around but I was wrong. This time, I am acknowledging being an orphan. Ordinarily, facing the death of an aged parent is not traumatic. In fact, we were all waiting for Mom to die – even Mom. So no tragedy here, yet facing the absence of the parental generation is unexpectedly difficult. There is no one left on either side of my family – no buffer generation between me and my own mortality. I am next. It's all normal, yet disconcerting.

As I say *Kaddish*, I wonder at the passage not just of time, but of generations. My parents were immigrants. Now my children and grandchildren have no concrete connection to the glory and suffering of the European Diaspora. I'm now the representative of Jewish tradition and heritage. As I say my daily *Kaddish*, I get to contemplate my own mortality and my new position of heritage connector.

I feel alone and unequal to the task. I want to ask my parents many questions, seek their guidance, but they're not here. Relief, regret and fear equally emerge during prayers.

Clearly, facing the death of a loved and cherished parent is supposed to be difficult and demanding. But there's another factor related to my struggle.

I have lost patience with male desire to keep me invisible. The absence of any true responsiveness to my *Kaddish* is almost unbearable. The whole purpose of saying *Kaddish* is to be in a community, with a minyan representing that community so that they may answer your words and respond to your call sanctifying God's name and presence.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik once wrote: "The *Kaddish* marks the beginning of a new phase of courageous and heroic mourning with a message of divine salvation... Through the *Kaddish*, we hurl defiance at death and its fiendish conspiracy against man." Accordingly, the prayer declares, "No matter how powerful death is, notwithstanding the ugly end of man... no matter how black one's despair is... we declare and profess publicly and solemnly that we are not giving up, that we are not surrendering, that we will carry on the work of our ancestors."

In saying *Kaddish*, I declare that I am part of that process.

Thus gender erasure is unacceptable. I'm no longer able to ignore their attempt to expunge me from the community. And it happens ubiquitously in the Orthodox world, and sometimes in the Conservative one as well. Even in the places that self-identify as women-friendly, there is a tangible discomfort with women's *Kaddish*. I've experienced this in New York, Israel, Florida and Montreal. In Florida, they asked me to lower my voice and say it silently! Do they understand how absurd that is?

At this point, many of you will want to shake me and say, "Look how far we have come!" Surely I know of all the advances both within the Orthodox world and in the other denominations. I know and teach about our current successes. We're the most Jewishly educated generation ever, and that includes our women. There are new rituals centred on women, and new positions of authority that recognize women's advanced leadership potential. I know all that.

Yet we're constantly being deprived full accommodation. Even in the most liberal of our sectors, women still are not at the top, are not paid equally, and are still harassed or complimented on how good they look rather than on how smart they are. Little girls still want to dress up as Esther, not because she was the heroine who risked her life and taught us about communal bonds, but because she won the beauty contest.

I understand there are women in the haredi world who dress "to the nines." They are combating invisibility. How do I do that in my synagogue, in a male world?

My *Kaddish* is as important and sanctioned as anyone else's. Yes, there was a controversy about women saying *Kaddish*. But so many contemporary halachists have approved this practice. We should have no tolerance for male unresponsiveness or opposition. I want to say *Kaddish* as a Jew for the *neshamah* of my dear departed mother. And I expect the congregation, male and female to respond. The tradition that I now represent mandates it.

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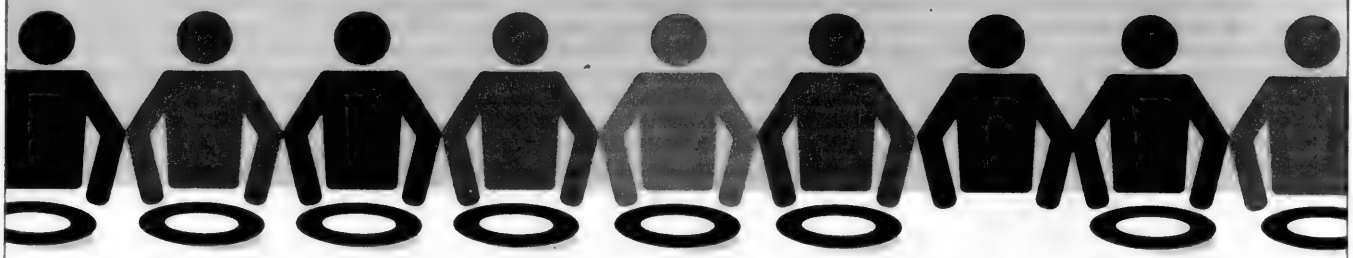

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History matters

Jimmy Bitton

In the 2002 romantic-comedy *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, the Greek protagonist Toula Portokalos grumbles that when she was growing up, she knew she was different.

"The other girls were blond and delicate and I was a swarthy six-year-old with sideburns. I so badly wanted to be like the popular girls… all sitting together, talking… eating their Wonder Bread sandwiches."

Toula grew up in a traditional Greek home, yet felt strong pressure to choose between her heritage and the collective culture of her Canadian society. She believes a choice is needed because she cannot reconcile her father's religious and cultural dogmatism and strong sense of Greek particularism with modern western society's constructed edifice of individuality. To her father's chagrin, Toula later falls for Ian Miller, a quintessential upper-middle-class white Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

Her father struggles to come to terms with the rupture of cultural continuity that Toula's actions will cause across future generations. For Toula, the impulse to assimilate is equally, if not more intense than the pressure to preserve her culture.

For Diaspora Jews, Toula's experience is all too familiar. Jews, in staggering numbers, are embracing modern western society at the expense of their own heritage. The recent Pew Research Center report confirms, along with other things, that American Jews are following the same trajectory as many other Americans by eschewing religion. The report paints a grim portrait of Jews in the Diaspora, with intermarriage rates at 58 per cent, and a staggering 71 per cent among non-Orthodox Jews.

Evidently, Jews are abandoning synagogues in increasing numbers. Like Toula, Jews are bombarded by tantalizing suggestions of wealth, relativism and alternative lifestyle choices, while simultaneously being pulled in the opposite direction by a heritage that is perceived as antiquated, and in extreme cases, as some form of neurosis. These push-pull variables make assimilation all the more likely.

While assimilation is a tragic reaction to emancipation, isolation (the extreme opposite of assimilation) is a tragic reaction to assimilation. At his retirement dinner, the former chief rabbi of Britain, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, recently stated that "those who embrace the world and reject Judaism, and those who embrace Judaism and reject the world" represent a "global danger" to Jews and Judaism.

Unlike isolationism, assimilationism never took root in North America as a full-blown ideology. While not much can be done to encourage integration of Jews who subscribe to an isolationist ideology, much can be done to discourage others from assimilation. Current efforts to address assimilation include strengthening Jewish ties to Israel and outreach programs aimed at bringing Jews closer to Judaism.

A traditional definition of Jewish identity is that Jews are principally Jews by religion. This construal of an "authentic" Jewish identity can leave secular Jews out in the cold. The Pew Report confirms that most Jews (62 per cent) view being Jewish as mainly a matter of ancestry and culture, while only 15 per cent view it as mainly a matter of religion.

Currently, secular and purely cultural manifestations of Jewish identity are halfway houses to assimilation. Therefore, putting resources into encouraging Jews to embrace their religious heritage is a valuable and necessary enterprise to curb assimilation. Judaism can offer Jews a sense of belonging, meaning to life and a moral compass to navigate their way in all aspects of life.

Whereas one may or may not choose to embrace religion, history on the other hand, is a fixed and inseparable identity. Jewish history offers narratives that relate most Jews to each other in genealogical ways. History defines a trajectory that can help to construct the essence of a Jewish identity and is an essential ingredient in maintaining identity.

Because history is a fixed designator, it can also induce affinity, deep self-awareness and even loyalty. Simultaneous to this, historical literacy is both leavened and enlivened by its engagement with key contemporary questions. History gives a historical framework that helps Jews contextualize the present in relation to the past, which can translate to a concrete Jewish identity. Learning Jewish history can be a vanguard of Jewish continuity in North America which can encourage Jews not to assimilate while they simultaneously work to integrate.

Jimmy Bitton is head of the history department at the Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Kimel Family Education Centre.

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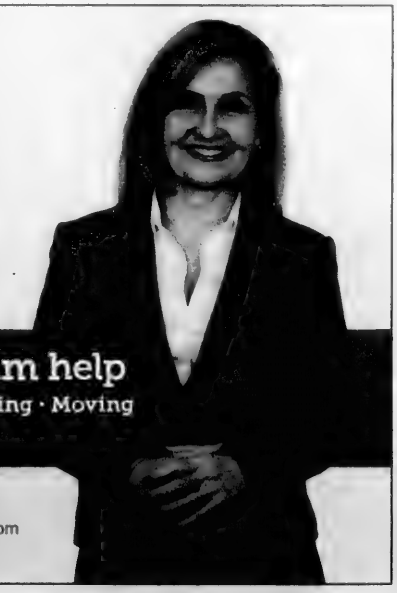

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'Muslim-only' enclaves: lead to integration or ghettoization?

Raheel Raza

Canada is home to a large number of ethnic communities, and it's natural that when immigrants come to a new land, they tend to congregate in areas where others like them have settled.

There are also some communities that have been marginalized in their homeland, so they tend to stick together. One example is the Ahmadiyya Muslims who have been persecuted in Pakistan, so now they live mostly in Vaughan, Ont., where they are close to each other and their mosque. In their particular case, it's understandable that they feel vulnerable and tend to find security in proximity to each other.

Now there's news that residents of a Thornhill, Ont., community are proposing to construct two residential highrise buildings and 61 townhouses in a low-density neighbourhood. The proposed condos would be built on the site of the Jaffari Community Centre, at 9000 Bathurst St., and would contain 377 units, primarily for Muslims.

There has been some push-back from residents who live in the Thornhill Woods neighbourhood, located right beside the community centre. Some residents started an online petition that has garnered more than 2,500 signatures against the development. They claim their resistance to the condos is due to worry about overcrowding and parking issues.

Other residents in the neighbourhood are also expressing concerns that the proposed housing will be subsidized, thereby decreasing their property values. As a show of community support, it would behoove the Shia Ithna Asheri Jamaat of Toronto (ISIJ), which runs the centre, to build low-cost housing that would be available to everyone in the area.

"Muslim only" enclaves are a reality in Europe, the United Kingdom and America, where they are sometimes funded by local governments and come with a slew of problems.

In Britain, where this idea first took root, followers of Anjem Chaudhry who runs the banned militant group Islam4UK, have set up "sharia zones" in different cities.

According to Daniel Pipes of the Middle East Forum, "There exist already some 10 to 20 Muslim-only enclaves in Canada and the United States, the villages run by Muslims of the Americas, a group affiliated with the Pakistani group Jamaat ul-Fuqra." In a recent letter to the U.S. government, some progressive Muslim groups have asked for Jamaat ul-Fuqra to be labelled as a terrorist group.

Now we're faced with the idea of a Muslim-only enclave in the Toronto area, and it's being pushed by a community that has recently faced controversy.

The Jaffari community is part of the ISIJ, which runs the East End Madrassah (EEM), a Sunday School that uses the premises of a public school to hold its classes for Muslim children. Based on a complaint, they were investigated for using a curriculum that promoted hate against Jews. There is concern that the curriculum being taught at EEM was created in Iran. No charges were laid.

In my opinion, the idea of a Muslim-only residential enclave is not in keeping with Canadian values. One of the questions that occurs to me is "How will the children growing up in this enclave learn to integrate into Canadian society?" When asked why he supported the building of the ISIJ condo project, a member of the Jaffari community said, "My family will be close to the mosque." If their only criteria for living in Canada and bringing up family here is to be close to their mosque, they might as well have stayed in an Islamic country.

Studies have shown that Muslim youths who grow up in ethnic enclaves are more susceptible to being radicalized compared to those who have a chance to mix and mingle in the public space. So we have reason to be concerned.

The other question we need to ask is whether the decisions of Muslim communities in Canada should be influenced by the politics of Iran and Saudi Arabia, or should these decisions be based on our collective sense of Canadian national identity and safety?

As a Muslim with a family to raise in Canada, when we immigrated 26 years ago, there was no pressure to live in a Muslim enclave. We knew we were coming to a country where we have freedom of religion and where we can follow our faith anywhere and in any way we want. However, we wanted to have our kids grow up with the Canadian values of individual freedom, gender equality and liberty, while contributing the best from their own world.

Raheel Raza is president of The Council for Muslims Facing Tomorrow, author of the book Their Jihad – Not My Jihad, *as well as an award-winning journalist, public speaker, and activist for human rights, gender equality and dignity in diversity.*

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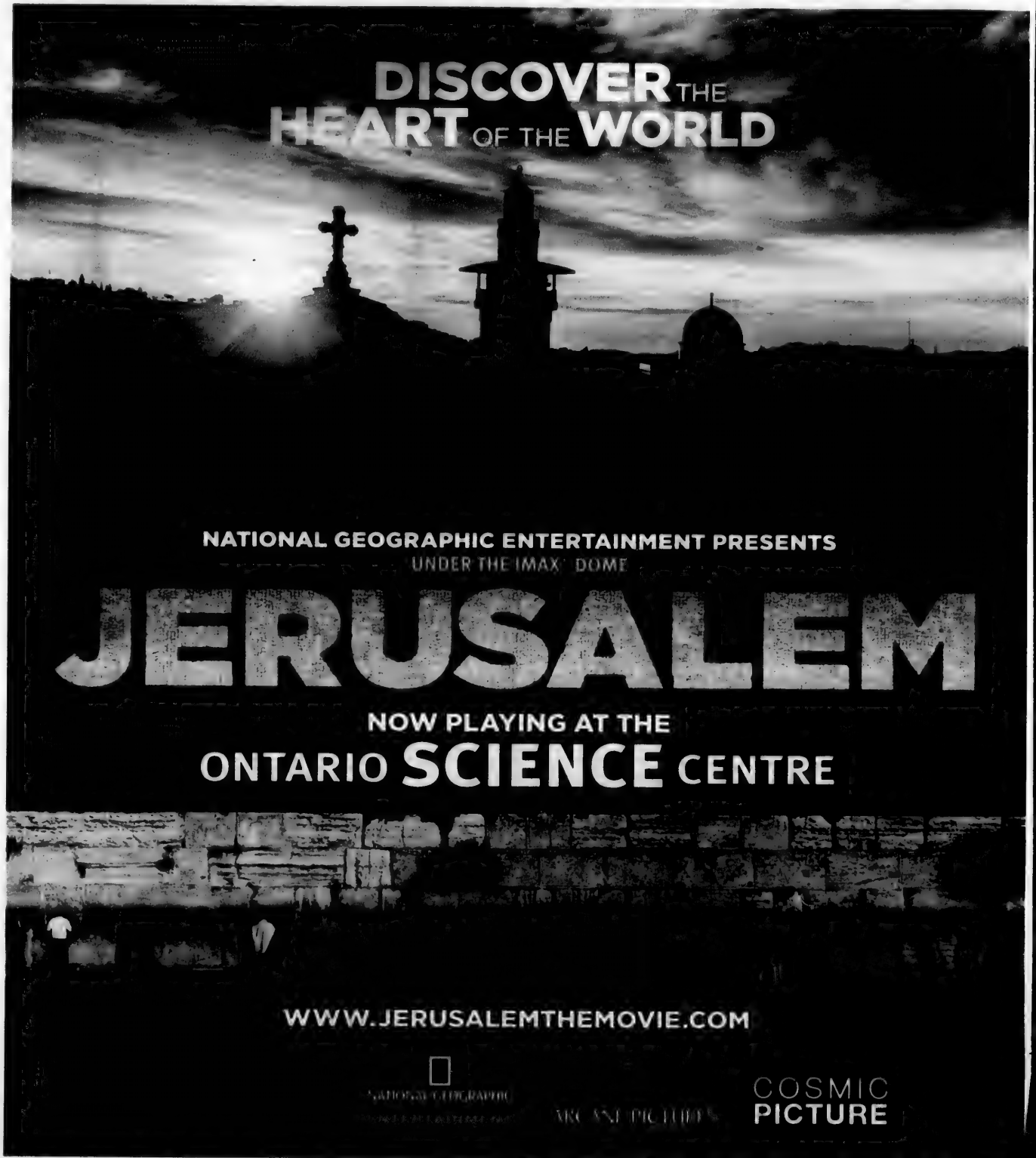
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Volunteers pack their cars with Passover food boxes on their way to be delivered last year.

Passover food drive returns minus chickens

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section, is gearing up to pack and deliver more than 2,500 Passover food boxes to needy Jews across the GTA.

Jews living under the poverty line, recent immigrants in need and people with disabilities have benefited from the organization's Passover Food Drive for the past 31 years.

"It's a tradition that allows people the dignity and the choice to celebrate," said Glenda Cooper, Passover Food Drive chair.

"Costs are so prohibitive, especially on Passover... so this just allows them the choice. Part of the Passover Food Drive is just to recognize people for who they are and that we see them as people, and just because they can't afford something, doesn't mean to say that they shouldn't be able to celebrate. That's really what we're trying to get across."

This year, Cooper and her committee of eight women have had to adjust to some changes. For one, the boxes – which contain items such as matzah, cereal, grape juice, canned fruit, Haggadahs and candles – won't include chicken.

"We used to get chickens from Chai Poultry, but Chai is no longer [in business]," Cooper explained. "[The owner] used to donate them to us for free for many years. It really was an added gift. This year, we don't have Chai and we couldn't afford to buy chicken... so BurnBrae Farms, the egg company, donated coupons for free eggs, so they're still getting a protein."

Cooper said the committee is also trying a new approach when it comes to advertising. For the past 30 years, they had inserted brown paper grocery bags into Metroland newspapers and *The CJN*.

"This year, we said there are no more bags. A lot of people weren't using them. It was a fortune of money just to go to the garbage, so I turned the advertising around a little bit. Until now, we didn't really advertise on TV or do much electronically," Cooper said, adding that the committee chose instead to run more ads in *The CJN* and on *cjnews.com*, and they've even advertised on CP24.

"We're trying to reach a far broader spectrum," she said, adding that they also have a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter.

As for a fundraising strategy, Cooper said the committee partnered with Jewish day schools to run an art competition. Students designed Passover greeting cards, and five winners were chosen. The cards were printed and are selling in packs of five for $25.

What hasn't changed is that food bins are available at grocery stores such as Sobeys, No Frills and Longos, where people can donate non-perishable kosher-for-Passover food items.

"We're doing our food drives from March 23 to April 2... People can drop off food in the boxes [at participating grocery stores], but at some stores, they can also purchase pre-packs, so they don't even have to think about what to buy. They just pick up a bag and pop it into the food box," Cooper said.

Delivery day is April 6, and Cooper said the committee will need a lot of volunteer drivers to distribute the boxes.

"People from all over the city volunteer. We get kids from the Jewish day schools. They come in groups. Families come in," she said.

In addition to volunteers, Cooper said the committee also needs cash donations.

"With the money that we raise, we're able to purchase exactly what we need... We have lost some grants across the board, like many others have, and so we are really reliant on the community and businesses. Our sponsorships came in, which was great, and now it's up to the rest of the community to help us bring this forward, because it really serves a need in this community."

Volunteers can show up on delivery day at 4700 Bathurst St. between 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

For information on donating or volunteering, visit Canadahelps.org/dn/17133 or www.ncjwc-ts.org, or call 416-633-5100.

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Toronto teen elected BBYO int'l president

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Amanda Freedman, a student at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, was recently elected international president of B'nai Brith Girls, BBYO's division for young women.

Freedman, 17, will serve at the helm of a 10-member teen board that will help chart the organization's vision for the coming year and provide leadership and support to teen leaders in local communities throughout the BBYO system.

BBYO is a 90-year-old pluralistic Jewish teen movement whose goal is to involve Jewish teens in meaningful Jewish experiences, by providing leadership and identity enrichment programs.

Freedman was elected Feb. 9 at BBYO's largest annual international convention in Dallas, Texas, where the theme was "Welcome Home – Every Jewish Teen, Anywhere." It brought together almost 2,000 teens plus hundreds of stakeholders from 20 countries for the weekend event.

"To be elected to BBYO's international board is such an honour. It means getting the experience to look at our movement through the widest lens, while also focusing in on specific communities that need our help," Freedman said.

"It means waking up every morning thinking of ways to improve our Jewish movement and working toward a brighter Jewish future, and going to sleep every night knowing that I have done something to ensure that Jewish youth are connected to their Judaism to make us a stronger people."

Amanda Freedman

As international president of B'nai Brith Girls, Freedman will travel to communities across North America and overseas as an ambassador of BBYO. She will work with the network of regional presidents and act as a liaison between the teens and staff of BBYO serving on the international board of directors.

"I will be able to convey the teen perspective to help give them the best experience possible," she said. "I will get to work with the rest of the international teen board to implement new initiatives, set up foundations for the future, and overall, spend the next year doing everything we can to make BBYO the best movement it can possibly be."

For the 2014-15 term, BBYO is planning to work alongside other Jewish youth movements, Freedman said. She will have the opportunity to meet the international presidents of these movements and work with them to achieve the common goal of a stronger Jewish future.

Freedman said she's been involved with BBYO since she started high school. She initially joined the organization because her mother had been in BBYO when she was a teenager in Tulsa, Okla. Freedman's older brother, Jesse, was also very involved with the organization and, at the time, was the newly elected regional president.

"Initially, I was reluctant to go to BBYO because unlike Jesse, I attended Jewish day school and I didn't think BBYO would be a different Jewish experience. But I really owe my brother a big thank you for pushing me to go, because BBYO has given me more than learning Hebrew and studying Torah in school could."

Freedman has been an active member of BBYO since she joined. "I was inspired as a young ninth grader to take a step into leadership and run programs for both my chapter and my region, and I loved the experience of running programs so much that during Grade 10, I served as my chapter's *s'ganit* (vice-president of programming)."

Throughout that term, Freedman said, she noticed what her chapter did well and where it needed improvement, so she decided to run for chapter *n'siah* (president). She held this role throughout her Grade 11 year and was further inspired to become regional *n'siah* in Grade 12.

"BBYO has given me a community, a network, a family and a home. It has given me the opportunity to meet Jews from all over the world, and taught me that even Jews from different backgrounds all have one thing in common that unites us. BBYO has helped me understand that I am a part of something much greater than myself – the global Jewish community, and shown me that when Jews from all walks of life come together, we have the power to change the world."

Freedman said she used to be afraid to run for student council because she never thought she would do a good job, but BBYO changed her outlook.

"BBYO inspired me to take a step into leadership by doing something as simple as running one program, and it was that act that ignited passion in me to make a difference and inspired me to get involved. I have gained confidence in myself and my abilities to make an impact through BBYO, and I have been able to personally inspire others to get involved, which to me is the greatest impact I can make."

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PURIM DRAMA: Toronto Heschel School junior kindergartners Bella Tick and Toren Markus act out the part of the Purim story when King Achashverosh chooses Esther to be his queen and puts the crown on her head.

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Lev Tahor

Five girls stage hunger strike on return to Canada

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Five Lev Tahor youngsters who were returned to Canada from Trinidad were hospitalized last week as a result of a hunger strike, according to a member of the ultra-Orthodox community.

The "five kids" are refusing to eat "until they are reunited with their beloved parents," said Miriam Helbrans, a mother of three who lives in the community.

Helbrans, the daughter of the group's rabbinic leader, Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, said two children were taken by ambulance to hospital from a north Toronto home where they had been placed by child welfare authorities.

The five were part of a group of youngsters apprehended in Trinidad and flown back to Toronto. They were fleeing a Quebec court order, enforced by an Ontario judge, which ordered them removed from their families over fear they could come to harm.

In Guatemala, another group – two parents and their six children – have reportedly applied for refugee status.

And in another development, an Ontario court agreed to release documents that had been under a publication ban. The documents include allegations of sexual abuse, beatings with crowbars, belts, whips and a coat hanger, as well as removal of children from their parents as a disciplinary measure. None of the allegations have been proved in court.

Six children – four from one family, two from another – along with the adults accompanying them were brought back to Canada from Trinidad on an official government jet, said Uriel Goldman, a spokesman for Lev Tahor.

According to a CBC report, Trinidad Attorney General Anand Ramlogan said the youngsters were detained when authorities learned they were not traveling with their parents and authorities were concerned over human trafficking, child prostitution and other factors.

However, Nachman Helbrans, another spokesman for Lev Tahor, said four of the children stopped in Trinidad were with their parents and the other two were travelling to Guatemala to join their parents. The parents, American by nationality, appeared at the U.S. Embassy to ask that their children be sent to them.

Meanwhile, *CBC News* reported that Canadian authorities had asked the Guatemalan government to help locate the Lev Tahor family. They are reportedly staying in the tourist town of Panajachel, a few hours west of Guatemala City.

Uriel Goldman
[Paul Lungen photo]

Another Lev Tahor member, a 17-year-old girl, was apprehended in a motel in Calgary with her baby, and flown back to Toronto. "We know she's in Toronto in one house, and the baby is in another house, five minutes away," Goldman said.

Goldman said the flights from Trinidad and Calgary were both on Shabbat. "Why not respect the religion?" he asked. "It's Canada, not [North] Korea. They don't know it's Shabbat?"

Goldman said Lev Tahor is being subjected to "psychological warfare."

"For no justification [child welfare authorities] come every day on fishing expeditions. That's what they're doing for the last two years," he said.

"It's lies, fear. It's just a tactic to break the family. Any family in the world, if they watch them for two years, they'd find a case.

"We're human beings, not robots. Sometimes we make a mistake," Goldman said.

Earlier, Denis Baraby, director of Quebec's department of youth protection for the Laurentians region, said he would ask for the removal of all children in the Lev Tahor community, which number some 250 individuals.

"I think the community is preparing a mass move," he told the *Gazette* in Montreal. "If we want to protect the children that are in the community, we need to start working on the exit of the 114 other children."

Baraby also said police and Crown prosecutors were preparing criminal charges against the guardians of the children who took them out of the country, the *Gazette* reported.

Goldman said "those people who left, I cannot talk on their behalf." But non-Lev Tahor members have told him they understand why parents would flee rather than lose their children.

The allegations against them are not true and there are no substantiated allegations against the rest of the community that would warrant the removal of all their children, he maintained.

Goldman said Quebec child welfare authorities want to destroy the community. Speaking in their voice, he said, "you cannot run away. We have to get you down. Your children are not sleeping at night because they're afraid. Who cares? They're just dirty Jews.

"This is normal?" he asked. "This is hate."

"We feel exactly like 1939 Berlin."

The Lev Tahor case is being watched around the world. One observer is former Montrealer Bernard Fryshman. A professor of physics at the New York Institute of Technology, Fryshman said he has been following the group's travails ever since its spiritual leader, Rabbi Helbrans, was charged in New York with kidnapping a teenage boy. He called Rabbi Helbrans' 1994 conviction in the case a miscarriage of justice, since he said the rabbi was trying to protect the boy from abusive parents.

As for the threat that Quebec is considering apprehending all Lev Tahor children, Fryshman said, "This kind of wholesale removal of children is a scary thing. If a child is being abused and you harm the child, that's what Children's Aid is for."

But to remove all the children, "that's scary. That's shocking. That should arouse all civil liberties groups."

Fryshman, who is affiliated with the Orthodox Agudah community, said civil rights organizations "should be at the government's door saying this is not the way a government should behave. These are human rights, fundamental freedoms.

"There's something scary in a government taking 127 children from a community. There's no precedent for that in any democratic society."

He suggested the government of Quebec wants to be seen taking a harsh stand against a religious minority.

"They want to set a precedent that they are harsh on religion," he suggested. •

Baraby's office would not comment on the case.

Program promotes coexistence

Continued from page 3

"We lived in the same cabins, we slept in the same cabins, which was another adventure, if I can call it that, and it was really interesting and beautiful how you got to know people around you that lived really close to you for three weeks.

"If we can compare it to life, it's a really short period of time, but it still had a very, very significant impact on our thoughts and our way of living and our way of seeing things. We did see a lot of things through each others' eyes."

During a speech to the National Council of Jewish Women late last month, Medlij spoke about an incident she and her fellow campers were able to resolve in a way that left both the Jewish and Arab participants feeling respected.

She said that last year, Camp Shomria commemorated its 100th anniversary, and during one celebratory event, the campers were asked to form a circle to sing *Hatikvah*, Israel's national anthem.

"I took a step back out of the circle, because I don't want to be part of it, and I don't think it speaks to me at all... Other Arab members of my group sat on the floor out of the circle," she said.

"The next day we had a conversation and... everyone expressed his point of view, and the reason behind doing what they did. We also listened to those who were objecting to what we had done. As a result, we came up with a compromise that we do have the right to leave the circle and not be part of singing the national anthem... but on the other hand, we do not have the right to sit on the floor, since it might be considered as disrespectful by the Jewish members of the group or for those who look at *Hatikvah* as something really important and means a lot to them."

Medlij said she felt that this discussion and compromise was a perfect example of the ways Palestinian and Jews can live peacefully with each other, in spite of their differences in beliefs and culture.

"This program had a very good and huge impact, in my opinion, on myself, and it also had an impact on others in my group. Thanks to such programs, we will be able to tear down walls and stereotypes that we have in Israel between Jews and Arabs."

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Montreal-area mayor to run in Mount Royal

Housefather seeks Liberal Party nomination

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Anthony Housefather launched his campaign to become a member of Parliament by slamming Premier Pauline Marois and her government for sowing the kind of fear he hasn't seen since the 1995 sovereignty referendum.

On March 15, the Côte St. Luc mayor officially announced his candidacy for the Liberal nomination in Mount Royal, which has been represented by former justice minister Irwin Cotler since 1999. Cotler, 73, said in February that he would not run in the federal election expected next year.

Housefather, an outspoken critic of Bill 60 – the Quebec values charter – and Bill 14, which would expand the French language charter, said the worry in the riding over the values charter and the outcome of the current election is acute.

"People are asking, 'Should I sell my house? Should I leave Quebec? Do my children have a future here?'" he said at a press conference held at a frozen yogurt shop in Quartier Cavendish.

Marois, he said, "lives in a fantasy world where an independent Quebec is perfect in every way… I think she's just off the wall."

Housefather vowed to "vigorously defend" the rights of the English minority in Quebec and to be "the voice of Quebec federalists" in Ottawa.

If the PQ is re-elected, especially with a majority, it will be a "huge issue" for the federal government, he said. "This provincial election will determine where this country is going."

However, he is counting on Liberal leader Philippe Couillard's "aggressive" leadership to stop this from happening.

Mayor of Côte St. Luc for the past eight years, Housefather, at 43, has 20 years of experience in municipal politics, initially serving as a Hampstead councillor before getting elected in Côte St. Luc. He is a past vice-president of the federal Liberal Party and was president of Alliance Quebec in his 20s.

Housefather was surrounded by all eight of his councillors, Mayors Peter Trent of Westmount, Philippe Roy of Town of Mount Royal, and Beny Masella of Montreal West. An endorsement from Hampstead Mayor William Steinberg, who was out of town, was read.

Trent called Housefather "scarily brilliant" and possessing exceptional "probity" and judgment. His councillors praised his ability to find consensus.

In addition, outgoing D'Arcy McGee MNA Lawrence Bergman, whom Housefather called a mentor, was on hand, as was English Montreal School Board commissioner Syd Wise, who read a message of "unconditional support" from chair Angela Mancini.

Anthony Housefather

Wise raised the conflicting feelings many Jewish voters in Mount Royal. He said he has been tempted to vote Conservative, but felt he must vote for "an eminent human rights activist" like Cotler.

When he heard Cotler was retiring, Wise said he thought this time he would vote Conservative to show his appreciation to Prime Minister Stephen Harper for his steadfast support of Israel.

But if Housefather does get the nomination, Wise said he would vote Liberal in 2015.

Wise and the EMSB are especially grateful to Housefather for his support of its project to reopen a high school in Côte St. Luc.

Asked for a comment on the growing support for the Conservatives in Mount Royal since Harper's leadership, especially among Jews, Housefather replied: "I'm pleased with the prime minister's support for Israel, but it should not be a wedge issue. We need both parties to support Israel.

"[Liberal Leader] Justin Trudeau has always been supportive of Israel."

Housefather continued that Mount Royal voters are also, in great majority, members of minorities in Quebec and ardent federalists, and Trudeau is better equipped to represent those interests than Harper.

"Justin Trudeau can speak to Quebecers, and he is the federal leader who has been most outspoken against bills 60 and 14."

Housefather thinks Harper should be supporting the provincial Liberals in the current Quebec election campaign.

The nervous mood among Mount Royal residents was underlined by Côte St. Luc councillor Dida Berku, who introduced Housefather.

"Never before have people felt so insecure," she said. "They are shaken by the political atmosphere. We need a strong leader to defend our rights."

Housefather said he expects the Mount Royal Liberal nomination meeting to be held in the "near future." No other candidate had come forward as of last week.

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Marois stands by 'kosher tax' candidate

CIJA rejects PQ candidate's apology

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) has rejected an apology from Parti Québécois (PQ) candidate Louise Mailloux, whom it has accused of anti-Semitic rhetoric, as inadequate and meaningless.

Mailloux, who is running in Montreal's Gouin riding for the first time, issued an apology March 15 after CIJA's accusation that she had spread "anti-Semitic propaganda" reminiscent of that of the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi groups, notably for her claim that Quebec consumers are forced to pay a "kosher tax."

"She alleges a misunderstanding and refuses to basically recognize her views are not only offensive, but anti-Semitic in nature," said CIJA Quebec vice-president Luciano Del Negro.

On March 14, Premier Pauline Marois defended Mailloux, but said her views are her own and not those of the PQ.

She called her a respected academic who articulately espouses the PQ government's proposed charter of Quebec values.

"Her writings are eloquent. I respect her point of view. She supports our secular charter and I appreciate her support."

Marois added: "The Parti Québécois is not an anti-Semitic party. We have good relations with the leaders of this community and all the different communities in Quebec."

In a statement issued through the PQ, Mailloux said, "Over recent days, many things have been said about the comments that I made within the framework of the reasonable accommodation debate. Concerning my remarks on certain religious practices, I wish to say that I never wanted to offend or injure anyone. If that is the case, I apologize very sincerely."

Louise Mailloux

An ardent secularist and feminist, Mailloux has been a philosophy professor at the CEGEP du Vieux Montréal since 1980 and is an outspoken public intellectual. She is the author of *La laïcité, ça s'impose* and *Une chartre pour la nation*.

On March 13, CIJA condemned Mailloux for spreading "anti-Semitic conspiracy theories" before the campaign, and it wants her to clearly disavow them.

The organization is particularly dismayed by "repeated" comments – verbal and written – she has made in the past about a hidden "kosher tax," the charge that kashrut supervision adds to the price all consumers must pay for supervised goods.

It's an allegation that came up frequently during the 2007-2008 Bouchard-Taylor commission on the reasonable accommodation of religious minorities. Kashrut and halal continue be debated in the province's media, with critics claiming it inflates prices or is animal cruelty.

CIJA cites an article Mailloux wrote in *L'Aut'journal* and a 98.5 Radio interview with Benoît Dutrizac two years ago, in which she claimed that kosher certification, which has become commonplace among products sold in any supermarket, is enriching rabbis.

She has elsewhere suggested that the proceeds from kosher and halal certification fund religious wars.

"According to Mailloux, kosher certification is a 'rip off', 'robbery' and a 'tax' paid 'directly… to the synagogue' unbeknownst to Quebecers," Del Negro said on March 13, "…thereby contributing to unfounded resentment toward Quebec Jews by their fellow citizens."

The so-called kosher tax is an "urban legend… unbefitting of a major political party," he said.

Although Mailloux's views were well known when Marois unveiled her candidacy March 8, CIJA issued its denunciation after Mailloux stood by them in a brief interview published by *La Presse* on March 13.

Asked if she takes responsibility for all her past statements, Mailloux responded, "Absolutely."

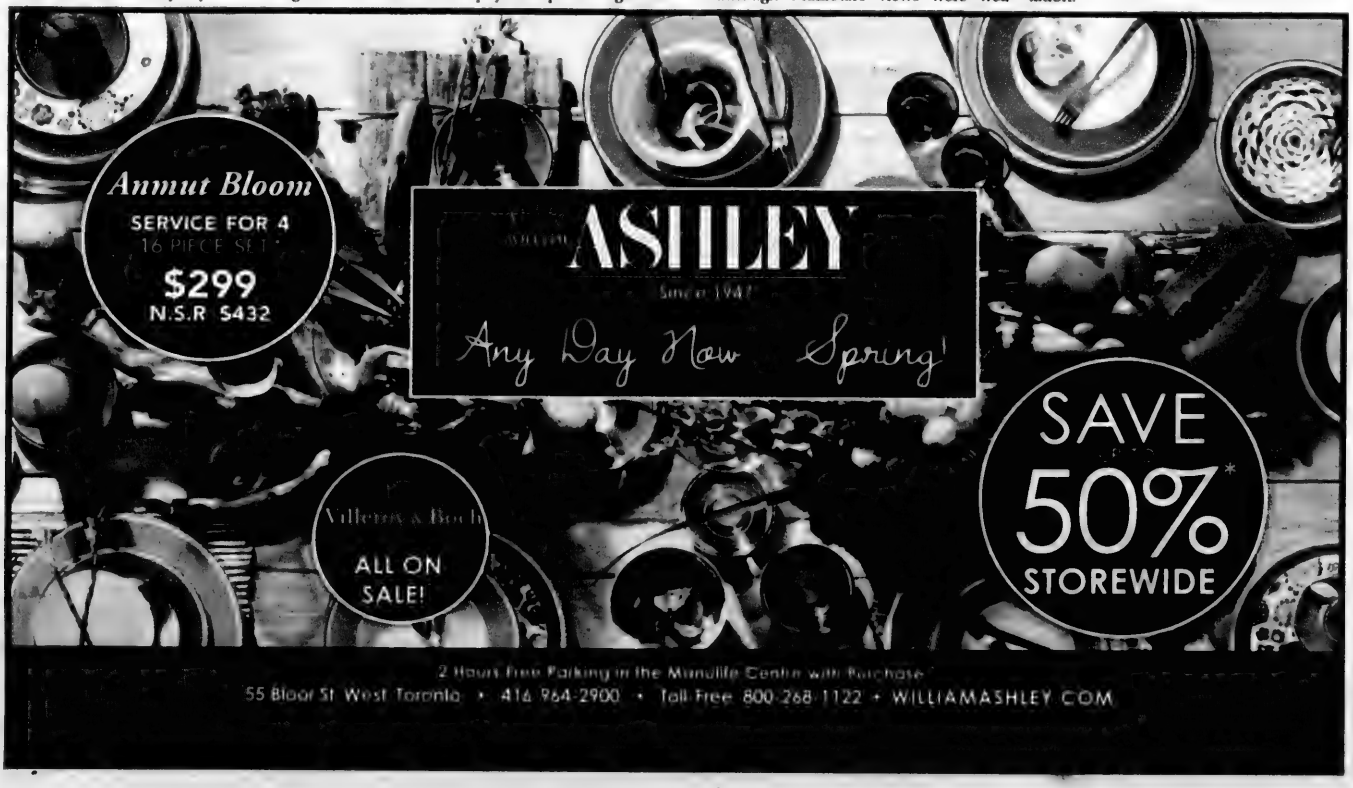
These opinions include comparing circumcision and Christian baptism to rape.

However, she refused to elaborate, saying: "At the present time, I am in the Parti Québécois to defend the secularism project. That's what interests me."

After Marois' comments, CIJA spokesperson Eta Yudin said, "We invite [Marois] to take a deeper look at what Mailloux has said in the media, not just her academic texts. She had the opportunity to distance herself or re-interpret those comments, and did not."

CIJA had called on the PQ to "debunk the myth of a 'kosher tax'."

Meanwhile, the PQ withdrew the candidacy of another candidate last week because of his posting of anti-Muslim imagery and comments on social media. Jean Carrière, who was running in east end Montreal's LaFontaine riding, was dropped after he posted on his personal Facebook page a picture of a topless woman giving the finger with the caption "F--- Islam" and a comment that "Islam is… female genital mutilation."



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IsraAID director visits Eastern Canada

Joel Jacobson
Atlantic Correspondent

Navonel (Voni) Glick

HALIFAX — Since he became program director of IsraAID in July 2011, Navonel (Voni) Glick has supervised planning and implementation of humanitarian projects in Japan, south Sudan, Jordan, South Korea, Haiti, Kenya, the Philippines and the United States. He's been emergency response leader in the latter four.

However, he spent the week of March 3, spreading the word about IsraAID in Eastern Canada, speaking to university and community groups in Fredericton (University of New Brunswick), Sackville N.B. (Mount Allison University), Wolfville N.S. (Acadia University), Halifax (Dalhousie and Saint Mary's universities) and St. John's Nfld. (Memorial). He concluded a Canadian swing with a couple of days in Toronto last week before returning to his Tel Aviv base.

"IsraAID is an apolitical, non-profit organization, existing without any government funding. It was founded in 2001 and registered in 2007 to respond to crises at major humanitarian disasters," he said in a Halifax interview.

IsraAID's main fields of expertise are capacity building in mental health care, responses to gender-based violence, youth empowerment, and professional training. It has operated in 22 countries

"We're supported mostly by the Jewish federations of Canada, specifically Toronto, but also receive funding from other federations in North America, plus private and family foundations and corporate sponsors," Glick said.

"Our annual budget is about $1.5 million, a very low percentage of which goes to administration and the rest to programming and development."

Glick, 27, is a dual Canadian-Israeli citizen and speaks four languages – Hebrew, English, French and Nepalese. He was born in Israel but has lived in France and India, studied at McGill University in Montreal, and worked for four years in Nepal with Tevel B'Tzedek, an Israeli development organization, prior to starting with IsraAID.

"I was drawn back to Israel to IsraAID to help others in this world," he said. "As program director, I co-ordinate projects, work with our country directors (where a disaster has happened) and oversee budgeting and accounts. When something happens, though, I'm usually first out, along with our medical team."

The first few days are critical when a disaster occurs, he stressed. "We're usually there in three to four days, but we want to advance that to one or two because those days are crucial. From each disaster, we appeal to our donors for funds and need to ensure we have enough to get started immediately, rather than waiting even an extra day or two."

He said people in stricken nations are aware Israel is participating in a meaningful way.

"Only in Jordan, have we kept a lower profile because we're assisting Syrian refugees there. Jordan knows about us, but the Syrians don't, because we're concerned they might be targeted for receiving food and supplies from Israel."

He said most countries respect IsraAID, because they recognize the Jewish state as a success story that built itself and is trying to help them re-build.

Glick spent a week in Haiti prior to his Atlantic Canada speaking tour, reviewing what IsraAID is doing in the earthquake-ravaged country.

"We were there (in 2010) more quickly than many other countries, setting up schools, rehab clinics, trauma centres, and eventually doing long-term community development that's still going on."

He said agriculture has been a major initiative, bringing Israeli technology and expertise in drip irrigation to encourage more efficient use of water for farm growth. "We've trained farmers, set them up with buyers for their product, and they are now close to independence."

Glick said he's satisfied and privileged to work in this field and "humbled by the people I meet in these countries.

"Disasters bring out the best and worst in people. You see the high of incredible selflessness and willingness to help and then the low of pain and desperation. It's a constant emotional up and down, with no end to the 'coulda, woulda, shoulda' questions you ask yourself."

Coyotes' veteran looks forward to playoffs

David Grossman
Special to The CJN

Nothing sets off Jeff Halpern's passion like a discussion about hockey.

But when the conversation, focusing on many years in rinks across the National Hockey League, suddenly turns to whether he's nearing the end of his career and his future plans, there's a slight hesitation in his voice.

Halpern pauses a bit to contemplate a reply.

"I'll play as long as I can – I just love the sport too much," he said in a telephone conversation from Arizona, where he plays for the Phoenix Coyotes. "I still have something to contribute, trying to enjoy each year, but I'm aware everything comes to an end and will deal with things when they happen."

Halpern is the oldest Jewish player in the NHL, and now, at the age of 37, his numbers aren't what they used to be. At the break for the Winter Olympics, the six-foot, 200-pound forward had two goals and six assists in 45 games.

Those stats are far from the days when he entered the NHL in 1999-2000 – his first of two stints with the Washington Capitals – when he scored 18 goals, followed by 21 a year later.

Halpern has had a solid pro career, mostly as a defensive forward and penalty-killer, playing 13 seasons in Dallas, Tampa Bay, Los Angeles, New York and Montreal.

The Potomac, Md.-born Halpern was captain of the U.S. national team at the 2008 World Championships.

He started skating at the age of three, taught by his father with help from an older sister, and became hooked on hockey at the age of four. More than three decades later, with the end of his playing days in sight, Halpern is contemplating a coaching career.

"It would be nice to coach, likely on the professional level, but I have to find the right place and enjoy it," said Halpern who, in past, indicated he would like to run youth hockey clinics.

A graduate of Princeton University, Halpern has something in common with Justin Bieber. The Canadian singer and songwriter was born in Stratford, Ont., and Halpern started his hockey career in the same city, playing for the Stratford Cullitons during the 1994-95 season, piling up 83 points in 44 games in the Ontario Hockey Association.

The Greater Washington Jewish Sports Hall of Fame added Halpern to its list of celebrities when he played for the Capitals, the team he grew up watching.

In 2005, the same year his mother, aunt and uncle were killed in a car accident, he chose to sit out a game against the Carolina Hurricanes to observe Yom Kippur.

"Judaism is important to me and our kids are raised Jewish," said Halpern, who married Kelley Cornwall, a former cheerleader with the Washington Redskins, a few years ago. Cornwall converted to Judaism.

Jeff Halpern

Halpern, whose great-grandmother was a Holocaust survivor, grew up in a Conservative home and celebrated his bar mitzvah at B'nai Israel Synagogue in Rockville, Md. He takes pride in his heritage and Jewish background, and despite strong athletic ambitions as a multi-sport youngster, he had to juggle his time to include religious school and hockey practices.

"I appreciate what I have been taught and the strong sense of tradition," said Halpern.

"As a kid growing up, it was always looking for an opportunity, trying to get to the next level and maybe a scholarship," said Halpern.

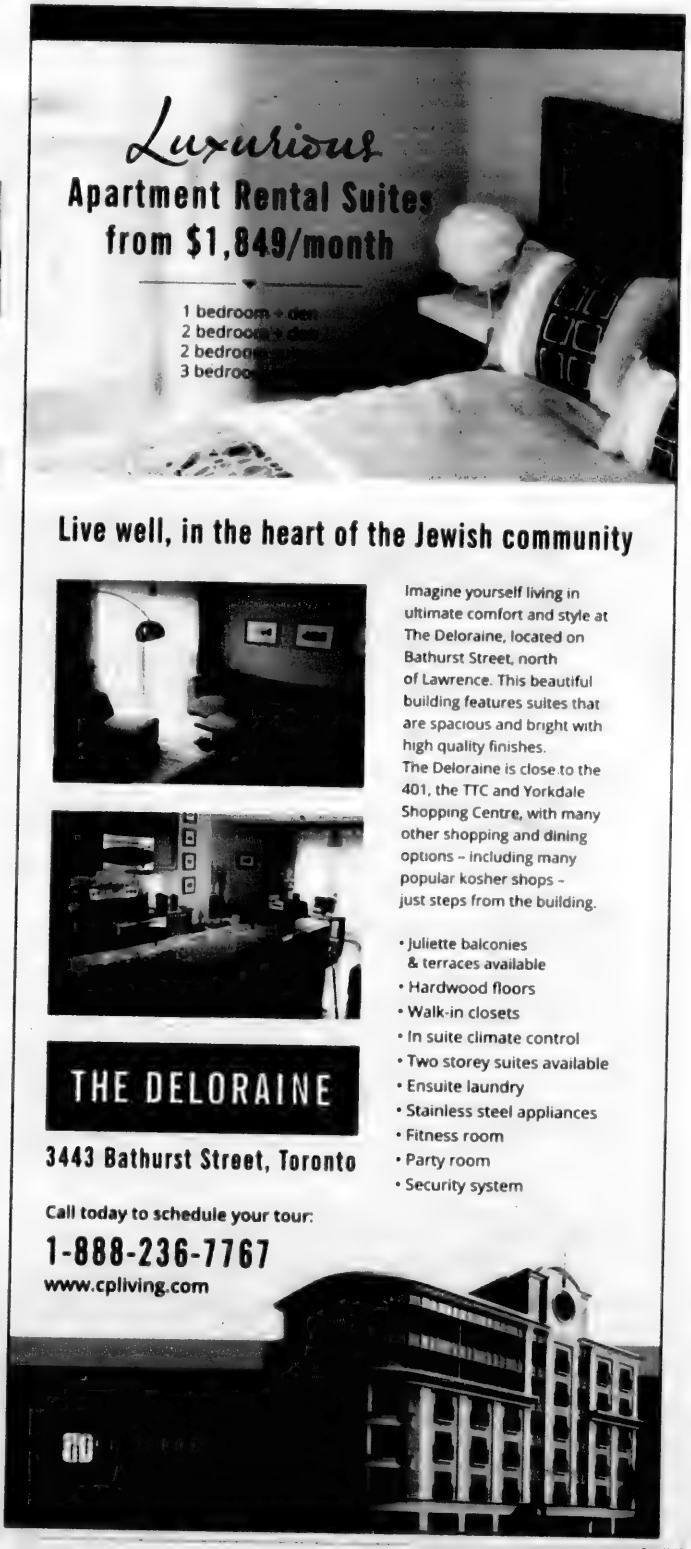
"My high school didn't have a hockey team, so I had to transfer to a prep school in New Hampshire."

As for his hockey career highlights and regrets, Halpern looks at the professional game and is realistic and diplomatic.

"Maybe it was my first game in the NHL, but I think my highlight has yet to come," said Halpern, who admits to being his biggest critic. "I hope it's a long and memorable playoff run. What I want to avoid is second guessing myself."

Halpern, who was undrafted, is one of a growing number of Jewish pro hockey players playing in the NHL and in leagues around the world. In Canadian, U.S. and European universities, the numbers are also on the rise.

"Playing in the NHL is such a special place, you dream about it as a kid," said Halpern. "I have had many opportunities and the challenge is always to keep getting better."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Cyclist rides to publicize mental illness

Abigail Cukier
Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — Danielle Berman's dad had a passion for cycling. And this summer, Danielle will ride almost 4,300 kilometres in his memory.

Berman's father, Dr. Les Berman died by suicide in 1999. This July, in a trip she has dubbed Ride Away Stigma, Berman, will ride from Vancouver to Hamilton to encourage open discussion about mental health and reduce the stigma of mental illness. She also plans to raise $60,000 for St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, the Suicide Prevention Community Council of Hamilton and the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention.

"My dad loved cycling and the outdoors and adventure," said Berman, 27. "I thought it was the perfect match to combine what he loved to do with what helps me when I'm struggling with my mental health."

Berman, who will be riding 80 to 120 kilometres a day, is in daily contact with her bike coach. Her training includes core workouts and one- to four-hour bike rides, which she willramp up in the spring.

She will start her ride in mid-July and plans to return to the Dundas Driving Park in Hamilton, Ont., on Sunday, Sept. 7, a few days before World Suicide Prevention Day.

Berman grew up in Dundas. Her father had moved there from South Africa in 1975, and later started a sleep disorders and respiratory health centre.

He had a passion for adventure. Berman remembers a lot of family camping trips and travelling.

"He had a great sense of humour and would have me laughing all of the time," Berman said. "He was so caring and loving. I also remember him encouraging me to do things outside my comfort zone.

"I am definitely doing that a lot this year."

Her father died in 1999 when Danielle was 13.

"I knew how he died, but I wasn't ready to believe he chose to leave," she said. "I held on to the belief for a long time that it was an accident. It was a long time until I was able to comprehend that he was so hopeless that he couldn't see any other option."

In Grade 11, Berman started experiencing depression.

"I felt so alone. I was hiding it, and I had a fear of being judged if my friends knew what was going on. I knew I was in this darkness, but I didn't understand it, because everything in my life was going well. Luckily, my mom recognized it and encouraged me to seek help," Berman said.

"As I started to open up to friends and family, I was fortunate. I was well supported by friends and family. But it's not like that for everyone unfortunately. As a social worker, I see how much stigma stops people from getting treatment or opening up to friends and family."

Berman is doing well these days, but she makes sure to have supports in place, such as exercise and being with nature.

Along the ride, she will hold events in various communities and will regularly update her blog and social media sites. Events will be listed on her website.

To make a donation or for sponsorship information, visit rideawaystigma.com. Funds will be divided among the three charities. Berman hopes to finance her travel costs with the help of sponsors.

"I wanted to do something where people would see my dedication. I am investing the time to train and ride," Berman said. "People can see how important this cause is to me. My hope is for them to start talking about mental health and seeing it in a new light. It is not a choice. It is an illness that can happen to anyone."

JPL 100

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VI.	Azrieli Institute Award for Best Book in Israel Studies in English or French[1] (Sponsored by the Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies, Concordia University)	$500
VII.	Translation Award for a Book on a Jewish Theme[4]	$500
VIII.	Michael Moskovitz Award for a Film on a Jewish Theme[5]	$500
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3. Author must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.
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Submissions for all nine categories must be received by April 30, 2014.

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OSCAR CELEBRATION: Frederic Bohbot hoists the Oscar he won as executive producer of *The Lady in Number 6*, named best documentary short. Bohbot, pictured at the Dolby Theater in Hollywood, is founder and head of the independent Bunbury Films.

CJPAC holds annual shmoozefest

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

CJPAC's Action Party feels less like a political event and more like a fun night out – and that's exactly the point.

The annual gathering of the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, which took place March 6 at Ryerson University's Mattamy Athletic Centre (a.k.a. the former Maple Leaf Gardens), offers young professionals a chance to mingle with a who's who of Canadian politics.

"Very few Canadians participate in the political process by joining a party, volunteering on campaigns or supporting candidates," said Mark Waldman, CJPAC's executive director. "At Action, we hope to show our community members how easy, accessible and fun becoming engaged in the political process can be."

Waldman says this year's party was the best to date, attracting a record sold-out crowd of nearly 1,400 guests. That number included 60 elected officials in addition to candidates.

"We were thrilled to see so many young professionals and elected officials mingling and getting to know each other throughout the evening," he added.

"Truly, this is what Action is about – building new authentic relationships between community members and political leaders from across the spectrum and deepening existing ones."

This motto has been drawing politicians of all stripes and levels to CJPAC's annual shmoozefest for years. This year's event was no different: Tony Clement, Olivia Chow, Kellie Leitch, Joe Oliver, Mark Adler, Irwin Cotler, Michael Chan, Tim Hudak and Josh Matlow were just some of the MPs, MPPs and city councillors in attendance.

Another notable party guest was Toronto Mayor Rob Ford, who quickly became the centre of attention and took dozens (if not hundreds) of photos with partygoers. Additionally, the event attracted a number of prominent Toronto mayoral candidates, including John Tory and Karen Stintz.

"The annual Toronto CJPAC Action is a fantastic event that I have attended for years," Tory said in a statement to *The CJN*. "It showcases the best and most socially engaged young professionals Toronto has to offer. As a strong supporter of the State of Israel and of Toronto's vibrant Jewish community, I look forward to the opportunity to engage with the next generation of Toronto's community leaders."

Like Tory, Thornhill MP Peter Kent has been attending the Action Party for a number of years.

"All organizations that have serious missions also need to have a social or recreational dimension, and I think that's exactly what the Action Party is," Kent told *The CJN*. "I've been to previous events here in Toronto and in Montreal, and it gives people a chance, across partisan lines, to dress up and have a good social evening without getting into the serious, important work that the organization's main mission is focused on."

One of the key differences this year was the location; it marked the first time the event was held at the Mattamy Athletic Centre, the former home of the Toronto Maple Leafs. The arena provided an ideal space for guests to network and greet one another.

"Our new location is a whole lot better," said Corbin Seligman, one of the event's four co-chairs. "Everyone's in one room rather than being all dispersed." (The 2013 event was held at the Arcadian Court in downtown Toronto).

Guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and drinks from three open bars located throughout the arena, as well as a DJ and a live band.

The party proved to be an ideal event for young professionals such as Adir Krafman, Israel co-ordinator at Hillel of Greater Toronto.

"I've met some people that I know and I'm excited to meet some people that I haven't met yet," said Krafman, 23. "There's a great atmosphere and I'm having a great time."

Waldman says the Action Party is just the beginning. His goal is to continue to engage young Jews through CJPAC's year-round programming.

"With a federal election in 2015, now is the time for our community to step up and get active," he said. "This year we want to train more election volunteers and provide more creative programming than ever before."

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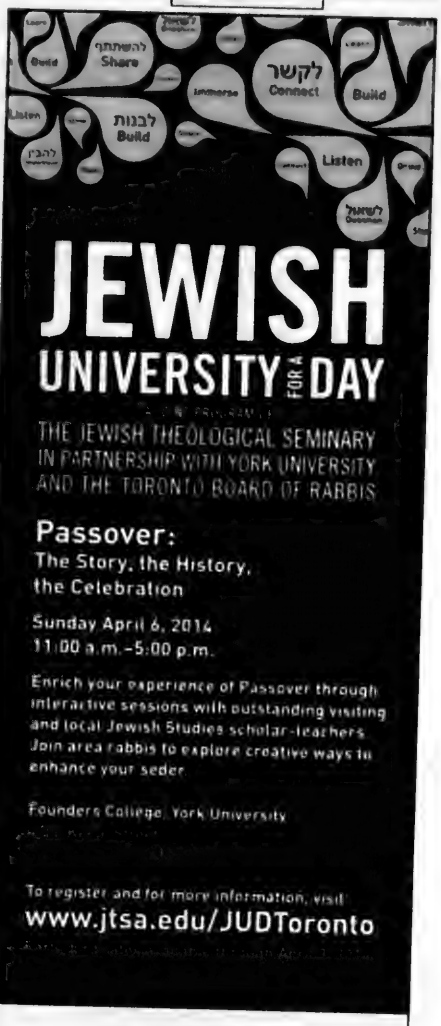

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Israeli Arabs help to debunk apartheid myths

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Eight Israelis who identify as Jewish, Muslim, Druze or Bedouin were in Toronto last week as part of a program called WordSwap, hoping to get the last word on the Israeli apartheid debate.

Flown in by StandWithUs Canada, a non-profit, pro-Israel advocacy group, Orit Tepper, Rabea Bader and Muhamed Heeb told *The CJN* about the message they hope to send to students who are inundated with dishonest, anti-Israel rhetoric on campus.

Heeb, a 27-year-old Bedouin Muslim who participated in the WordSwap program when it ran for the first time last year, said he was happy to have another opportunity to tour Ontario universities to dispel some of the damaging myths perpetuated by Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) organizers.

"I wanted to meet the Canadian students and tell them the truth. Last year, I met a lot of students… I keep in touch with many of the students from last year, and this is one of my goals – to bring our image of Israel… Some did not know there are Arabs in Israel. A lot of people were surprised," said Heeb, a University of Haifa student who is obtaining his master's in public policy.

The WordSwap team travelled to the University of Toronto, York University, the University of Windsor, the University of Guelph, the University of Ottawa and Carleton University, where they held tabling sessions and engaged students in informal conversation, answered challenging questions and shared personal stories about their service in the Israel Defence Forces.

The Israeli-born Tepper, a co-founder of WordSwap who lived in Toronto from 1989 until 2005 and attended York before she moved back to Israel, said she understands how difficult it is for Jewish students to cope with anti-Israel rhetoric on campus.

Orit Tepper, top left, and Rabea Bader, far right, pose with their fellow WordSwap participants during a tabling session at York University.

"As a student at York… it was almost impossible to focus on my education. You were either indifferent to what was going on around you, or you took a stand and it affected your ability to learn and to focus on what you needed to focus on," she said, adding that she served as Hillel's Israeli affairs co-chair.

"When I went back to Israel and I started studying there, I didn't have any issues on campus. It was non-political. I studied with Christians, Muslims, Israeli-Arabs, side by side, and we never spoke politics."

She said although she returned to Israel, she didn't want to forget the Jewish students who still faced anti-Israel events on a regular basis.

"Our goal is not to focus on politics on campus. We answer questions, we learn about the students we meet and we share with them our experiences in Israel," Tepper said.

"We want people, who maybe haven't had an opportunity to meet an Israeli, an Arab-Israeli, or a Jewish-Israeli… to turn around and say, I have an Israeli friend," she said.

"Most of the people we talk to are people from the Middle East, from Yemen, from Saudi Arabia, from Syria, from Lebanon. To them, Israel is just an entity – they call it Little Satan – and when they meet one of us, they can't help but think, 'Well, you're not so bad.'"

Bader, a 23-year-old Tel Aviv University student studying for his bachelor's in computer science and economics, said he met a number of people at U of T who were shocked to learn that Arabs live in Israel.

"I said, 'I'm living proof,'" he said, going so far as to converse with them in Arabic to convince them further.

"I've travelled a lot, and I've been called [names] when they learn that I'm from Israel," said Bader, a member of Israel's 125,000-strong Druze community.

"I see how Israel is misrepresented in the media… They're accusing Israel of apartheid… and you know it's not true, but if you don't stand up and say it's not true, a lot of people are going to believe these lies."

Heeb and his fellow WordSwap participants attended an IAW event last week at U of T, where he said he witnessed first hand that IAW organizers aren't interested in dialogue.

"I asked them a lot of questions, but they didn't answer any of them. They wanted to boycott Ben-Gurion University, so I said, 'Listen guys, Ben-Gurion University has the most Arab girls, Bedouin girls, studying there, more than [schools in] Arab countries.' I told them I was from the University of Haifa. I'm Arab. I'm doing my master's, and my faculty would not be able to exchange the knowledge that we have. But they didn't answer [me]," Heeb said.

Tepper said that every time one of the WordSwap members took the microphone, organizers stopped recording.

"They censored them. A member of our group said, 'I'm an Israeli Arab, my grandparents have lived there, I've lived there, I have full rights, I've served in the IDF, I work in Tel Aviv, I don't face discrimination, so how can you say that if you haven't even been there?'"

Bader said he thinks the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement is "a joke."

"All I hear is propaganda, lies, and seriously, I thought they wanted to boycott Israel because they want peace, but they're not talking about peace… Peace or no peace, they're boycotting Israel," Bader said.

Tepper said she feels the majority of the Jewish community still doesn't grasp the seriousness of the situation faced by pro-Israel students on Canadian campuses.

"The Jewish community needs to realize what is going on. We need their support. We can't have just a few students carrying everything on their backs, and that's how I felt when I was at York. That we were working around the clock and we were by ourselves," Tepper said.

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"May his memory be a blessing and his family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem"

Firm threatens to pull funds over Windsor BDS vote

Ron Stang
Special to The CJN

WINDSOR, Ont. — A well-known Windsor engineering firm says it will withdraw a long-running work placement program for students at the University of Windsor (UW) if the university's student government endorses an anti-Israel boycott vote.

Richard Spencer, president of RC Spencer Associates Inc., told UW president Alan Wildeman in a letter that the boycott divestment and sanctions (BDS) referendum, which passed in an undergraduate vote earlier this month, is "an expression of anti-Semitism" and slammed it for singling out Israel.

Spencer, a UW graduate who has employed the school's co-op engineering students for more than 20 years, said he would "cease support" unless Wildeman intervened to prevent the endorsement.

In an interview, Spencer called the boycott "prejudice" because Israel was the sole country being targeted. "Why didn't they issue this against the Chinese… in Bangladesh where Joe Fresh is doing all kinds of things," he said.

The letter was swiftly condemned as "Islamophobic" by the Palestinian Solidarity Group (PSG), the campus organization which brought the vote, the first such undergraduate referendum to pass on a Canadian campus.

Spokesperson Mohammed Almoayad said the letter was filled with inaccuracies, was "crude," and "not very well thought out."

He pointed to one sentence that said, in part, that "the Muslim faith… promotes violence and hatred toward the Jews in the Middle East."

Spencer said he has received a lot of support from people in the community, including some "I highly respect."

The letter went viral on the university student engineering society's Facebook page. It sparked a heated online discussion and was later withdrawn.

Spencer said he's not anti-Muslim.

"If they want to come over and see who works for me, I've got every nation and every religion represented," he said.

The referendum passed 798 to 585 – UW has an undergraduate population of about 14,000 – but Wildeman immediately announced he would launch an investigation into complaints about how it was handled.

He also asked the University of Windsor Student Association to defer accepting the chief returning officer's report until the university completes its investigation, which the student council agreed to do March 13.

Wildeman called wording in Spencer's letter "totally inappropriate" because it "targeted one group of students."

Wildeman said he wrote Spencer and others saying students have a "legal right" to hold referendums and the university "could not stop them from doing that if it wanted to."

The BDS vote would only affect student government policy and not that of the university administration.

The referendum question called on the student government to commit to "divesting from companies that support or profit from Israeli war crimes, occupation and oppression."

Since the vote, the university has become a lightning rod for attention from around the world, with extensive international media coverage including in Israel.

Wildeman said he was probably "getting an email a minute from somebody in the world somewhere… on all sides of the issue."

He also said he has received many comments from alumni and benefactors, but no one has yet withdrawn funding or tangible support. "I think we're still at the point where a lot of people are wondering, waiting to see what's going to happen," he said.

The university has appointed Raj Anand, a lawyer and former chief commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, to conduct the investigation into how the vote was handled.

U of Ottawa groups launch Sabra hummus boycott

JTA

OTTAWA — Pro-Palestinian student groups at the University of Ottawa have launched a campaign to ban Sabra hummus from campus.

Sabra is partly owned by the Strauss Group, a foods manufacturer that the students allege financially supports the Golani Brigade of the Israeli Defence Forces, according to the *New York Times*. The students say the Golani Brigade has been accused of human rights violations by numerous organizations.

Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights and the Palestinian Student Association are among the student groups involved in the campaign, according to the university newspaper, the *Fulcrum*, along with the community group Young Jews for Social Justice.

"We will be raising awareness amongst the student population, collecting signatures for a petition and encouraging students to individually boycott the product," Asma Basmalah, a representative of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights, told the paper. The campaign coincided with the 10th annual Israeli Apartheid Week, which ended earlier this month.

Caroline Milliard, manager of media relations for the university, told the *Fulcrum* that the main objective of the institution's food services department is to provide healthy options at fair and competitive prices.

"The purchasing policy of our service provider is apolitical," she said.

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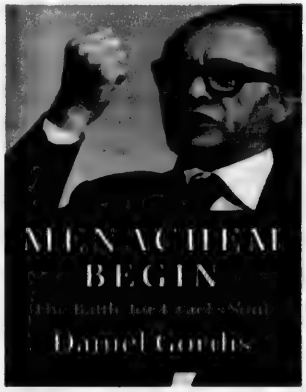

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'We were taught never to forget'

Spill from page 1

The answer repeatedly provided (as though a forgone conclusion): "Because we were taught never to forget."

Here we find the volatility of a communal narrative that has emphasized remembering above all else – so that we can scarcely recall what we are remembering, so that we make indelible marks on our own bodies, mimicking the gross actions of the Nazis, all out of the grave fear of forgetting. "Remember not to forget" (together with its close companion, "never again") is a limited, circular message that leads back only onto the act of memory itself. What trickles down is often an echo of horror and fear, lacking substance and purpose.

I want to remember my grandmother's smile; I want to remember my grandfather's love of Jewish song; I want to remember the cities in Poland in which they were born and where they were married; I want to remember the Yiddish language that they taught me. I want their love and their life to be my legacy.

My grandparents did not survive the horrors of the Holocaust and the murder of their families and communities to be recalled until the end of memory as "Holocaust survivors." They were people – good, hard working, resilient, with a desire to make a world a better place, to bring happiness to their children and grandchildren, with a love of Jewish tradition and community. I will not make "Holocaust survivor" their moniker, nor "never again" my vacant battle cry.

The directive of "never again"/"remember not to forget" has left my generation aimless. What do we do with this exhortation? Where do we go with this teaching? The emphasis on remembering and on pain has led some to a state of constant caution and many others instead to alienation and misinformation. And this turning away may be the greatest disservice we can do to those who survived and to those who didn't.

Yes, remembering is essential, but it is not an end in itself. We can be more than vessels of memory. We can do more than stomp around, pumping our fists in the air, shouting "never again" from our comfortable existence in Canada. I believe that my generation can do more than hold the story of the Holocaust for future generations. We can be agents for change and for healing, for connection and for creativity. We can be active, engaged members of the Jewish community and citizens of the world.

So, how do we facilitate this shift? There are many ways to take this memory and move it forward. For me, it is through arts and culture. For others, it may be through activism, education, informed philanthropy, and even the seemingly simple acts of listening attentively, building relationships or cultivating constructive conflict. Thankfully, I am not alone in prodding and attempting to transform some of the diluted messages dispensed throughout a lifetime immersed in Jewish schools and institutions. I have found like-minded people who inspire me in their rigorous insistence on confronting misconceptions, infusing daily discourse with complexity and writing a new, more nuanced narrative about modern Jewish experience.

Then let us shift the expression into a call to action: remember and connect, remember and know, remember and grow, remember and change.

Originally from Montreal, Evelyn Tauben is an independent curator, producer and writer based in Toronto with a focus on contemporary Jewish arts and culture.

Excavation points to early religious practices

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

One might think that a significant archeological find a few hours' walk from Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem would turn up artifacts we would recognize as Jewish.

But since the Judaism of the day was not what we know, the find yielded ritual objects that seem vaguely pagan, almost heretical by today's standards.

Shua Kisilevitz, the archeologist who was part of the team that excavated the site at Tel Motza, about seven kilometres west of Jerusalem, prefers the phrase "pagan Yahwism" to describe the religion of the era.

Shua Kisilevitz

Last December, Kisilevitz and three fellow archeologists announced what they called an "unusual and striking" find, unearthed in construction for a highway: the 2,750-year-old walls of a temple, along with a cache of ritual objects that included a pedestal decorated with lions and sphinxes, pendants, pottery and vessel fragments, and figurines – two human and two animal – that may or may not have depicted deities.

The dig provides "rare archeological evidence for the existence of temples and ritual enclosures in the Kingdom of Judah in general and in the Jerusalem region in particular," the team announced.

The uniqueness of the find is even more remarkable, the archeologists said, because of its proximity to the First Temple, built, according to the Bible, under King Solomon in 960 BCE.

But archeologists know little about the period's religious practices because there are hardly any remnants of ritual buildings from the era, according to Kisilevitz.

While more study is needed, the find provides valuable insights into what those rituals might have been, she told *The CJN* recently prior to her talk on the subject at the University of Toronto.

While those practices may seem strange and un-Jewish today, they were in keeping with the rules of the time, Kisilevitz said.

Previous excavations showed that Motza functioned within the royal administration of the Kingdom of Judah, she said. "It was very much connected to Jerusalem. [It couldn't] create its own religion. The people of Motza didn't wake up one morning and say, 'Oh we want to create something new.' They couldn't break off so easily."

The artifacts are important because they reflect a formative time for Judaism, she noted, adding they show that the ancient Israelite faith was not always centralized in Jerusalem and its practitioners may have used ritual objects now forbidden as graven images.

"There are all these presumptions we have which we project onto the early formation of religion," Kisilevitz said. "This temple finally shows us how the religion started out and what it really looked like at the time. They [were] doing what was common in the period."

The find also conforms to biblical accounts, which mention local religious precincts outside Jerusalem, she added.

And "Motza" is mentioned in the book of Joshua as a town in the tribal lands of Benjamin, which bordered Judah.

Kisilevitz, who works for the Israeli Antiquities Authority and is here for several months on an exchange with the University of Toronto, said the team does not know whether the human and animal figurines served a religious purpose.

The archeological team believes the temple at Tel Motza must have functioned before religious reforms enacted in the times of Kings Hezekiah and Josiah, which abolished all ritual sites outside Jerusalem and concentrated religious practices solely in the Temple.

Kisilevitz believes the artifacts do not conflict "at all" with modern understanding of Judaism. "We just have to change the way *we* think of the religion at the beginning."

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Rabbi Asher Lopatin

Open Orthodoxy: 'Orthodoxy that is unafraid'

Ron Csillag
Special to the CJN

Rabbi Asher Lopatin is a leading proponent of "open Orthodoxy," a term coined by U.S. Jewish thinker Rabbi Avi Weiss in 1997 to describe a form of modern Orthodoxy that emphasizes Halachah, intellectual openness, a broad concern for all Jews and a more inclusive role for women. The open Orthodoxy movement has been attracting a growing following in North America and Israel.

Rabbi Lopatin, 49, is president of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School, the leading modern and open Orthodox rabbinical school in the United States, founded by Rabbi Weiss and located in New York City.

Previously the spiritual leader of a synagogue in Chicago, Rabbi Lopatin is widely known for his commitment to fostering and promoting an inclusive view of Orthodoxy. He has been assailed by many in the Orthodox and haredi camps for promoting and engaging in dialogue with rabbis of other denominations, and encouraging interfaith relations.

Rabbi Lopatin will speak in Toronto on March 27 to help mark the fifth anniversary of the Toronto Partnership Minyan, a modern Orthodox congregation where women read from the Torah and lead certain parts of the service. He will speak at the Prosserman JCC (4588 Bathurst St.) at a dinner at 6 p.m. on "Using Non-Torah Ideas in Understanding Jewish Law," and at a dessert reception at 8:15 p.m. on "The Five Pillars of Orthodoxy."

The CJN interviewed him via telephone from New York.

What is open Orthodoxy and why is the time right for it?

I really believe open Orthodoxy is one focus of modern Orthodoxy. It's an emphasis of modern Orthodoxy, which itself is an emphasis of Orthodoxy, which is itself Judaism, really. Open Orthodoxy is really the reclaiming of the modern Orthodoxy of years ago, which is not afraid of the outside world and actually feels that connecting with the world around us allows us to be better Jews, allows us to learn better Torah, and that it's critical we train rabbis to be part of the world around us.

Now is a very important time for modern Orthodoxy, and it's a real test because we don't have the giant shoulders of Rav [Joseph] Soloveitchik to rest on. On the one hand, it's an amazing time for Orthodoxy. It's growing and thriving and is stronger than ever. On the other hand, that's why it's so important that Orthodoxy rise to the challenge of its responsibility to make sure we are serving all Jews and make sure that Jews are serving the world as well.

One of Orthodoxy's chief attractions is that it has never been particularly "open." Can open Orthodoxy stand on its own?

Well, open Orthodox is modern Orthodox. You could say "inclusive Orthodoxy" or "welcoming Orthodoxy." Or Orthodoxy that is unafraid.

Maybe you need a new name. "Neo-conservative," perhaps?

I'm happy with "modern Orthodox." "Modern." "Open." "Passionate." I don't think "neo-" has ever worked.

I think Orthodox Judaism has always struggled to be open to trends, and yet be very strong and inward-looking as well. It's a challenge, but if you look at some of the great rabbis of the past... the Gaon of Vilna was very much into mathematics and the importance of understanding the world. The Volozhin yeshiva, where Rav [Avraham] Kook learned, was very open to outside ideas. The key thing is, how do we process these ideas? Are we learning enough Torah? Are we confident enough in our Halachah and our traditions to process the outside world? How does it get us to think differently, to understand Torah in a more sophisticated way? But I don't think it's always been closed.

Years ago, the right flank of the Conservative movement broke off and became the Union for Traditional Judaism. Is that comparable to what you are advocating?

I'm very much against splintering and breaking away. I want to be together. I want to work very hard for our yeshiva to be very much part of the Orthodox world and the entire Jewish world. At the same time, we have to be committed to our principles.

Open Orthodoxy has been labelled [by the New York Orthodox newspaper Yated Ne'eman] as a threat to Judaism and "deviant." [The article last fall also said open Orthodoxy "is not Orthodoxy."] How does that language affect you?

Our movement is Orthodox. From what I'm seeing, I feel that there is a very vigorous discussion, but it's a much more respectful discussion than it was even six month ago. We're not afraid to ask questions and to look at the world around us and say it's not necessarily all bad. And maybe it challenges us to learn more Torah and learn it differently.

The mood is much more positive. I hope it remains vigorous and I hope the arguments continue. But I hope it's less of an attack and more of healthy disagreement.

You mentioned Rabbi Soloveitchik. He was among a group of rabbis who issued rulings forbidding co-operation with the non-Orthodox, especially in matters of theology. How do get around those? Do you ignore them?

There are many opinions out there as far as connecting with other movements and religions. My rebbe, Reb Ahron Soloveitchik, was very much against being on board with non-Orthodox rabbis. But that was a long time ago. Orthodoxy thought everyone was going to leave. No shuls were built without mechitzahs [partitions between men and women]. Times are very different now. I don't know what Rav [Joseph] Soloveitchik would say right now under the circumstances.

[The late] Rabbi David Hartman had a different interpretation of Rav Soloveitchik's view on theological discussions [with non-Orthodox]. Rabbi Hartman felt that if you were in a position of strength, then you could definitely have this kind of dialogue. But if you're in a position of weakness, then you should not do it. And I think now that if you ask people on the right and left of Orthodoxy, they would say Orthodoxy is in a position of strength.

So can you foresee a day when a Reform rabbi delivers a sermon in an Orthodox synagogue?

Rabbi Asher Lopatin

I'm not sure a guest rabbi would give the sermon, but they could definitely speak in an Orthodox synagogue. I have had non-Orthodox rabbis give divrei Torah at different times in the synagogue. I've been on panels at the synagogue with rabbis of different denominations. And I'm seeing co-operation in limited areas: Israel [being one]. So yeah, I think we can definitely see a time when a Reform rabbi will be invited to share Torah in an Orthodox shul.

Can you foresee the day your yeshiva ordains a woman?

I believe that the idea of ordaining a rabbi is a minhag (accepted tradition). We've had a lot of minhagim that have changed over the years. I really feel I want to empower women as much as possible. In some ways, this is an idea that should have been done thousands of years ago with Dvorah. So I'm very supportive of women taking on prominent roles of leadership in synagogue. It could definitely happen, that [Orthodox] women are ordained as rabbis.

How do you feel about women wearing tfillin?

[There is no] sweeping generalization that women should wear tfillin, because they don't have an obligation, and in general, there's no reason for them to impose this upon themselves. But if an individual woman feels she's ready for the responsibility of putting tfillin on, I believe the classic halachic sources would support her. Just like Michal, daughter of Saul, put on tfillin, and the Talmud says she was not rebuked for it.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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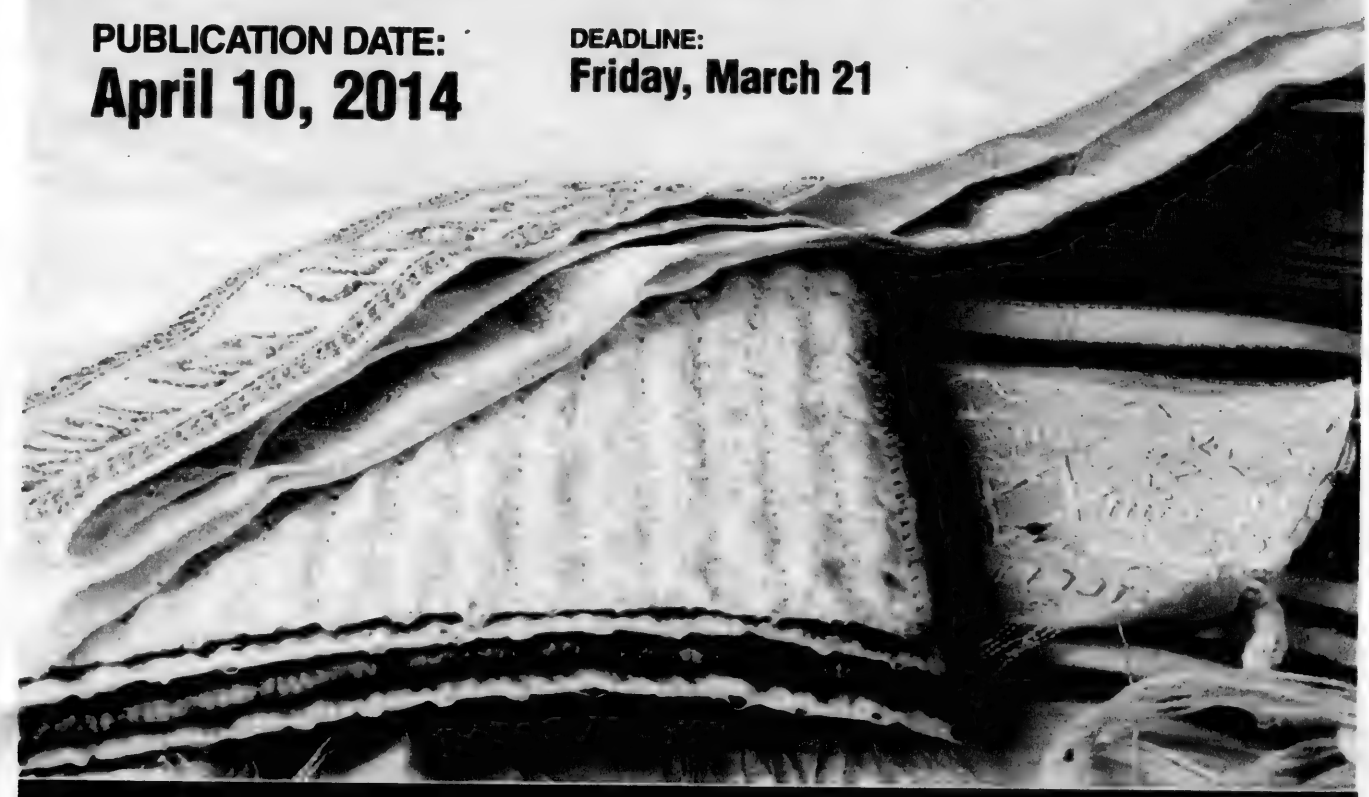

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Israel throws Diaspora Jews a lifeline

Money Matters
Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

We are in the midst of seeing a major transformation in the relationship between the State of Israel and the Diaspora. The "start-up nation" is thriving, something that can't be said about world Jewry. Waze, a traffic and navigation app for smartphones that was developed in Israel and was recently bought by Google for just over $1 billion, is one of many Israeli start-ups that have attracted the interest of foreign investors. Just a few weeks ago, Facebook purchased the Israeli startup Onavo, which makes mobile applications that allow users to track their cellphone data-usage plans. More significant than the more than $100 million Facebook paid is the fact that Facebook – whose founder, Mark Zuckerberg, donated more than $980 million in 2013, making him the leading philanthropist in the United States last year– will now open a research centre in Israel.

A list of companies with such centres in Israel would include Apple, Dell, EBay, General Electric, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Samsung, Xerox, Yahoo and many more. More Israeli companies are listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange than those from any other country except the United States and China. Not bad for a country with less than eight million people. Long gone are the days when Israel was an economic backwater whose main export was Jaffa oranges.

While I generally stay far away from political analysis, it seems that hope for peace in the Middle East rests on economic partnerships between Israelis, Palestinians and Arabs, something that's already happening to a certain degree. Israel's technological know-how recently facilitated the passage of an Israeli motion at the United Nations dedicated to sustainable agricultural advancements for developing countries. This is only the third time in Israel's history that a resolution it introduced at the UN has passed. Astoundingly, 138 countries voted yes and 105 countries asked to co-sponsor the motion, while Arab countries (only) abstained. We must do our utmost to ensure that economics trumps politics, ensuring a brighter future for all involved (and placing economic considerations before political ones would greatly benefit Canada, also).

In addition to, and in no small measure as a result of this great economic growth, Israel is now home to about half of the world's Jews – quite a change from 1948, when only about five per cent of world Jewry lived there. With well over 50 per cent of Jews outside of Israel intermarrying, there is an awakening to the fact that we in the Diaspora need the support of the State of Israel more than Israel needs our backing.

The Israeli government recently announced that it plans to invest billions of dollars over the next two decades to bolster the Jewish identity of Diaspora Jews, helping and hoping to ensure the continued viability of a committed and knowledgeable world Jewry.

I was gratified to hear Foreign Minister Avigdor Leiberman, in addressing what he called "the most pressing issue on the global Jewish agenda… more pressing than any other issue, including the Palestinian negotiations or the Iranian nuclear threat," propose that the Israeli government should budget $1 million dollars a day, or $365 million a year, for Jewish education outside Israel. He called on Jewish leaders to provide matching funding. This fantastic investment opportunity would pay dividends for generations to come for Jews around the world.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Kosher wine: how sweet it was

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Could Rabbi Dov Behr Manischewitz know that one day his name would become associated with one of the largest kosher wine companies in the world? Or that his blackberry, elderberry and venerable Concord grape wines would convince generations that kosher wine could not compare with the finest that France, Italy or California have to offer? **[http://bit.ly/kwine1]**

Where did the idea that "kosher wine" equals "sweet wine" come from? According to the Kosher Wine Institute, "the poor quality of kosher wine is due largely to historical circumstance. The Concord grape, the only available variety for Jewish immigrants arriving in the New York area, is an acidic grape, which must be balanced with sugar to be enjoyed. Hence, sweet wine. Time passes, and compromise becomes tradition." **[bit.ly/kwine3]**

If extra sugar and Concord grapes don't make a wine kosher, what does? The rules surrounding the production of kosher wine are much more stringent than those regarding other kinds of kosher food. Only Sabbath observant Jews can handle the grapes and wine. In fact, no non-Jew can come in direct contact with the wine or associated machinery unless the juice has been briefly heated (*mevushal*) to between 80 and 90 C. **[bit.ly/kwine10]**

Does this process damage the wine? Google the topic and you'll find people with strong feelings either way. Wine/food consultant Bernard Kenner tasted two pairs of high quality Israeli wines, identical except two were *mevushal* and two weren't. His verdict: "Yes, the difference was obvious… Both wines were very good, likeable nose, dark berry flavours, good structure and finish, but the *mevushal* had an extra layer of tannins at the end that asked for more time to be put back into balance. **[bit.ly/kwine11]**

Jewish winemaking goes a bit further back than those Concord vineyards. But the late Israeli wine critic Daniel Rogov suggested that early kosher wines were nothing to write home about either. "Wines shipped to ancient Egypt were so bad that they had to be seasoned with honey, pepper and juniper berries to make them palatable… So bad were most of these wines that it was probably a good thing that the Muslim conquest in AD 636 imposed a 1,200 year halt to the local wine industry." **[bit.ly/kwine12]**

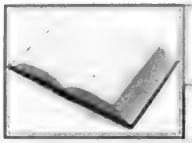
Jump forward a few centuries to the 1890s, and Baron Edmond de Rothschild felt the country's vintners deserved another chance. He built two large wineries, which would become Carmel Wines, Israel's largest. **[bit.ly/kwine16]** On this side of the Atlantic, Herzog Family's Royal Wine, based in New York, is known for its Kedem and Baron Herzog lines. **[bit.ly/kwine19]** Another well-known name, Schapiro's Wines, was founded in 1899. The company's motto was "wine so thick you can almost cut it with a knife." **[bit.ly/kwine18]**

And Manischewitz? Actually Manischewitz wine is not produced by Rabbi Dov Behr's B. Manischewitz Company. **[manischewitz.com]** That famous brand was purchased by the Centerra Wine Company in 1987, and it is produced in Naples, N.Y. **[manischewitzwine.com]** Take the real or virtual tour to learn more about the company's historic and unforgettable offerings like Concord Grape, Blackberry and Extra Heavy Malaga, "a specially sweetened fruity wine with generous mouth feel."

highway@rogers.com

A Purim reflection to sober the hungover

Rabbi Dovid Heching



Rabbinic Reflections

Today, while Israel is flourishing with unparalleled advancements in countless fields, it finds itself the recipient of ubiquitous discrimination. From boycotts, both academic and financial, to incessant existential threats from its neighbours, we are reminded that we are still in the throes of a 2,000-year national exile. What's the secret to redemption? How can we return to our former days of glory when the flag of Israel was lionized by all?

Let's turn the clock back 2,300 years, during our first national exile, to a time when we faced a similar challenge in Persia. A familiar scene unfolded as Haman, the Jews' archenemy, sought to totally annihilate the Jewish nation – marking the first time since our nation was forged at Mount Sinai that Jews had been threatened with extinction. Ultimately, the Jews were saved, and three years later, Darius II allowed us to return to rebuild our Temple. What happened that led to this fortuitous return?

God's name is not mentioned in the Megillah of Esther, but if we follow the storyline with an actuarial eye, it is apparent as the "coincidences" pile one on top of the other that God is acting as the maestro. The Jews of Persia discerned God's hidden hand, and a national Jewish renaissance sprang forth as they reaffirmed their commitment to Jewish observance on an even deeper level than they did at Mount Sinai! Shortly thereafter, redemption was theirs. They returned to Israel.

This is precisely the message of Purim: by being able to discern what is really transpiring, we won't get distracted by the traffic of life. On its surface, Purim appears to be a Jewish costume party, a celebration that places the emphasis on outward appearance, but ironically, the true essence of Purim teaches that costumes are merely the medium that delivers the message: to look past the surface, delve deeper. We intentionally blur our unique exteriors, alerting us to push beyond what immediately meets the eye.

Our first exile was a result of laxity in observance and lasted only 70 years – we looked past the surface storyline and saw God. Our current exile is a result of divisiveness, passing impetuous judgments and the inability to overcome differences. Our ancestors in Persia taught us the secret. Whether between man and God or man and man, it is the mandate of every Jew to look deeper.

And as Jews we have always looked deeper. Whether it was to solve social dilemmas, to create technological innovation or to make major advances in all genres of science, we have tackled the most confounding problems by not settling for superficiality. Why can't we look a bit deeper and focus on the 95 per cent all of us Jews have in common, and overlook the five per cent where we don't see eye to eye?

Haman and our enemies throughout history didn't single out any one type of Jew, viewing us as one people, one tribe. If we yearn to see the day of our unified redemption in Israel, we must do the same.

Rabbi Dovid Heching is the director of Downtown Jewish, a Jewish education network on Bay Street in partnership with the Forest Hill Jewish Centre.

Jolt your community with JOFEE

From the Bimah
Rabbi Catharine Clark

Spring is almost here. It is time to add a jolt of green energy to your Jewish community with JOFEE – Jewish outdoor, food and environmental education. JOFEE is the integration of Jewish life with care for the environment, particularly through enjoying sustainably produced food and outdoor experiences. Program examples range from environmental bike rides and Jewish summer camps specializing in outdoor adventure to Jewish community centre gardens and synagogue community-supported agriculture programs (CSAs) in which participants purchase shares in a farm's produce for the season and pick up a weekly box of vegetables in return.

Seeds of Opportunity: A National Study of Immersive Jewish Outdoor, Food, and Environmental Education (JOFEE), a recent study produced by Informing Change, Hazon, a Jewish environmental organization founded in New York, and a number of Jewish foundations, shows the benefits of such programs to Jewish communal life.

Jewish communal organizations fretting over how to attract Jews in their 20s and 30s should be particularly interested in the study's findings. While adult participants in immersive JOFEE programs range in age from 18 to 84, more than 65 per cent are between the ages of 21 and 40. Moreover, JOFEE attracts the growing sector of Jews who are post-denominational, not identifying with (or belonging to and funding) institutions affiliated with Judaism's traditional denominations. Many of these participants are inspired by their JOFEE experiences to become Jewish communal leaders. More than 85 per cent of immersive JOFEE participants have helped organize a Jewish communal event, and two-thirds of them say that their leadership was influenced by their JOFEE experiences. JOFEE programs work in attracting and inspiring a coveted demographic.

Immersive experiences, such as a retreat over a long weekend or a multi-week training program in sustainable agriculture, might not fit into the calendar of your Jewish institution. Fortunately, JOFEE experiences need not be immersive to be meaningful, inspiring and fun.

Shoresh, a Jewish environmental organization in Toronto, partners with Jewish day schools, summer camps and synagogues to start organic gardens, run pickling workshops and lead environmental hikes in the city's outdoor spaces. Earlier this year, the JCC in London, Ont., hosted a Tu b'Shvat dinner featuring local foods and a presentation by an area farmer. Shaar Shalom Congregation in Halifax is planning an urban garden. Temple Shalom in Vancouver hosts a CSA in partnership with Hazon.

Programs like these can engage a wide range of Jews, but that's far from the only benefit to bringing outdoor, food and environmental education to your Jewish community. An environmental hike is a great opportunity to delve further into Jewish texts on caring for the land and one's own physical health. A synagogue garden with strawberry plants and apple trees can help children understand the difference between reciting a blessing praising God for creating the "fruit of the earth" and reciting one for the "fruit of the tree." Even better, produce from the garden can be donated to local organizations combating hunger and used for healthier kiddushes for the whole congregation.

Spring is almost here. Whether your Jewish community is a chavurah, synagogue, JCC or the whole population of Jews in one of Canada's small, vibrant Jewish communities, now is the time to start a JOFEE program.

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Shimon Peres backs 'good partner' Abbas

Spencer Ho
The Times of Israel

Countering recent comments by Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon, President Shimon Peres praised Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas as a serious peace partner while expressing hope for successful talks Monday.

"President Abbas is a man of principle, he is against terror, against violence," Peres said in a meeting with Congolese human rights activist Rose Mapendo. "He is a good partner, and I'm glad that our government is negotiating with him. Disagreements are normal, but we also agree on opposition to terrorism."

In an interview on Saturday, Ya'alon said there would not be peace in his era and decried Abbas as someone who is not a partner for a final agreement. He also implied that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry had failed to act as an honest broker on releasing Israeli-Arab prisoners.

Peres's comments came while Abbas was in Washington for discussions with U.S. President Barack Obama on ongoing peace negotiations.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu had a good meeting with President Obama a few weeks ago and now we wait to see what will happen with President Abbas," Peres said, according to a statement released by his office. "It is in the interest of all of us to a find a way out of the disagreements; we're hopeful but concerned because there are crucial decisions to make in the coming weeks."

President Shimon Peres, right, met with Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas at the president's residence in Jerusalem in 2008. [*Flash90 file photo*]

Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, Israel's top negotiator in talks with the Palestinian Authority, chastised Ya'alon on Sunday evening over his comments, saying "grumbling and despairing is easy… our responsibility is to change reality."

Peres continued to refute Ya'alon's words, albeit in a less direct manner than Livni, saying that both Israelis and Palestinians long for peace.

"Negotiations are difficult, and sometimes it seems as if there are only two options but often there are more, negotiations are a process of creation," he said. "We are all waiting for peace, it is the wish of the Israeli and Palestinian people."

Abbas is expected to discuss the U.S. framework agreement draft and the possibility of extending the July deadline for the talks while meeting with Obama later Monday.

He met Sunday with Kerry, who pushed him to work to narrow the gaps between the Palestinian and Israeli negotiating positions.

TimesofIsrael.com

Visit cjnews.com for coverage of the Abbas-Obama meetings in Washington this week.

Brenner dies at 78

JTA

NEW YORK — David Brenner, a longtime standup comedian whose observational humour is credited with inspiring many top comics, has died.

Brenner, a Philadelphia native, died at his home in New York City on March 15 after battling cancer. He was 78.

A favourite of Johnny Carson, Brenner appeared on the *Tonight Show* more than 150 times – reported to be a record – starting in the 1970s. The former documentary filmmaker was a regular on TV talk shows and starred in four HBO specials.

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Johansson hails SodaStream, slams Oxfam

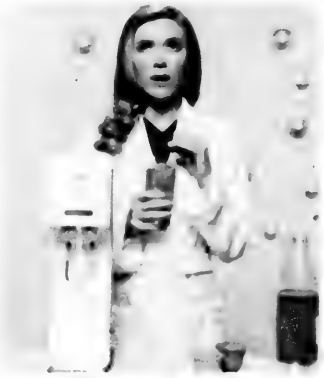
The Times of Israel

Actor Scarlett Johansson offered her most robust defence to date of her role as a spokesperson for SodaStream in an interview Sunday, and slammed the British charity Oxfam from which she stepped down as an ambassador.

Speaking to Britain's *Observer* newspaper, Johansson said of SodaStream's factory at the settlement of Mishor Adumin in the West Bank, which employs Palestinians, Israeli Arabs and Israeli Jews, "I'm coming into this as someone who sees that factory as a model for some sort of movement forward in a seemingly impossible situation."

As for Oxfam, which slammed her for her ties to the firm, Johansson said there was "something that feels not right" about "a non-governmental organization to be supporting something that's supporting a political cause." She said Oxfam had "funded a BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement in the past." (The *Observer* added that Oxfam denies supporting BDS against Israel.)

The actress was being interviewed by the *Observer* (the sister paper of the *Guardian*, its content appears on the *Guardian* website) primarily about her role as an alien in *Under the Skin*, a new sci-fi film, but the final part of the conversation revolved around SodaStream.



Scarlett Johansson in commercial for SodaStream (*You Tube screenshot*)

The interviewer did not mention in the article that SodaStream's West Bank factory employs Palestinians and Israeli Arabs, but was openly critical of Johansson for working for SodaStream, writing that "it looked liked she'd received very poor advice; that someone who is paid good money to protect her interests hadn't done the necessary research before she'd accepted the role and that she'd unwittingly inserted herself into the world's most intractable geopolitical conflict. By the time Oxfam raised the issue, she was going to get flak if she did step down, flak if she didn't. Was the whole thing just a bit of a mistake?"

Johansson was vigorous in her response, however. "I stand behind that decision. I was aware of that particular factory before I signed with it."

"Really?" the interviewer interjected, apparently surprised or disbelieving.

"Yes, and… it still doesn't seem like a problem," Johansson said. "Until someone has a solution to the closing of that factory, to leaving all those people destitute, that doesn't seem like the solution to the problem."

When the interviewer then told her that "the international community says the settlements are illegal and shouldn't be there," Johansson said: "I think that's something that's very easily debatable. In that case, I was literally plunged into a conversation that's way grander and larger than this one particular issue. And there's no right side or wrong side leaning on this issue."

Actually, the interviewer pressed on, "there's a lot of unanimity… about the settlements on the West Bank."

"I think in the U.K. there is," Johansson retorted.

The interviewer noted that the United Nations, the Red Cross, the International Court of Justice all agree the settlements are illegal and then she wrote, "Half of me admires Johansson for sticking to her guns – her mother is Jewish and she obviously has strong opinions about Israel and its policies. Half of me thinks she's hopelessly naive. Or, most likely, poorly advised. Of all the conflicts in all the world to plant yourself in the middle of…"

She then pushed Johansson on the Oxfam fallout, saying, "People saw you making a choice between Oxfam – a charity that's out to alleviate global poverty – and accepting a lot of money to advertise a product for a commercial company. For a lot of people, that's like making a choice between charity – good – and lots of money – greed."

But Johansson retorted with her critique of Oxfam for having supported a BDS movement in the past. "It's something that can't really be denied," she said.

Sunday's interview marked Johansson's sturdiest defence of her SodaStream role, but it was hardly her first such defence. Earlier this month, speaking to the London *Telegraph*, she said she believed in the company and praised its environmental record.

"I'm not an expert on the history of this conflict, and I've never professed to be," Johansson told the British newspaper in the interview. "But it is a company that I believe in, that I think has the ability to make a huge difference, environmentally."

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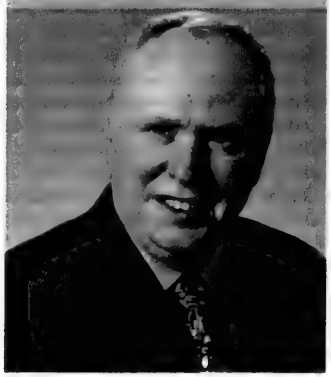
Guest Voice

A clear vision in the Middle East



By Bernie Farber

If you have ever been to a sporting or community event, you may have seen the black and white uniformed St. John Ambulance volunteers. Those who have taken a first aid course probably did so under the auspices of St. John Ambulance.

There is, however, more to the Order of St. John than community volunteers and first aid – much more. In fact, St. John plays a role in bringing Jews, Muslims and Christians together in the volatile Middle East – but more on that later.

With a worldwide mission to help prevent sickness and enhance the health of people universally, the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem (to use the full name) operates in major world centres through its two charitable foundations, St. John Ambulance and St. John Eye Hospital Group. From London to Hong Kong and Jerusalem to Toronto, the order's 300,000 volunteers and close to 4,000 employees have brought comfort to the afflicted and helped relieve sickness and disease in the four corners of the world. It is truly an organization without equal, respected by virtually all faith and ethnic groups.

Precisely for this reason, the Order of St. John is uniquely situated in both Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA), acting as a model of beneficence in a region more known for its strife than its open heart. And indeed, it's the lesser-known St. John Eye Hospital Group that stands out as a sea of goodness in a region fraught with tension and violence.

From its main location in east Jerusalem, and from clinics in Anabta, Hebron, and Gaza, as well as with mobile outreach, the Eye Hospital Group transcends politics to help a region where eye diseases are rampant and where some of the poorest people in the world live, offering them a chance to see.

With historical ties dating back to 1070, when the first hospice was built to care for travelling pilgrims, the Order of St. John has had a steady presence in Jerusalem since 1882, when it underwent a revival by Queen Victoria. Back in those days, as now, there was recognition that eye diseases in this desert region required special focus. As the Order explains: "The Palestinian rate of blindness is so high because of the very particular patterns of disease and demographics in the communities we serve. Movement restrictions and the erection of the separation wall are having severe effects on health and nutrition... [As a result of] a rise in consanguineous marriages, children are born with congenital diseases, including eye problems such as cataracts, glaucoma, retinal degeneration, optic atrophy, diabetic retinopathy and eye malformations. Indeed, there is often more than one child in each family with such a congenital condition, and children with eye problems are often hidden at home and not sent to school."

The State of Israel, recognizing the importance of the work undertaken by the Eye Hospital Group, maintains a very special and positive relationship. Even in Gaza, where clearly political relations are non-existent, St. John Eye Hospital is presently working with the Israel Defence Forces to have it relax its new ban on importing building materials so that it can begin work on its new clinic.

As well, the Eye Hospital Group is directly engaged in research with Israel's Hadassah Hospital, and at Tel Aviv University the orthoptics department's graduates work with St. John.

Sixty per cent of the hospital's funding comes from private donations, without which it would not be able to maintain its current level of care.

Today, it's more challenging to fund individual projects in the PA, even a hospital whose transparency is legendary and from which 94 cents of every dollar donated goes directly to helping the patient.

In 2013 alone, the eye hospital and its clinics screened more than 13,000 people, treated more than 114,000 patients and performed in excess of 4,000 operations. It has brought a sense of comfort, health and relief to many. By helping to create and maintain health, the Order of St. John also promotes peace, and this was recognized in 2012 when the St. John Eye Hospital Group was awarded the prestigious Gandhi Foundation International Peace Award. Clearly the work of the hospital is another tool helping to bring peace and health to a troubled region.

Bernie M. Farber, the former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress is now senior vice-president of government and external relations of Gemini Power Corp.

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You can enjoy charoset after the seder, too

Rivka Tal
Special to The CJN

Scurrying and scrubbing, Jewish families all over the world are preparing the special seder plate used during the recitation of the Haggadah, the story of the Exodus. Charoset symbolizes the mortar and bricks in the Exodus story, and although it is delicious, it brings to mind the work done by the Israelites enslaved in Egypt.

Its basic ingredients are mentioned in the *Song of Songs*, where Israel is compared to apples, pomegranates, figs, dates and nuts. Red wine is almost always added.

Ashkenazi Jews – descendants of eastern European families – make an apple-nut-wine paste. The Sephardi customs practised by descendants of Spanish, North African and Turkish Jews incorporate other traditions, often using ingredients such as legumes, prohibited for their Ashkenazi cousins.

Traditional Yemenite charoset contains sesame seeds, dried dates and figs, ginger and dry wine, as well as hot peppers! Iraqi Jews, on the other hand, use a combination of almonds, walnuts and pine nuts. Moroccan-style charoset is made from chopped dates, pecans and almonds simmered together, then rolled into balls and sometimes wrapped in rose petals. Some North African Jews prefer a combination of pine nuts, hard-cooked egg whites, grated apple, sugar, ground almonds and walnuts, lemon juice, cinnamon and ginger.

At our house we serve two kinds of charoset: with and without nuts (for the children). When following any of these recipes, think about double batching, since leftover charoset can be enjoyed throughout the week of Passover as a side dish.

TRADITIONAL MIDDLE EASTERN CHAROSET

2 large coarsely chopped or grated apples
1/2 cup chopped nuts
1 tsp. cinnamon
sweet red wine

Combine apples, nuts and cinnamon. Add enough wine to bind the mixture. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

NORTH AFRICAN CHAROSET

2 oz. pine nuts
1 hard-boiled egg white
1 grated apple
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup chopped almonds
1/2 cup ground walnuts
juice and zest of 1 lemon
cinnamon
ginger
sweet red wine (optional)

Combine all ingredients, adding cinnamon and ginger to taste. Add wine, if desired. Cover well and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

TURKISH CHAROSET

20 pitted dates
1 cup raisins
1 cup coarsely ground walnuts
1/2 cup chopped almonds
red wine

Combine all ingredients, adding wine as desired. Cover well and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

ITALIAN-STYLE CHAROSET

4 apples, peeled and chopped
6 cut-up dates
3 hard-boiled eggs
1 cup ground almonds
6 chopped walnuts
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup matzah meal
1/4 cup lemon juice

Combine all ingredients. Cover well and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

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Easy Passover recipes – believe it or not!

Judy Bart Kancigor
Special to The CJN

Did you ever think the day would come when you'd hear the words "Passover" and "easy" in the same sentence? All that cleaning! All that fussing! All that cooking!

Leah Schapira, author of *Fresh & Easy Kosher Cooking* and co-founder of CookKosher.com, an online kosher recipe exchange, has teamed up with Victoria Dwek, managing editor of *Whisk*, a popular kosher food magazine published weekly by *Ami Magazine*, to produce *Passover Made Easy: Favorite Triple-Tested Recipes* (Artscroll), the first in the series of Made Easy cookbooks published throughout 2013 and 2014.

No, Schapira and Dwek won't help you with your housework, but you will find over 60 creative, doable Passover recipes to take you through not only the seders, but the week-long celebration as well.

Tired of gefilte fish and matzah ball soup? (Not that there's anything wrong with them!) Try unique starters like Brisket Eggrolls, Antipasti Rolls, or Roasted Tomato and Eggplant Soup. Apple-Jam Chicken Drumettes, Potato-Chip Zucchini Sticks and Matzaroni and Cheese are sure to please the kids. For seder, I'm choosing Braised Short Ribs in Homemade Duck Sauce, an easy, hearty dish you can make ahead so you can de-frazzle your preparation and enjoy your guests. And save room for dessert: Choose from Frozen Lemon Wafer Cake or Pecan Pie with Cookie Crust, to name just two.

First you eat with your eyes. All the recipes are accompanied by dazzling colour photographs with plating and styling tips.

Most appreciated in the book are the wine pairing suggestions. Every adult drinks four cups of wine at each of the two ceremonial seders. No wonder kosher winemakers consider this their busiest season.

Not so long ago, the words kosher wine brought to mind the syrupy sweet concoction served as an accompaniment to prayers, with your choice of blackberry or grape. Not anymore. Observant Jewish baby boomers, hipper and more sophisticated than their parents, have demanded the same selection and quality found in the non-kosher world, and kosher winemakers have taken notice.

No matter how elaborate, satisfying and filling the holiday meal, there's always room for dessert. No flour for a week? No problem! We Jews are a resourceful lot, necessity being the mother of invention and all. "Light, refreshing and lemony, Frozen Lemon Wafer Cake is the perfect dessert to finish off heavy holiday meals," notes Schapira.

BRAISED SHORT RIBS IN HOMEMADE DUCK SAUCE

You can also use this sauce over flanken, chicken or fish.

1 tbsp. oil
1 red onion, diced
6 tbsp. sugar
1/2 tsp. chopped fresh ginger
juice of 1/2 lemon (about 1 1/2 tbsp.)

2 tsp. potato starch
1 cup orange juice
salt, to taste
coarse black pepper, to taste
3 lb. short spare ribs

Preheat oven to 300. Heat oil in sauté pan over medium heat. Add onion and sugar and cook, stirring constantly, for 10 minutes, until mixture is syrupy. Add ginger and lemon juice.

Dissolve potato starch in orange juice and add to pot. Season with salt and pepper. Continue to cook until sauce thickens, about 3-4 minutes.

Place ribs into a 9x13-in. baking pan. Season with salt and pepper. Pour sauce over ribs. Cover tightly and bake for 2 hours. When serving, pour sauce over ribs. Yield: 4-6 servings

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MENU #2
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish, Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls, Roast Chicken, Roast Brisket of Beef, Lockshen Pudding, Pan Roast Potatoes, Carrot Tzimmes, Cole Slaw, Lemon Roll, Macaroons, Chocolate Brownies, Seder Plate, Charoses
$349.00 for 10 people

MENU #3
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish, Cabbage Borscht, Roast Turkey Breast (precarved) or Lemon Chicken Breast, Farfel & Mushrooms, Candied Yams, Green Beans Almondine, Cole Slaw, Fresh Fruit Salad, Passover Cookies, Seder Plate, Charoses
Total fat menu Only 20g Fat per person
$205.00 for 5 people

MENU #4
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish, Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls, Roast Veal, Lockshen Pudding, Pan Roast Potatoes, Green Beans Almondine, Cole Slaw, Honey Cake, Chocolate Brownies, Seder Plate, Charoses
$205.00 for 5 people

MENU #5
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish, Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls, Roast Chicken, Roast Brisket of Beef, Chicken Fingers, Green Beans Almondine, Lockshen Pudding, Chocolate Brownies, Seder Plate, Charoses
$195.00 for 5 people

MENU #6
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls, Sweet & Sour Meatballs, Poached Salmon, Pan Roasted Potatoes, Green Beans Almondine, Lockshen Pudding, Chocolate Brownies, Seder Plate, Charoses
$179.00 for 5 people

ADDITIONAL MENU SELECTIONS
MEAT DISHES: Roast Turkeys, Turkey Breast, Cornish Hens, Chopped Liver, Cabbage Rolls, Veal Roast, Flanken in Borscht, Roast Duck, Lemon Chicken Breast, BBQ Chicken Wings, Honey Garlic Wings, Chicken Fingers, Knishes -Potato or Beef, Kishke, Meat Kreplach
VEGETABLE DISHES: Vegetarian Loaf, Matzo Lasagna, Stir Fry Vegetables, Grilled Vegetables, Apple Farfel Pudding, Farfel & Mushrooms, Potato Latkes, Green Beans Almondine, Broccoli & Mushrooms, Handmade Egg Noodles, Seder Plates, Charoses
SALADS: Cole Slaw, Pickled Beets, Tossed Salad, Cucumber Salad
FISH: Poached Salmon, Sweet Gefilte Fish, Salt & Pepper Gefilte Fish
DESSERTS: Apple Flan, Chocolate Cake, Chocolate Brownies, Chocolate Lemon Roll, Fresh Fruit Salad, Honey Cake, Macaroons, Mandlebroit, Mocca Cake, Passover Cookies

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Dark Chocolate Espresso Wafers	250g bag	$13.00	
Dark Chocolate covered Matzoh Clusters	300g bag	$13.00	
Dark Chocolate Covered Macaroons	300g bag	$14.00	
Dark Chocolate Coconut Bark	350g bag	$14.00	
Pure Dark Chocolate Lollipop	50g	$4.00	
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Asparagus side dishes for Passover

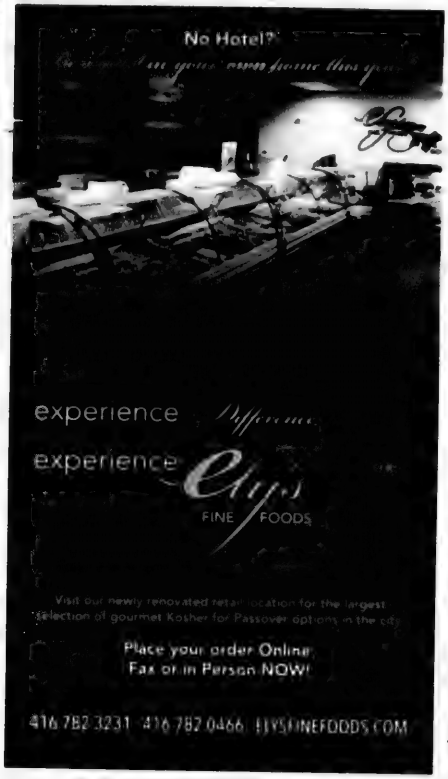
Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

The arrival of fresh young, local asparagus, a sure harbinger of spring, is often neatly timed to coincide with the Passover seders, as it does again this year. Fresh asparagus tends to start to appear mid-April to mid-May, when its shoots break through the farmer's soil and reach their optimal length of between 6 and 8 inches. Of course, you can buy asparagus all year round now, but there's a special place for it at the Passover table, where its bright emerald tones and snappy flavours help balance the richness of the meal's other components.

When you're at the grocery store, always look for stalks that are crisp, with no evidence of wilting, bright green and that stand soldierly straight. The tips should be dry, compact and closed and can range from a deep green to an almost purple colour. Steer clear of any that have open tips or are starting to sprout.

Once home, it's important to store asparagus properly, since if improperly stored, they will perish quickly. Simply trim ¼-inch of the bottom of the stalks and store upright in some water in the fridge. Properly stored, asparagus can be refrigerated for up to 3 days.

The easiest way to prepare asparagus is to bend each spear to where it naturally snaps and breaks. Then simply even out the tear with a knife. Of course, the most important thing to remember about this vegetable is that more is not better! Asparagus requires the briefest of cooking times, whether you're steaming, blanching, sautéing or roasting. Overcooked asparagus will become discoloured, mushy and stripped of many of its nutrients.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ASPARAGUS WITH GARLIC, GINGER AND CORIANDER

This flavourful side dish holds up well against a rich main course such as roast chicken or brisket. Even though its elements speak to an Asian background, don't hesitate to serve it with more mainstream recipes.

1 1/2 lb. asparagus, trimmed
3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
Topping
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
3 large cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp. coarsely chopped ginger
1 tsp. ground coriander
2 tbsp. chopped fresh coriander
2 tsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 400. Line a large, rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil. Spread the asparagus evenly in a single layer on top of the foil. Drizzle with the olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Roast in the centre of the preheated oven for 7 minutes or until bright green and tender crisp.

Meanwhile, prepare the topping. Heat the olive oil in a small skillet set over low heat. Add the garlic and ginger; cook, stirring occasionally, until very soft and fragrant, about 4 minutes. Stir in ground and fresh coriander. Remove from heat and let steep until the asparagus are ready.

Transfer asparagus to serving platter or bowl. Stir lemon juice into oil mixture. Pour evenly over asparagus. Serve immediately. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

ASPARAGUS WITH SHALLOTS AND ORANGE

Cooked oranges? You bet! Be sure to slice the oranges very thinly. If you still have access to blood oranges, try those too. They will be beautiful.

2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
6 large shallots, thinly sliced
8 very thin orange slices, cut into quarters
1 tsp. grated orange zest
1/4 cup orange juice
1 1/2 lb. asparagus, trimmed

Heat the oil in a large non-stick skillet set over medium heat. Add the shallots; cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes. Add the orange slices; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Stir in the orange zest and juice. Bring to a boil. Add the asparagus in one layer. Cover and steam for 3 to 4 minutes or until the asparagus is bright green and tender crisp. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Transfer asparagus to serving platter or bowl. Top with shallots and orange slices. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

ASPARAGUS WITH BRAISED RADISHES

The simplicity of this dish belies how much fabulous flavour it delivers. Braising the radishes mellows their natural bite and renders them the perfect foil for the snap of the asparagus.

2 bunches radishes (about 1-3/4 lb)
1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil or margarine
1/2 cup lower-salt chicken or vegetable broth
1 tbsp. sherry vinegar
1 tsp. granulated sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
1 1/2 lb. asparagus, trimmed and cut in half

Trim the radishes; cut into thick slices, about 3 or 4 per radish

Heat the olive oil in a large non-stick skillet set over medium heat. Add the radishes. Cook, stirring often, until they soften, about 5 minutes. Pour in the stock. Bring to a simmer. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the radishes are tender-crisp, about 5 minutes. Stir in the vinegar, sugar and salt until radishes are well coated. Stir in the asparagus. Cook, stirring, until the asparagus are tender and bright green and the liquid is reduced to a glaze, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a serving plate and serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

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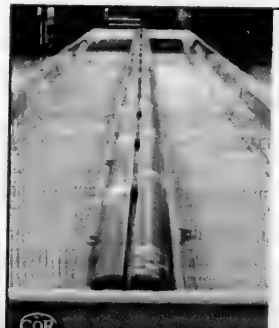
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35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
45 CONDOMINIUM WANTED
50 ACCOMODATION AVAILABLE
55 ACCOMODATION WANTED
60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
62 SHARED ACCOMMODATION WANTED
65 ACCOMMODATION EXCHANGE
67 HOUSE SITTERS
70 UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION
75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
80 SHORT TERM RENTAL WANTED
81 APARTMENT TO SUBLET
82 ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT
84 ROOM WANTED FOR RENT
85 APARTMENT WANTED
87 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
105 COTTAGE FOR SALE
110 COTTAGE FOR RENT
115 COTTAGE FOR RENT/SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM AVAIL
145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM WANTED
147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
165 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT OF TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT OF COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES EXCH/SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREER/RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
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248 DAY CARE WANTED
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255 DOMESTIC HELP WANTED
257 HEALTHCARE AVAILABLE
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260 BUSINESS PERSONALS
265 PEOPLE SEARCH
270 PERSONALS
273 INTRODUCTION SERVICES
275 PERSONAL COMPANIONS WANTED
278 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY
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290 LOST & FOUND
295 PETS
300 ARTICLES FOR SALE
305 ARTICLES WANTED
313 BOATS
315 CARS
320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY

345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
365 CARPENTRY
368 CARPETS
370 CATERING
372 CHUPPAHS
375 CLEANING/CLEANING SUPPLIES
378 CLOCKS/WATCHES
380 CLOTHING
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498 TRAVEL & TOURISM
500 TUTORING
510 UPHOLSTERY
512 WAITERING SERVICES
515 WATERPROOFING
517 WEIGHT LOSS/FITNESS
520 WINDOW SERVICES
550 WORKSHOPS

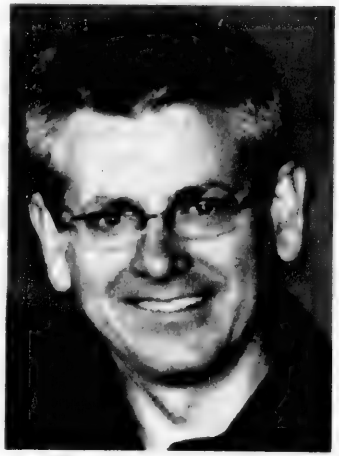
Cultural approach important in end-of-life care

Charlie Angus

In starting a conversation about palliative care, it's important to state that this issue isn't simply a matter of dollars and cents, although the financial benefits to the system are astounding. Palliative services save the health system an enormous number of resources, while providing higher levels of personal comfort.

Last fall, the New Democratic Party brought forward parliamentary motion, M-456, to create a Canada-wide strategy on palliative and end-of-life care, in conjunction with the provinces and the territories. There are many excellent organizations attempting to support families across the country, but they work in a patchwork manner.

Furthermore, what is often overlooked in this conversation is the cultural element. In the NDP motion on palliative care, the issues of family, cultural and spiritual elements are specifically mentioned. Nowhere is this connection better understood than in the work of groups like the Jewish Hospice Program run by Jewish Family and Child (JF&CS) in Toronto. They understand that providing support to the family in a culturally sensitive manner before and after death helps ensure death with dignity. It also helps a family pick up the pieces. Thus, an event that could have been traumatic can actually be a healing moment.



Charlie Angus

The culturally sensitive approach of groups like the JF&CS is rooted in the overall vision of Jewish federations to implement the concept of tikkun olam, repairing the world. While this principle is firmly rooted in the Jewish tradition, the practical steps taken by JF&CS can be utilized in many other contexts.

Access to palliative and end-of-life care is inconsistent in Canada, depending on the region. This is where the federal government can play an important role. Although health services are delivered at the provincial level, the federal government has a duty to work with the provincial and territorial partners on setting benchmarks and helping the delivery agencies learn from best practices.

In talking about a national strategy for ensuring the best practices for dealing with the dying, the work of JF&CS is a model for combining cultural, religious, and spiritual expertise as part of its counselling, care planning and volunteer support to clients and their families.

Yet, this issue never seems to make it onto the political radar, although more than 70 per cent of Canadians do not have access to hospice services. The costs to the medical system as patients are shuttled into emergency wards and families endure the wait for hospital beds are enormous.

What is needed to ensure that this palliative care discussion succeeds? First off, all federal parties need to state where they stand on the federal government's role in establishing a pan-Canadian palliative care strategy. The NDP is committed to making this a key element for dealing with health-care reform in Canada.

Getting all-party support, however, won't happen without the involvement of communities, individuals and health-care providers.

There is consensus among academics, health professionals, faith communities and the public, that Canadians deserve better end-of-life and palliative care treatment. The Jewish community, with its rich tradition of looking after the needs of its members, has a huge role to play in helping ensure that MPs of other parties understand the importance of ensuring that this consensus is reflected in Parliament.

Become part of the discussion. Ask your MP where he or she stands on this important issue. The time for the conversation on quality end-of-life care has come.

Charlie Angus is the NDP member of Parliament for Timmins-James Bay.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Levin, Semion	Feb. 25/14	Private
Krausminc, Annie	Feb. 26/14	127 Searle Ave
Dadoun, Rachel	Feb. 26/14	48 Purple Sageway
Zak, Benjamin	Feb. 26/14	24 Coreydale Crt
Jennisen, Michael	Feb. 27/14	Private
Rinberg, Etel	Feb. 26/14	Private
Feifel, Chana	Feb. 27/14	Private
Kiselyov, Roza	Feb. 28/14	10 Tangreen Crt
Bendavid, Maurice	March 2/14	22 Mistysugar Trail
Zeisler, Ester	March 3/14	333 Clark Ave. W
Schaerf, Lilly	March 3/14	29 Denmark Cres
Silver, Stephen Brian	March 3/14	Private
Garnick, Nathan	March 2/14	25 Canyon Ave
Steinberg, Weingarten, Esther	March 3/14	3705 Bathurst St
Dvores, Alexander	March 4/14	Private
Kutnowski, Hinda	March 5/14	120 Promenade Circle
Flaicher, Larry	March 4/14	Private
Siegel, Philip	March 5/14	207 Clanton Park Rd
Kats, Elizaveta	March 7/14	134 Waterloo Ave
Garr, William	March 6/14	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Rose Bockner	Feb 27/14	85 Skymark Drive
Harold Raven	Feb 28/14	80 Antibes Drive
Sorel Etrog	Feb 26/14	411 Duplex Avenue
Edith Shankman	Mar 2/14	1 Donwoods Drive
Phyllis King	Mar 2/14	205 Cummer Avenue
Yalena Nirkan	Feb 28/14	193 Tamarack Drive
Malvina Herscovici	Feb 28/14	349 St. Clair Ave. West
Benny David	Mar 4/14	7420 Bathurst Street
Ruth Fremes	Mar 2/14	44 Charles Street West
Dr. Marvin Stock	Mar 4/14	16 Silverwood Avenue
Morris Justein	Mar 1/14	One Post Road
Miriam Kimel	Mar 5/14	2045 Lakeshore Blvd.W.
Helene Rudolph	Mar 6/14	25 Montclair Road
Sarah Lambert	Mar 6/14	645 Castlefield Avenue
Melvin Wise	Mar 6/14	40 Rosehill Avenue
Nathan Max Goldman	Mar 7/14	9 York Downs Drive
Toby Kudlow	Mar 8/14	133 Torresdale Avenue

HEBREW BASIC

Irene Pinchuk	Feb 25/14	170 Red Maple Road
Emma Shapiro	Mar 1/14	333 Clark Ave. West
Simon Goldenthal	Mar 5/14	32 Wigan Crescent

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Obituaries
Unveilings
Cards of Thanks
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Solly (Rothgauz) Lewis

August 31, 1927- March 7, 2014

Solly lived a wonderful life, and his fighting spirit kept him strong and inspirational up until the very end. Eight-six years young-at-heart, and the husband of his beloved wife Elizabeth (Betty) of sixty-two years, Solly passed away suddenly, but peacefully with his family on March 7 2014, while visiting his birth city of London England. He and Betty, escorted by his loving sons Stephen and Paul Lewis, had gone to visit family and celebrate the Oxford & St George's Centenary celebration, where they met friends dating back more than 65 years. Solly, born on August 31, 1927 and dear brother to Hazel Harris, was predeceased by sisters Esther Barnard and Ruth Babot and brother Joe Ross. He started his working career in London's Petticoat Lane and then spent many years as a London Cabbie. Solly brought his family to Toronto on January 1, 1970. He worked in the textile industry in Toronto and finished his career at York Manufacturing. He will be dearly missed by his cherished wife Betty, sons Stephen and Paul, daughters-in-law Judy and Elise, grandchildren Jessie, Saul, Zoe and Hayley, his sister Hazel and the many friends and family members he kept in touch with around the world.

As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation at www.heartandstroke.com would be greatly appreciated.

Israel re-brands with new holistic approach

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

More than a century ago, Theodor Herzl wrote a book in which he described Israel as an old new land. For the public, with its archeological digs and religious sites, Israel definitely conjures images of the old. The new, not so much.

But today Israel is a land that is trending, that tweets, that has hashtags. It's innovative and spunky. It's a place where you can go rock climbing, dance in a disco, dive with dolphins, and enjoy cuisine as fine as anywhere that side of Paris.

It's very much a place that is a world leader in all manners of innovation, so it was about time the country's pitch to tourists reflected that.

That appears to be the thinking of officials at that country's ministries of tourism and foreign affairs, who commissioned studies to determine how best to re-brand the country.

Last week, representatives of the Israel Government Tourist Office (IGTO) unveiled a new campaign aimed at updating and modernizing Israel's brand while taking into account its diversity and innovation.

The re-branding features the name Israel in colourful, custom-designed typeface, accompanied by the catchphrase, "Land of Creation." The new typeface, designed specifically for the campaign, blends elements of Hebrew, English and Arabic writing. Designers came up with more than two dozen variations, from which the Ministry of Tourism selected three for its marketing campaigns. Other ministries will select other options, but they are so similar, they will present a unified image of Israel.

"[The slogan] Land of Creation ties everything together," said Jerry Adler, PR and communications director for the IGTO.

"It doesn't just refer to Israel as a start-up nation," said Ami Allon, the IGTO's consul for tourism. "It's about culture, it's about history."

"It's about Israel as a whole," he continued. "Over the last few years we realized that the right way was to give a logo, a branding, that would create a whole, that would have everything within it."

The logo is not static – and neither is Israel. It's "a dynamic logo with one visual language that can be adopted by all government offices," said Adler.

"The new logo is part of an ongoing efforts of the government of Israel... to change people around the world's view of the country and its people," he added.

Jerry Adler

Ami Allon

It is expected the logo will be employed in future marketing and PR initiatives, collateral materials, Internet and social media presence, TV, radio or other forms of communication.

Even the logo with a much older vintage – that of a Bible scene in which two of the spies sent to Canaan by Moses carry back a massive load of grapes suspended on a rod – has been updated.

Variations feature the spies carrying a watermelon, a telephone, a heart, a sun umbrella, and even an ice cream cone, all on very colourful backgrounds.

The logos and the creative language were designed by Open, an Israeli firm, following market research by Saatchi & Saatchi England, which suggested the theme of the rebranding should be Israel's creative energy.

The colourful contemporary Israel logo and the phrase that accompanies it suggests modernity and innovation, said Allon. Another aspect of the new campaign focuses on the country's people – the faces of the country.

Saatchi & Saatchi was asked to provide its expertise in designing the most effective campaign, from the perspective of an outsider looking in. The company's market research showed that for visitors, "Israel was not only about the country. It is about the people within the country," Allon said. "So in the last campaign we not only showed the places, we showed the faces."

The goIsrael website, a portal into all things connected with travel to the Jewish state, employs a unique interactive video designed by Interlude, an innovative Israeli company. Visitors are guided around the country by a trio of native Israelis. Visitors to the site can choose which Israeli will show them around, and the video takes them to locations ranging from Eilat, where you can swim with dolphins, to Tel Aviv, where you can enjoy a great meal and finish the evening enjoying the latest in techno at a dance club.

"Israel is seizing on the dynamism of multiculturalism and using that," said Adler.

So far, in its first few weeks of operation, the interactive feature appears to be succeeding. "The average stay on the website is more than six minutes. It's a lot," said Allon. "It's far more than YouTube."

It's too early to say whether the re-branding campaign is working, he added.

But there is certainly some success to build on. Despite the turmoil in Israel's neighbourhood – unrest in Egypt, civil war in Syria – more than 3.5 million tourists visited the country in 2013. "It was a fantastic year, if you think what happened in our area," said Allon.

Of that number, some 70,000 carried Canadian passports. The number of visitors from Canada was likely 20 per cent higher than that, he suggested, since it doesn't include people traveling on non-Canadian passports, such as Israelis returning for a visit.

Canadians are valued visitors, since they spend $160 a day on average, more than most others. And 35 per cent are on a return trip.

"It means people who go to Israel feel they haven't seen enough," said Allon.

To increase awareness of the country as a vacation destination, the IGTO recently hosted five travel bloggers in Israel.

"We developed and launched an online Israel specialist learning centre for the travel trade," said Adler.

"Our plan for this year is to divert more budget into social media and bloggers, allowing us greater access to the mass market and hopefully succeed in changing opinions and reinforce the image of Israel as a world-class, modern destination."

North America is the largest and most important market for Israeli tourism, and, therefore, represents "the largest investment in advertising," Allon said.

There are many short-term visitors to the country, from cruise ships, Russia and even Egypt and Jordan. But in the last two years, tourists have been spending more time in the country, and "that means people are spending more money in Israel," said Allon.

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As cigarettes and books fade from view

Reviewed by Norman Ravvin

Books v. Cigarettes
George Orwell.
Penguin Great Ideas Series

Our access to books is changing apace. In a big city like Montreal or Toronto, it is increasingly difficult to find a bookstore with enough stock to allow for a good, revelatory browse. Libraries are refocusing their attention on new forms of public space, new venues for "knowledge delivery," and consider moving book stacks off site.

Major book chains present, on the main floor of their landmark locations, not books, but household items – mugs, bath mats and candles. In the same way, the major online bookseller is awash in every product under the sun, while it follows the search patterns of book buyers in order to sell them pet food and appliances.

In Canada we think of the frailties of the book trade as being caused by our peculiar national economy and culture. For a few decades, beginning in the 1960s, the federal and provincial governments provided funding to programs that supported regional publishing. But much of this infrastructure has disappeared; American ownership of our large publishers is now de rigueur; a more-or-less monopolistic state exists in our book selling and distribution market; and the conglomeration of media ownership means that if a review runs in a major newspaper in Montreal, it will most likely fill space in its sister papers across the country.

It's astonishing to open George Orwell's collection *Books v. Cigarettes*, much of which first appeared in 1946, to find that trends we think of as of the moment were underway in Orwell's London, 70 years ago.

In Orwell's portrait of mid-'40s England he catalogues familiar woes. In the essay *Books v. Cigarettes* he comments on the prevalent notion that book buying is an extravagance, an overpriced habit. In his characteristically wry tone, Orwell computes his own book, newspaper and magazine buying costs to find that his expenditures in this area do not compete with his budget for Players cigarettes and a "half a pint of mild six days a week."

"I have said enough," he writes, "to show that reading is one of the cheaper recreations: after listening to the radio probably *the* cheapest."

I could not help thinking, as I read Orwell's tallying of his outlay on books and smokes, of an argument commonly expressed today to account for a preference for virtual books over the artifact previously known, simply, as a book: that is, that the former can be had more cheaply. How cheap, I wonder, when people say this, must a book be?

In an essay titled *Bookshop Memories* Orwell reflects on his work in a second-hand bookshop, mostly to characterize the precariousness of this sort of business.

Who does he highlight as his memorable customers at the shop "on the frontier between Hampstead and Camden Town"? There are the "not quite certifiable lunatics" who "gravitate towards bookshops, because a bookshop is one of the few places where you can hang about for a long time without spending any money."

Our big chains have borrowed a page from this scenario, creating living room-style nooks where customers flip through things they may or may not buy. Even the throw rugs and mugs in major chain stores are reminiscent of what London second-hand shops peddled to pay their overhead: "second-hand typewriters . . . stamps . . . sixpenny horoscopes . . . in sealed envelopes."

In *Confessions of a Book Reviewer* Orwell describes a literary predicament that is common today. The "standard of reviewing has gone down," Orwell tells us, "owing to lack of space." A possible antidote discussed at the time was that "a good deal of reviewing, especially of novels, might well be done by amateurs." Here Orwell is prophetic of the use by Amazon of homemade reviews as no-cost product promotion.

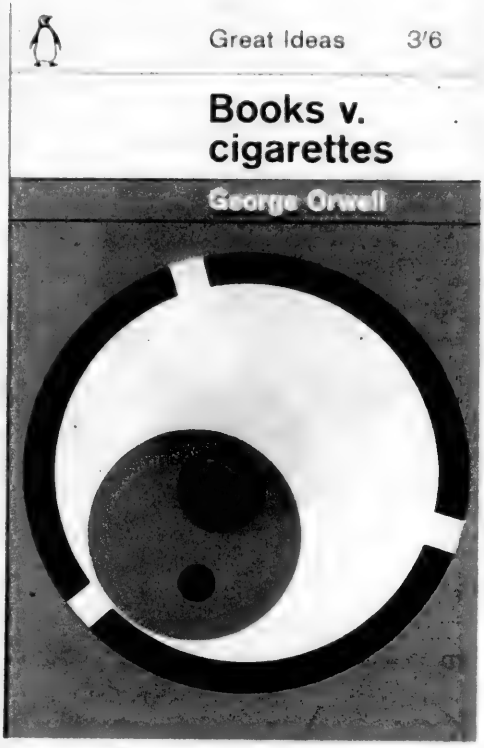
As one would expect from the author of *Homage to Catalonia* and *1984*, Orwell is concerned about the rarity among his contemporaries of engaged writing that is free of a party line. In 1946 when he published *The Prevention of Literature*, Orwell recalled the previous decade, when a Soviet mythos held sway over English intellectual life, and accounted for an unwillingness to speak or write forthrightly about pressing issues "like Poland, the Spanish Civil War, the Russo-German Pact" and the "twenty months" during which Hitler's pact with Stalinist Russia held.

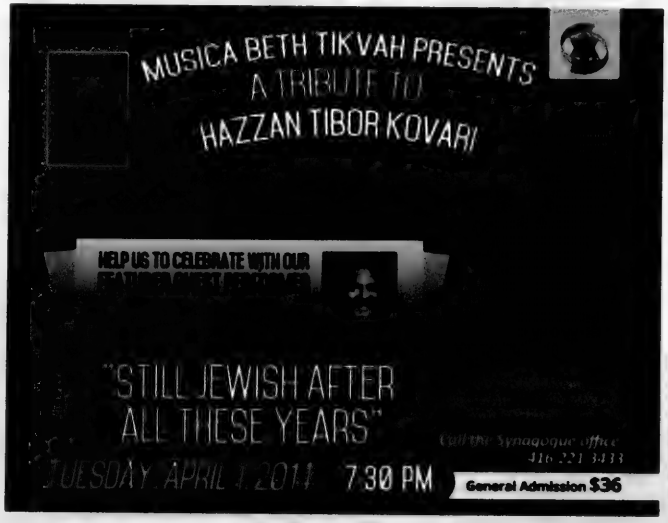
Orwell's disgust with modes of totalitarian thought and language is timely, as we watch press events overseen by Vladimir Putin, in which pliant journalists take down the leader's words as if they represent the world as it should be. The startling videos, viewable on YouTube, depicting Cossacks horsewhipping the musicians from the Russian punk group Pussy Riot, make Orwell's characterization of totalitarian society prescient: "Such a society, no matter how long it persists, can never afford to become tolerant or intellectually stable. It can never permit either the truthful recording of facts, or the emotional sincerity, that literary creation demands."

Here we have language that is nearly 70 years old, but which addresses, with great ethical vigour, the totalitarian character of life under Putin. One hopes there are Russian or Ukrainian novelists up to the challenge of a response, spurred by the dual images of Putin, legs spread, browbeating reporters, and the reappearance on the national stage of Cossacks wielding whips.

But there is shame in the fact that the entire Olympic theatre was acted out without a single substantial protest by athletes and their minders. In the mid-'40s, Orwell proposed that intellectuals who remained obediently silent alongside totalitarian violence "killed" books. *Books v. Cigarettes* reads today as a remarkable warning against such self-silencing.

Norman Ravvin is a writer and teacher in Montreal.

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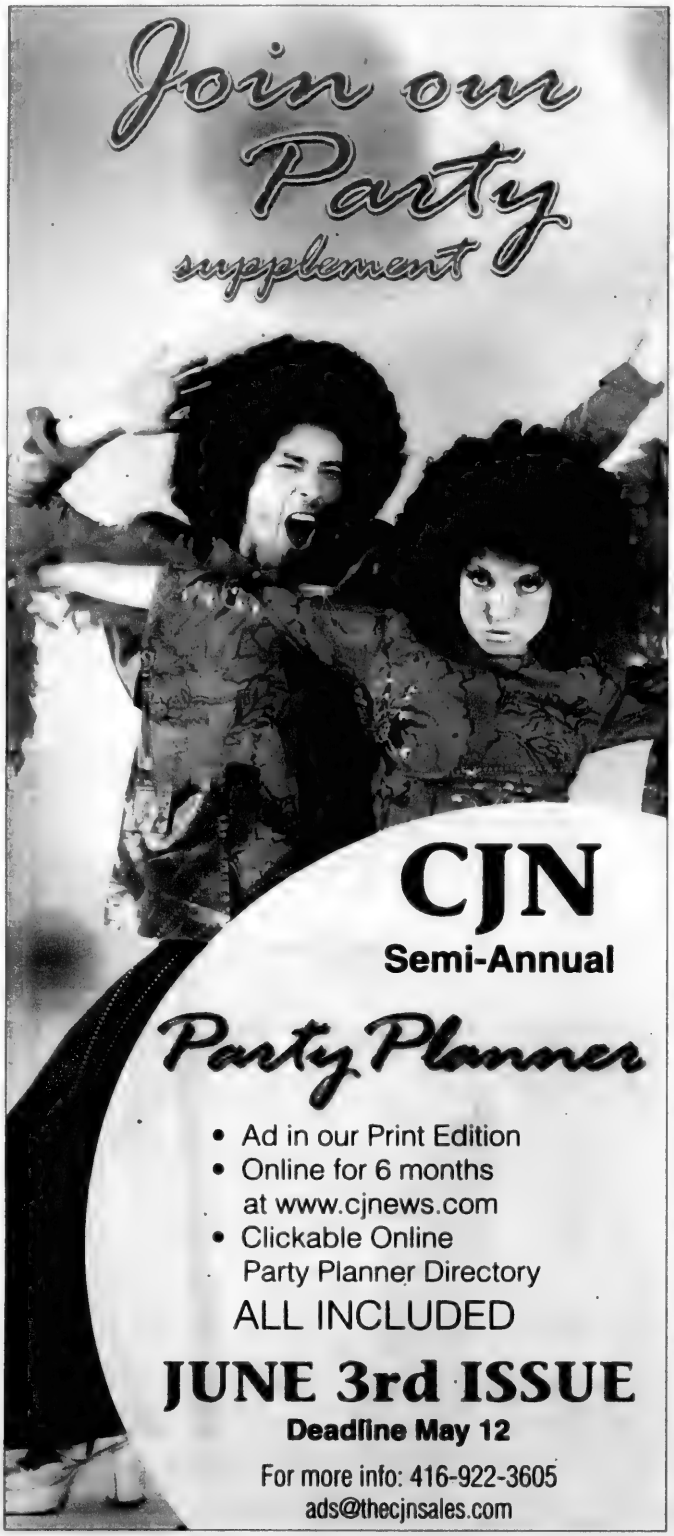

A new perspective of war in coming-of-age novel

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

A young girl who finds an antique wooden doll that had passed from hand to hand and survived some of the worst wars of the last century is the subject of a debut novel titled *Soldier Doll*.

Jennifer Gold

Jennifer Gold, a 34-year-old lawyer with the Ontario Medical Association, and now a published writer, told *The CJN* about the inspiration behind her young adult novel, published by Second Story Press and released this month.

"I had the idea about a year and a half before I started writing. I was in Prague with my husband, and I was at the Jewish Museum. There was an art exhibit by children from the Terezin concentration camp," Gold said.

"We were looking at the art, and I sort of had this idea that maybe one of these children was living in a concentration camp and someone offered her this toy, this doll, and it would provide her with some comfort. The idea kind of grew from there. That was where I first had the idea, and that was the first chapter I wrote."

Soldier Doll is a story with two narratives – one told through the perspective of a 15-year-old girl named Elizabeth who just moved from Vancouver to Toronto, and another narrative set in the past in different wartime settings.

While rummaging through a garage sale, Elizabeth finds an antique, wooden, hand-painted doll in a soldier's uniform. She decides to buy it for her father, a military contractor who is preparing to ship out for Afghanistan.

"She realizes, through an encounter with a boy at a local used book store, that it might actually be the soldier doll that is the subject of a famous World War I poem," Gold said.

"The poem is fictional, but I envisioned it as sort of an *In Flanders Fields* type of poem, a poem that everyone would have studied in school. So the idea was that this was the actual soldier doll that inspired the famous poem of the same name. So, that had Elizabeth and this boy, Evan, trying to locate the various owners and the history and trying to place the soldier doll."

The book, told through flashbacks, takes the reader back to World War I, when the doll is first given to a British solider by his girlfriend. Following the British soldier's death, it's found by a Jewish German soldier in Ypres, who, years later, gives it to a young child in Terezin. The soldier doll later finds its way to Vietnam, then to Afghanistan following the Sept. 11 World Trade Center attacks, before being discovered by Elizabeth in 2007.

Gold said the book is completely fictional, but as a product of the Jewish day school system, she was more informed and able to write about concentration camps and about Kristallnacht, a pre-Holocaust event that is also mentioned in her book.

"That was drawing on the education I had growing up. I don't have any Holocaust survivors that I know of in my family, but it was a big part of my education. I was able to draw on that when I was writing."

In addition to wanting to tell a coming-of-age story, Gold said she also wanted her book to include lessons about history, and the idea that war is not as "black and white" as one might think.

"I think a lot of teenagers today would have the message that war is bad, and 'no blood for oil,' etc., etc., but what I wanted to show was it's not black and white... I wanted to get across that soldiers who go to war are often teenagers themselves, and they have their own reasons for going that may be different from the government's reason for going to war."

Soldier Doll is available on Amazon.ca and at Indigo bookstores.

FILM BASED ON AMOS OZ NOVEL, IS SET IN PRE-STATE ISRAEL

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *The Little Traitor*, an independent US-Israeli-made family drama (2007) based on the novel *A Panther in the Basement* by **Amos Oz**. The film, written and directed by **Lynn Roth**, is set in Palestine in 1947 and focuses on an unlikely bond between a kind British sergeant and a Jewish boy.

Starring **Alfred Molina** and featuring **Theodore Bikel**, this coming-of-age film is presented as part of Spotlight on Israeli Culture, with guest speak **Prof. Kalman Weiser**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Bloor and Spadina. Sunday March 23, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. $15, $10; box office opens one hour before screening start time. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• • •

Jews in Film: The Beth Tzedec Max and Beatrice Wolfe Library continues its series on "The Image of Jews in Film." On March 26 the topic is "The Exciting and Provocative Cinema of Israel;" while sessions on April 2 and 9 examine how Jewish issues, societies and conflicts are portrayed in International Jewish Cinema. Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst St. Wednesdays, dessert 1:30 p.m., lecture 2 p.m. $20 for series or $10 at the door. Registration, 416-781-3514, ext. 225 or 416-781-3511.

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Graphic Novels on Film: Graphic novels have been called "our generation's most troublesome genre." **David Levine** looks at *Waltz with Bashir*, *American Splendor*, *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, *Sin City*, *Persepolis* and other titles as he discusses the technologies and trends that gave rise to graphic novels on film in a lecture with film clips titled "Back to the Drawing Board – Graphic Novels on Film."

Miles Nadal JCC, Monday March 31, 7 to 9 p.m. $12, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

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Beth Sholom Concert: *Kol Isha*–The Female Voice Concert features **Amy Sky**, **Neshama Carlebach**, **Theresa Tova**, **Aviva Chernick**, cantors **Magda Fishman** (Los Angeles), **Arianne Brown** (Washington) and **Alisa Pomerantz** (New Jersey); hosted by CTV medical correspondent **Dr. Marla Shapiro** in aid of breast cancer awareness. Free BRCA genetic kits available with admission. Beth Sholom Synagogue, March 27, 7:30 p.m. 416-783-6103, ext. 228; www.thefemalevoice.net

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Musical Events

• **Koffler Chamber Orchestra**, conducted by **Jacques Israelievitch**, performs *From Europe to Israel*, featuring the works of composers **Julius Chajes**, **Odon Partos**, **Shostakovich** and **Tchaikovsky**. Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd. Sunday March 23, 3 p.m. $15, $20, $25. 647-925-0643, ext. 229.

• Wanderlust presents Canadian Jewish artists **Briga**, **Jessica Hana Deutsch** and **Tamar Ilana** who perform traditional and original music, including Roma, Flamenco, Celtic, Balkan, Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jewish and bluegrass. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. Sunday, March 30, doors open 7:30 p.m. $15, $20.

• Orchestra Toronto presents a Light Classics "Diamonds Are Forever" concert featuring stage and screen themes by **John Williams**, **Howard Shore**, **Alesandr Borodin**, **Leonard Bernstein** and **John Barry**. Toronto Centre for the Arts, George Weston Recital Hall, 5040 Yonge St. April 6, 3 p.m. Pre-concert chat, 2:15 p.m. $43, $37, $19, $15. Ticketmaster, 1-855-985-2787.

• Active 55+ presents "Opera Appreciation -- Viva Puccini!" with opera educator **Iain Scott**. Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. It's *Madame Butterfly* on March 25, *Turandot* on April 1. Miles Nadal JCC. Drop-in $14. Registration, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

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Arts in Brief

• Ventriloquist storyteller **Yehudit Shier Weisberg**, along with "Yossel," performs an adaptation of the Yiddish story *It Can Always Be Worse* as part of the Toronto Storytelling Festival. Gladstone Hotel, Ballroom, 1214 Queen St. W. Sunday March 30, 4 to 4:30 p.m. There will be storytelling all day from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets available at the door. Afternoon, kids free, adults $10; evening 7 to 10 p.m., $10.

• Israeli Yiddish scholar **Miriam Trinh** presents two free lectures. "The Life and Work of Avrom Sutskever" (Yiddish lecture) at the Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St. on Sunday, April 6, 4 pm. "Poetry from the Ghettos and Concentration Camps" (English lecture) at the Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, April 7, 7 p.m. Co-sponsored by UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish. 416-635-2883, ext. 5189.

• Volcano Theatre stages a reading of *Benedictus*, a political thriller by Israeli playwright **Motti Lerner**, hosted by the Koffler Centre of the Arts; **Ross Manson** directs the cast of four. Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St. Thursday March 20, 7:30 p.m. Free; registration required. www.kofflerarts.org, info@kofflerarts.org

• The University of Victoria has cancelled its planned production of *A Twentieth Century Passion*, a Holocaust memorial oratorio by **A. Peter Gary**, that had been slated for performance in early April.

• • •

At the Galleries

•The Rite of Return — Canadian Jewish Artists and Contemporary Poland, featuring works by photographer **David Kaufman**, remains on view at Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst St., until April 6.

•Israeli artist **Sigalit Landau's** show, *Moving to Stand Still*, continues at the Koffler's Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St. until April 6. www.kofflerarts.org

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Bethlehem is a tightly-wound and balanced thriller

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

The Israeli award-winning film *Bethlehem* has much in common with the Palestinian Oscar- nominated film *Omar.*

Both tell the story of a Palestinian informant working for Israel's secret service. However, while *Omar's* story was framed through the lens of its charismatic Arab protagonist, *Bethlehem* balances its time and perspective between both sides of the conflict.

Omar, nominated in the best foreign film category at this year's Academy Awards (and now playing in select Canadian cities), is more riveting as a thriller than its Israel-made counterpart.

However, *Bethlehem* – opening on March 28 – is a more nuanced look at the rifts and relationships between Israelis and Palestinians.

In *Bethlehem*, which won six Ophir Awards (Israel's Oscars), the Palestinian informant is a gangly but gutsy teen, Sanfur (Shadi Mar'i, who looks like the Middle Eastern equivalent of Michael Cera). His brother, Ibrahim (Hisham Suliman), is a wanted terrorist that Israeli intelligence agent Razi (Tsahi Halevi) has been trying to capture for a year.

When Ibrahim takes responsibility for a suicide bombing in Jerusalem, Razi tries to get Sanfur to give up his brother's whereabouts. Razi and Sanfur have a close relationship, although Sanfur is not comfortable betraying his brother.

In the midst of this confusion, Sanfur feels invincible. In *Bethlehem's* opening scene, he straps on a bulletproof vest and asks one of his friends to shoot him. Always in Ibrahim's shadow, Sanfur wants to prove that he has power. When he tries out the vest in a later scene and shoots himself in the stomach, he ends up with a bloody wound, a potent metaphor for the collateral damage that inevitably arises despite the hope of security.

Tsahi Halevi, left, as Israeli secret service agent Razi, and Shadi Mar'i as Sanfur in the award-winning drama *Bethlehem*.

The plot thickens when the secret service gets word that Sanfur may be transferring money to his brother, who has links to both Hamas and the al-Aqsa Brigade. Razi's boss, Levy (Yossi Eini), wants his agent to break ties with Sanfur if the teen does not provide a path to capture Ibrahim. (Levy refers to Sanfur as Esau, an obvious allegory).

Bethlehem is in Hebrew and Arabic, with English subtitles. It is the film debut of Israeli director Yuval Adler, an Israeli Jew who worked in military intelligence. Adler co-wrote the script with Ali Wakad, a Palestinian journalist. Their knowledge of Israeli politics adds authenticity to the drama. Their collaboration is likely why *Bethlehem* is a more balanced, intricate view of Israeli-Palestinian relations than *Omar*.

Unlike *Omar*, which portrayed neither side in a positive light, yet invested the audience in the plight of a Palestinian terrorist, *Bethlehem* shows the humanity and menace on both sides. As balanced as the drama is, though, *Bethlehem* is more sympathetic to the Israelis.

Most of the actors are newcomers, including Halevi and Mar'i. (Halevi is a former dancer and singer, although you would never guess it from his deeply arresting performance.) Both give tremendous turns as men trying to figure out their next move in a geopolitical realm where it is hard to feel protective or heroic. Mar'i and Halevi depict both the humanity and difficulty of everyday life on their anguished faces, and their scenes together are very touching.

If the film falters in any way, it is in illuminating the bond between the unstable Sanfur, who keeps moving between his allegiance to the Israelis and his Palestinian brethren, and Razi, also torn between his friendship for the teen and his patriotic duties. A few more scenes to explain the roots of their alliance would have made the climactic scene, when the two men confront each other, more suspenseful and significant.

Adler uses the camera less as a way to angle certain Israeli or Palestinian characters as heroes or villains but shoots much of the film head on, making it an objective observer that does not side with anyone. (Yaron Scharf, who also photographed the Oscar-nominated *Footnote*, is the cinematographer.)

Bethlehem portrays the Palestinians with depth, but also bitter honesty. After the Israelis bring down a terrorist, we see groups of Palestinians mourning and crying, as cameramen shoot their woe and misery. As soon as a terrorist group comes into the building to speak more menacingly about retribution for the dead man's death, they order the videographers to turn the cameras off.

The film also explores the rifts between Palestinians in terms of class, racial descent and political division: There is even a schism, as in reality, with the goals of different terrorist groups. Few films from the region have explored these tensions as acutely. Some of the musical choices are a bit overwrought, with dark, trembling music playing over some of the Palestinian violence.

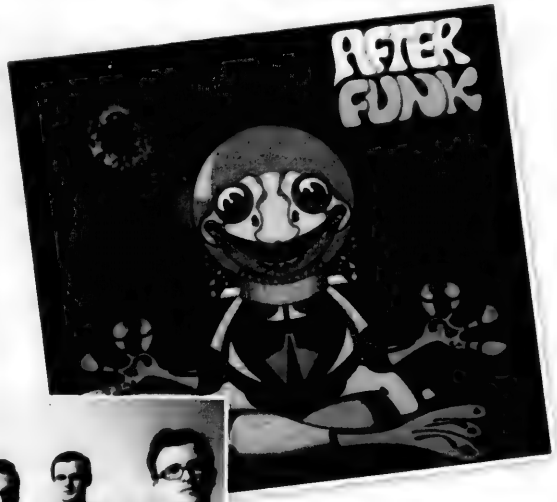
Bleak but boldly acted, *Bethlehem* is one of the best explorations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in modern cinema. Although not quite as taut a thriller as *Omar*, it is a more balanced examination of the ties that bind and break between the two populations.

RESISTANCE: *Sisters in Resistance*, an exhibit of oil paintings by Toronto artist Harry Tiefenbach runs until March 24 at The Gallery at the J, in the Miles Nadal JCC. The paintings celebrate women resistance fighters of World War II. Tiefenbach was born in Poland in 1946 to Holocaust survivors.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

AFTER FUNK enjoys quick ascent in T.O. music scene



After Funk have gone from a foursome to an eight-piece band. Their music is easy to dance to and their unique sound is bound to catch on beyond Canada's borders.

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Whether it's headlining a show or opening a gig for one of their musical inspirations, Ontario-based funk and soul outfit After Funk is one of the hottest bands of the moment.

Their groovy, soulful sound, mixed with jazz and rock influences, have kept sell-out crowds dancing in Toronto clubs such as the Phoenix and the El Mocambo through the winter.

After Funk's shows are filled with retro and modern sounds. Among the group's eight members are a couple of young Jews with grooves: drummer Jaime Rosenberg and Phil Tessis, one of the band's two guitarists.

Rosenberg, 22, is one of the band's four founding members. With his Western University roommate Justin Bontje, a bass player, the duo set up a laid-back space in their dorm to play music. At school, the friends met keyboard player and vocalist Yanick Allwood and guitarist Bradley McBurney. The four quickly bonded over a love of funk and soul.

"We decided to sign up for a couple Battle of the Bands [contests], and we ended up winning them both," Rosenberg tells *The CJN*.

The foursome decided to make their sound even bigger. By the end of 2012, After Funk had doubled in size and increased its volume. Four more members, including Tessis, now 25, joined.

Rosenberg got interested in funk music in high school and was a big fan of the bands Soulive and Lettuce. Since After Funk launched, the Toronto musician has become friends with members of both groups.

Alan Evans, Soulive's drummer, mixed and mastered After Funk's self-titled album, which debuted in January. Meanwhile, the group opened for Lettuce at a February gig in Toronto.

"[With Lettuce], we played the Phoenix, which is a big place. That was the biggest crowd we've ever played for," Rosenberg says.

But jamming with some of his musical heroes couldn't match the electricity Rosenberg says he felt at a gig in the summer of 2013. On that July night, After Funk was booked to headline an after-party performance in Toronto to follow a Phish concert.

However, Phish cancelled its show in the wake of a big storm. As a result, some miserable fans flocked to After Funk's concert at the Great Hall instead, giving the rising collective the chance to save a dour night.

"Everybody was kind of bummed out and upset about Phish being cancelled and was in a bad mood," Rosenberg says. "Everybody who was [at the after-party] had a great time and wasn't thinking about Phish anymore. It kind of made them forget."

After Funk also played shows in 2013 alongside high-profile groups such as jazz-funk fusion band Snarky Puppy, which won a Grammy for best R&B performance earlier this year. The group also opened for hot New Orleans collective Dumpstaphunk and the Juno-nominated groups Walk Off the Earth and Five Alarm Funk.

"If we just keep opening for bands that I like to listen to, I'm happy," Tessis says, laughing. "It's inspiring to get to play shows with them. They're all really down-to-earth people."

Tessis joined After Funk in July 2012. At the guitarist's first gig, Allwood's keyboard malfunctioned and was out for the entire show. This could have been a challenge for Tessis, since he had only learned the songs the day before.

"I was responsible for covering all of the chords and stuff… [But] it was a fun first-gig experience," he says.

Although Tessis is a newer addition to the group, he wrote the music for the two instrumental songs on the band's groovy, seven-track EP. Allwood does the majority of After Funk's songwriting.

All eight members of the band have a music education, either from Western University, the University of Toronto or Humber College. Rosenberg currently studies music at Humber, in a program that Tessis graduated from in 2010.

After Funk's music has complex composition, but is easy to dance to. Infused with soul, synthesizer and a big, blasting horn section, their unique sound is bound to catch on beyond Canada's borders.

"We play funk, but we put so much else into it that it doesn't end up coming out as just funk anymore," Tessis says. "You get a bit of everything."

The group is gaining popularity locally, but they also have their sights set on down south. Rosenberg says the group is trying to find more chances to perform in the United States.

Other members of After Funk have roots in London, Ont., Hamilton and Toronto, and the group often performs in and around the Golden Horseshoe.

They will head east for their next show, at L'Escalier in Montreal on March 21, and they'll be playing the Merchant Tap House in Kingston the following night. The weekend marks the band's three-year anniversary of their first performance.

Rosenberg says he credits After Funk's quick ascent on the local music scene to the band's chemistry.

"Everyone's really close and gets along," he says. "That translates when we're on stage. The crowd picks up on that vibe. We're always striving to be as good as we can be and get the band sounding better."

Videos, events and more on Heebonics.ca

What's New

Deadline reminder: The deadline for the issue of April 3 is March 24. The deadline for the issue of April 10 is March 31. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 20

KENSINGTON CHILDHOOD

Kensington Market Historical Society and Friends of the Osborne Collection, Toronto Public Library, present a discussion with **Leslie McGrath**, **Owen Shime** and **Alan Rakoff** on growing up in Kensington Market, Lillian H. Smith branch, Toronto Public Library, 239 College St. Doors open at 6 p.m., lecture at 6:30 p.m.

GREAT RABBINIC THINKERS

Martin Lockshin discusses "Shmuel David Luzzato, Modern Biblical Scholar and Traditionalist," 8 p.m., Or Chaim Yeshiva. www.torahinmotion.org.

Saturday, March 22

SHABBAT ITANU

Paul Rosen, Olympic sledge hockey player, speaks at Temple Sinai, 10 a.m.

Ellen Schwartz, co-director of Jacob's Ladder and founder of Project Give Back, speaks at Adath Israel during Shabbat services.

ARZA CANADA

Rabbi Miri Gold, the first Reform rabbi recognized by Israel, speaks at Temple Kol Ami, 9 a.m.

THE WORLD NEEDS ISRAEL

Dov Altman, CEO of Canadian Friends of Bar-Ilan University, discusses "Israel in the 21st century, the miracle continues and why the world needs Israel," during Shabbat services at Shaar Shalom Synagogue.

Sunday, March 23

KOL AMI BUSINESS CIRCLE

David S. Cohen discusses leadership and management from a Jewish perspective, Temple Kol Ami, 1 p.m.

PRE-PESACH FASHION SALE

Beth Avraham Yoseph Toronto Congregation holds a pre-Pesach fashion sale, and will sell disposables and plastics for Passover, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m.

MEDICINE IN THE SHTETL

Dr. Shim Felsen discusses "Medicine in the Shtetl," 2 p.m., Workmen's Circle Centre, 471 Lawrence Ave. W.

VENDORS MARKET

A market featuring spices, kitchenware, jewelry and more, benefiting B'nai Brith Canada and Uptown Chabad will be held 11 a.m.-4 p.m., 15 Hove St.

EVENING OF JEWISH SONG

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation presents an "Evening of Jewish Song," to benefit Jews for Judaism, with **Netivot HaTorah Choir**, **Shul of Rock Band**, **Arbah Kolot Barbershop Quartet**, **Rabbi Moshe Meirovich** and **Rabbi Chaim Strauchler,** 6:30 p.m. $25/$39.

MARLIES GAME

Shaar Shalom Synagogue goes to the Toronto Marlies game. For tickets, call **Anna** 905-889-4975.

Monday, March 24

JEWISH TORONTO HISTORY

Jack Lipinsky discusses "The History of Jewish Toronto," in 3 sessions, 7:15 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. March 24, "Weaving unity from diversity (with some victims on the side of the road)."

OLDER DRIVERS

Dr. Gary Naglie, chief of Baycrest's department of medicine, discusses issues related to senior drivers, 7:30 p.m., Adath Israel Synagogue.

LIFE IN THE ARMED FORCES

Retired **Maj. Hans William Schmidt** discusses his experiences in the Canadian Forces, at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 66, 6 Spring Garden Ave. Doors open 6:15 p.m., speaker at 7:15 p.m. Co-sponsored by Temple Sinai Brotherhood.

THE STORY OF MY LUNCH

Tamar Yunger of Shoresh Environmental, discusses "The Story of My Lunch: Judaism and Sustainable Food Systems," 8 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

THE HAGGADAH DECODED

Rabbi Aaron Greenberg discusses "The Haggadah Decoded," with Emunah Women, 10:15 a.m., 208 Coldstream Ave. RSVP by March 20, call 416-636-0036.

Tuesday, March 25

BETTER BRAIN HEALTH

Dr. Carol Greenwood, senior scientist at Baycrest Rotman Research Institute,

Continued on page 49

Continued from page 48

discusses "Brain Food: The Diet and Brain Connection," 1:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Wednesday, March 26

MORASHA CLASSES

Yehudit Shier Weisberg teaches a 5-week course on "Jewish Prayer: A Gift for Living," 10 a.m., starting today.

Jerry Fink teaches a 5-week course on "Western Art Music from a Jewish Perspective," 11:15 a.m., starting today. To register, call, 416-789-7400.

Thursday, March 27

KOL ISHA

An evening of song for breast cancer awareness, featuring **Amy Sky**, **Neshama Carlebach**, **Theresa Tovah** and more, 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. Call 416-783-6103, ext. 228.

PASSOVER COOKING

Agnes Imani puts a new twist on Passover cooking, Prosserman JCC, 7:30 p.m. $25. RSVP at pjparents.cook.eventbrite.ca.

Upcoming Events

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 6-week bereavement group for men and women who have lost a spouse, starting **April 24.** Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10 for more information.

JEWISH YOUTH CHOIR

Harmonia, a Jewish youth choir, is now accepting registrations. Rehearsals start **March 30**, 4 p.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC. Email harmonia@mnjcc.org.

WOMEN'S DAY OF LEARNING

Kehillat Shaarei Torah Synagogue holds its Women's Day of Learning, **March 30**, with speakers **Ilana Rubinstein, Chana Leah Rappaport** and **Chana Goldstein.** RSVP 416-229-2600, ext. 5 or wdol2014@gmail.com.

FAMILY PHOTOS NEEDED

Beth Jacob V'Anshe Drildz Congregation is looking for former members to share family photos and memories for a commemorative book that is being written about the shul. Contact janinesherr@aol.com.

JAZZ HAVDALAH

Beth Torah presents jazz Havdalah with the **Steve Koven Duo**, **March 29.** RSVP 416-782-4495, ext. 27.

BOOK LAUNCH

Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich speaks with **Daniel Gordis** about his new book, *Menachem Begin: The Battle for Israel's Soul*, **March 30, 6 p.m.,** Beth Sholom Synagogue.

PJ KIDS COOK

An afternoon of Passover activities, including cooking, story time and crafts, for children 3 and older is offered by PJ Library at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre, **March 30**, 3:30 p.m. RSVP 905-303-1821, ext. 3025.

PASSOVER SEDERS

Chabad of Markham hosts a seder, **April 14**. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

Temple Har Zion is holding a seder, **April 15**. Register by March 28. Call 905-889-2252, ext. 232.

Association of Jewish Seniors and Bernard Betel Centre hold a seder, **April 15**. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2-10. Starts March 18, 7 p.m.

High-Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents in a high-conflict situation, not for individuals in an abusive situation. March 20, 6:30 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Opera Appreciation: Viva Puccini with **Iain Scott**, 1:30 p.m. March 25, *Madame Butterfly;* April 1, *Turandot*.

Judaica through the ages with silversmith **Zahava Lambert,** March 20. Doors open at 1:30, program begins at 2 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Association of Jewish Seniors presents "Resilience during times of depression," with **Margalit Meidan,** Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, March 20, 9:30 a.m. Call **Arnold Foss,** 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Circle of Care offers free exercise and fall prevention classes for seniors, call **Irene Lakatos,** 905-303-5838, ext. 3157.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. March 19, Post-Purim Persian Party, 1 p.m., with concert, belly dancing and food; March 20, lecture on "Nutrition for Bone Health," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine March 26 (register in advance); Dance with live music, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesdays; seniors chair exercise starts April 22; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

PJ Plus is a 10-week parent and child program for active Jewish learning for children ages 1-1/2 to 3 years. Starts March 23. Call 905-303-2353, ext. 3258.

Nanny Robina presents a workshop on how to get your baby to sleep through the night, March 18, 7 p.m. $15. Call ext. 4235.

Spring and summer programs for children are open for registration. Call ext. 4235 to register.

Women's only fitness classes: cycling, zumba, yoga and core conditioning are offered. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com.

The Prosserman JCC is part of the studio audience of the *Steven and Chris* show, April 2. Call ext. 4235 for a ticket.

Norene Gilletz presents tips and recipes for a "Panic-free Passover," April 1, 6:30 p.m. Ext. 4235.

Registration for the 2014-2015 school year for the day-care and preschool has begun. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Toronto Jewish Film Society shows *The Little Traitor*, March 23, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. **Kalman Weiser** will be the guest speaker. Box office opens one hour before screening time.

Sisters in Resistance, paintings by Harry Tiefenbach of women resistance fighters from World War II, is at the gallery until March 24.

David Levine discusses "Graphic Novels on Film," March 31, 7 p.m.

Register for the Joke Lab with actor **Jack Newman** and learn how to tell hilarious jokes and humorous anecdotes, April 24-May 15, 7 p.m.

Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. ext. 250.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.; **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.Join

Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays, March 25-May 6, 7 p.m. MELT Method-hand and foot, Mondays April 7-May 12, 2:30 p.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays April 2- June 18, 12:15 p.m. Introduction to healthy breast yoga, April 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

Alexa Edelstein presents a cheque to her cousin Rachel Benlolo at Zareinu Educational Centre.

Bat mitzvah girl raises $11,000 for Zareinu

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Tweens celebrating bar and bat mitzvahs today are emerging as major charitable forces, as some happily give away their monetary gifts.

When Alexa Edelstein, a Grade 7 student at Netivot HaTorah Day School, celebrated her bat mitzvah recently, she asked her guests to donate to the Zareinu Educational Centre, rather than giving gifts to her.

"She raised $11,000 and was beaming as she presented the cheque to the school," said Michelle Edelstein, Alexa's mother.

"Becoming a bat mitzvah was a milestone in my life. Not only did I want to do something meaningful, but I also wanted to be an inspiration to other kids to do the same," Alexa said.

Teaching kids about the responsibilities of Jewish adulthood, encouraging values of tikkun olam (repairing the world), giving back and raising funds for good causes can go hand in hand with this rite-of-passage, combining service, advocacy and study.

Alexa was exposed to Zareinu from an early age when she walked the runway at the centre's annual fashion show. "I would take Alexa every year to Zareinu's annual Moveathon, and today it is still one of her favourite things to do," Michelle Edelstein said.

Alexa's cousin, Rachel Benlolo, is a student at Zareinu, and a family friend has a little girl with Down syndrome who attends the school.

"I have seen the miracles they performed with Rachel," Alexa said.

Zareinu provides individualized therapies and treatments with an adapted education that includes Jewish teachings and traditions. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for children with disabilities and their families by providing the most up-to-date therapies and learning strategies to help them achieve their individual potential.

Last year, Alexa went with her class to Zareinu to learn about the different therapies and activities the teachers and therapists do with children to help them overcome their challenges.

"They asked us to put a sock on our hands and pick up Fruit Loops, then put them on a pipe cleaner to show us how it feels for many kids to do something that for us seems like a simple task. They also spun us around and when they stopped and we all felt dizzy, they told us that many kids feel this way without being spun around. They showed us words on a piece of paper with the letters mixed up so that we can see how a child with dyslexia feels."

Alexa said it was a great way to help the students appreciate how Zareinu works. "Visiting the school gave me a better understanding of… the types of challenges that many kids have. It made me sad to see so many kids with physical and developmental challenges, but, at the same time, happy that such a school exists and helps so many children and families," she said.

Rachel Benlolo's mother, Marlene Kenley, told *The CJN*, "As cousins, we are very blessed to have the family that we have. It's touching to witness the next generation of children getting involved and taking after their parents, such as Alexa supporting Rachel, wanting to be a part of her life, and understanding that Zareinu is such an important school. There are many children out there who need people like Alexa, and Rachel is one of them."

Not every child will become a philanthropist, but involving children in your family's charitable activities is one way to give them a sense of charity as part of a legacy of giving.

"We are all so worried about whether the next generation will care as much, or do as much. Here's a bat mitzvah girl making a big difference and setting an amazing example," said Shimon Vinger, director of development at Zareinu.

Alexa's message to other kids: "There's no better gift than the gift of giving."

Food sensitivities at seder

Ask Ella
By Ella Burakowski

Dear Ella,

Passover is around the corner, and although I love hosting the seder, this year brings some extra challenges.

Besides kashrut, I must concern myself with my diabetic bubbie, a vegetarian sister, a dear friend whose son has a peanut allergy, and another friend who only eats gluten-free.

I used to be able to buy some prepared foods to help with the meal, but I can't take that chance this year. I don't know where to begin. I'm feeling a little overwhelmed. Any suggestions would be appreciated.

Seder Food Limitations

Dear Seder Food Limitations

It's a good thing you're starting early, because you'll need to do some extreme planning.

I suggest the first thing to do is to talk with your guests and find out if they have any suggestions. They're used to cooking for themselves and may have some helpful hints or easy recipes to get you through this. Once you have compiled a list, go through it and see which of the recipes will fulfil as many of the limitations you are challenged with. The one rule you must not veer from is nothing on the table, or even in your home if possible, should contain nuts. The peanut allergy is too serious to take a chance.

Use a cookbook that has nutritional information, so you can make sure you are in line with carbs and fats for bubbie. The Internet is also an amazing resource. Let me get you started.

From Norene Gilletz, www.ou.org/jewish_action/03/2013/anon-gebrokts-gluten-free-passover/ and from Kids with Food Allergies, www.kidswithfoodallergies.org/KFA-Celebrates-Passover.pdf

If *kitniyot* isn't a problem, then quinoa is a great alternative. Nut-free charoset recipes are in abundance on the Internet, as are gluten-free kugels and matzah ball recipes. Remember that meat eaters also enjoy vegetarian sides.

Now that you've done some research, create a menu and make your shopping list. If you take your time in the planning stages, you'll sail through this.

Before the meal is served, tell people which dishes are vegetarian, gluten-free low carb, etc., and you can announce that everything is nut-free. That way everyone's dietary limitations don't have to take control of the seder-table conversation.

You've been the ultimate concerned hostess. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done. Now your guests can truly sit back and enjoy the true meaning of celebrating Passover together with family and friends.

Dear Ella,

Mark and I have been dating for more than six months. We met on JDate and clicked from the first coffee date we shared.

Yesterday, I picked up his phone (which is identical to mine) and noticed emails that popped in from JDate. I am shocked and upset that he has not removed his profile, as I certainly have. I'm not sure what to do with this information. I don't want to seem like the jealous type, but I don't think this is right. Do you?

JDate Jilted

Dear JDate Jilted

It's too early to freak out. You haven't had a conversation yet. Be honest and in a calm and unemotional tone, tell Mark you picked up his phone by mistake and noticed emails from JDate, then let him take over the conversation.

Does he begin to hem and haw? Is he squirming and sweating like he was just caught? Or does he laugh it off with a plausible explanation like maybe he was just going to let his membership lapse on its own.

If you want a serious relationship, then no subject should be off the table, regardless of how uncomfortable it may be.

A good relationship is open and honest, and at six months you should know your boyfriend well enough to understand if this move was intentional, an oversight, or an all-out lie about what the two of you share.

Stop stewing and start talking. The harder the conversations are, the closer the two of you will become. It's the growing together and learning about each other that makes falling in love so special.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: ellacjn@gmail.com. Ella is not a professional counsellor. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

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Moghira Younis (left) and Adi Naali, Israeli experts on olive oil, gave 11 presentations during their recent week-long visit to the GTA. *[Barbara Silverstein photo]*

Jews, Arabs join forces to promote Israeli olive oil

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

People shopping for high-quality olive oil may one day skip the Italian and Spanish varieties and reach for the Israeli brands.

The creation of an international market for its product is a distant goal of the Israeli Olive Board, according to its emissary, Adi Naali, who recently spoke to a gathering of some 50 people at an olive oil tasting event at the Toronto home of Robert and Galya Sarner.

Naali, the manager of the Israeli Olive Board, and his colleague, Moghira Younis, an adviser on olives, figs, grapes and pomegranates at the Ministry of Agriculture, spent an intensive week in the GTA teaching people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds about Israel's burgeoning olive oil industry.

Naali and Younis gave 11 presentations – eight on college and university campuses and three geared to the Jewish community.

The olive oil tasting at the Sarner home was co-hosted by Galya Sarner, director of the Israeli-Canadian Project at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, and Donna Holbook, national executive director of the Canadian branch of the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem (ICEJ). It was sponsored by Hillel of Greater Toronto and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs of UJA Federation.

Participants were treated to a sumptuous spread of hummus, cheese platters, and bowls of olive oil with French bread and crackers for dipping.

Later, they sipped shot glasses filled with some of Israel's finest olive oils, while Naali instructed them on how to distinguish high-quality extra virgin olive oil, which is cold pressed, from the cheaper, chemically processed oils. "A high quality oil should smell fruity," he said. "The more bitter and spicier taste, the better the olive oil."

Naali advised people to be cautious when buying olive oil, because a lot of extra virgin olive oil sold is adulterated with cheaper chemically processed oils.

He also spoke about the necessity of boosting olive oil consumption in Israel. About two litres per capita are consumed annually, which, he said, is low in comparison to Mediterranean countries like Greece and Spain, where the consumption rate is 26 and 15 litres per capita respectively.

Younis discussed some of the modern methods of olive cultivation, noting that each machine now used to harvest the olive trees replaces 260 workers.

He said one of the most innovative aspects of growing olives is the successful irrigation of the Negev. The desert is now blooming with olive groves that are irrigated with salt water.

Younis also told the group about his contribution to helping Arab Israeli women become economically independent. He is advising Sindyanna, an Arab women's co-operative based in the Galilee that is supported by both Arab and Jewish Israelis, on the cultivation of the Oasis Solidarity Organic Olive Grove in Wadi Arra, the village where he grew up.

The olive oil presentations and workshops were timed to coincide with Israeli Apartheid Week (March 3 to 11 this year), said Shirin Ezekiel, associate executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto. She explained that the relationship between Younis, an Arab Israeli, and Naali, who is Jewish, exemplifies the collegiality that exists between these two groups. "Part of the idea behind the presentations was to highlight the collaboration between Jews and Arabs within Israel."

Younis and Naali spoke at York University, University of Toronto, Ryerson University, and Seneca, Centennial and Humber colleges. The majority of the participants there were not Jewish, Ezekiel said.

Ezekiel said the students were particularly interested in the cultivation of the olives. "They were very excited about the olive trees growing in the desert. They thought it could be a model for other countries."

CJN
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PAGES

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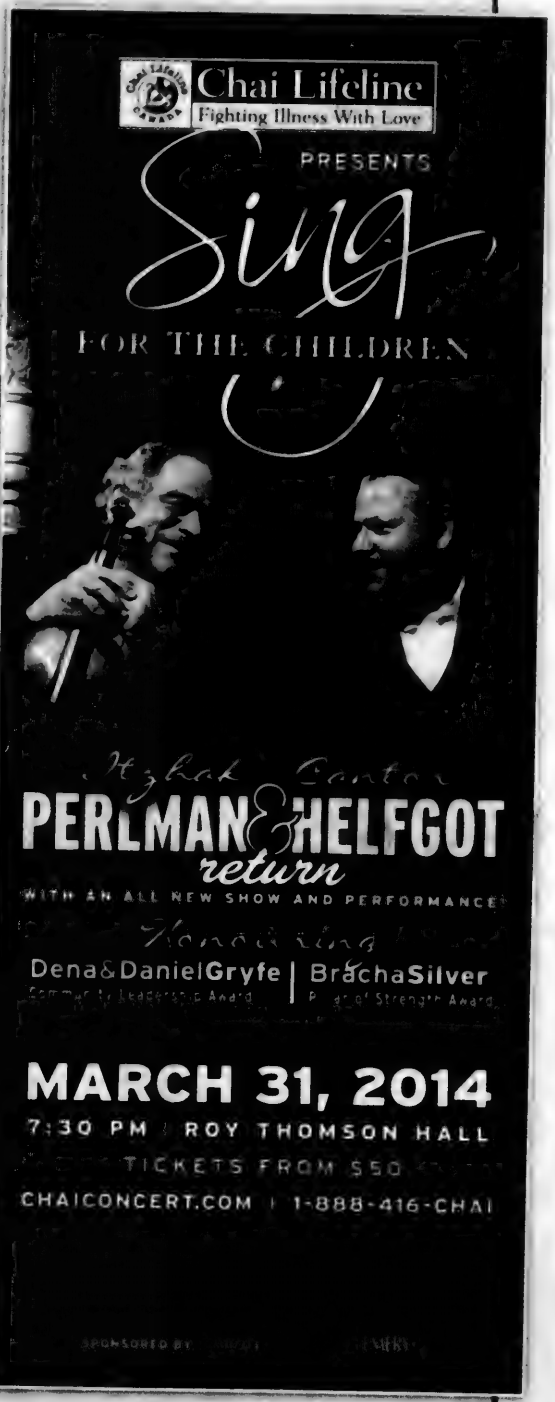

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Israeli Foreign Ministry employees protest outside the offices of the Shin Bet, Israel's security agency, last summer. The sign they're holding reads, "Lost diplomacy equals an isolated Israel." Foreign Ministry workers went on strike March 23. *(Flash90 photo)*

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In conversation with Itzhak Perlman
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Desperate times, desperate measures

Opinion

Israel's Foreign Ministry workers association announced a general strike on Sunday as part of an ongoing labour dispute with the Israeli government, cutting off all consular services and regular diplomatic and public diplomacy work around the world. In this exclusive, personal article, DJ Schneeweiss, Israel's consul general to Toronto and Western Canada, explains why.

DJ Schneeweiss
Special to The CJN

Israel's foreign service is in crisis.

Over a period of many years, our government has been engaged in a mostly unwitting hollowing out of one of the country's greatest resources – its ability to act on the international stage. As a result, and in an effort to staunch wounds that many of us fear may prove fatal to Israel's international standing and freedom of action, Israel's Foreign Ministry workers association initiated a strike on Sunday across our entire network of embassies and consulates, as well as at ministry headquarters in Jerusalem.

Here in Toronto, our consulate doors are shut. We have postponed or cancelled a series of events and initiatives with local partner organizations, as well as various public speeches and appearances and all our communications output.

Continued on page 59

Initiatives bring Jews, First Nations closer together

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

More than 100 years ago, Winnipeg businessman Harry Henteleff used to make it a practice to get out of town and do some hunting and fishing in the dense forests and pristine lakes that were plentiful on the Manitoba-Ontario border.

Henteleff was usually accompanied by guides from local First Nations communities, and the friendships he struck up stayed with him for life.

More recently, Henteleff's grandson, Michael Dan, has been making his way into a nearby area in Northwestern Ontario, not far from the Manitoba border, which was ceded by Anishinabe-speaking peoples to the Crown in what is known as Treaty 3.

Like his grandfather, Dan respects Aboriginal culture, but it's not hunting and fishing that brings him there.

Dan, president and CEO of Gemini Power Corporation, is promoting a hydro-electric project that he believes will benefit his company, as well as pay handsome dividends for local First Nations bands for generations to come.

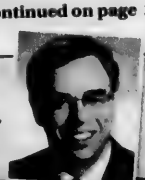
"My family has a connection to Treaty 3 [lands] that goes back 100 years," said Dan. "Now his grandson has come back with several million dollars and is [developing] a hydro station in the area."

Dan is far from the first contemporary Jew to take an interest in Aboriginal well-being. Late last year, the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ), meeting in San Diego adopted a "Resolution on First Nations" advanced by a committee of the Canadian Council of Reform Jews/URJ. The resolution recounts the many social, economic, health and education challenges facing First Nations communities. It calls on Reform Jews to "continue to develop and strengthen relationships with the First Nations community." It also calls on the federal government to urge provincial authorities to teach First Nations history and to work with First Nations to address the challenges facing Aboriginal Canadians.

Continued on page 27

Tazria
Candlelighting: 7:22
Havdalah: 8:26
Greater Toronto Area

Joe Oliver is Canada's first Jewish finance minister
Please see page 18



Sanctions against Russia could put Israel in World Cup – see page 36

CANADA

Nausea Drug Kosher

MONTREAL — The anti-nausea prescription drug for pregnant woman, Diclectin, has been certified kosher by the Toronto-based Kashruth Council of Canada. The Blainville, Que., pharmaceutical company Duchesnay Inc., announced March 11 that the drug now bears the COR hechsher for both regular and Passover use. Kashruth Council spokesperson Richard Rabkin said this is "the only kosher certified drug of its kind in Canada." This is the third of the company's products to be so recognized, said Carole Boyer, Duchesnay's vice-president, corporate affairs and communications. The others are the prenatal multivitamins PregVit and PregVit folic 5. She said they are also free of gluten, lactose and tartrazine, synthetic food colouring.

WORLD

Nazi Party Apology

MINNEAPOLIS — A Minneapolis man who organized a World War II party with actors dressed in SS uniforms at a restaurant draped in Nazi flags issued a public apology March 19 on behalf of a World War II re-enactment group. Photos of the Jan. 20 event at a German restaurant in Minneapolis went viral last week, causing a backlash against the restaurant, Gasthof zur Gemutlichkeit, and its owner. Scott Steben said his group is "a historical re-enactment and professional actor society" that is "dedicated to promoting understanding of World War II. In no way are we or any of our members affiliated with groups that promote the subjugation of anyone." The party has been held annually at the restaurant for six years. The staff member who took the pictures was fired.

No Betrayal: Madoff

NEW YORK — Ponzi schemer Bernie Madoff said in a prison interview that he doesn't feel he "betrayed the Jews." Madoff, 70, is serving a 150-year sentence at a medium-security jail in Butner, N.C., for a scheme believed to be the largest of its kind in U.S. history, one that affected a disproportionate number of Jewish individuals and groups. "Religion had nothing to do with it," Madoff told *Politico* in an interview published March 20. "I don't feel that I betrayed the Jews. I betrayed people. I betrayed people that put trust in me-certainly the Jewish community. I've made more money for Jewish people and charities than I've lost." Madoff said he's tried to recover money for his victims, but his efforts have largely gone unacknowledged.

Appeal Court Rejects Suit Against Blogger

MONTREAL — The Quebec Court of Appeal has upheld a Superior Court ruling dismissing a defamation suit brought by three chassidic community leaders against a Montreal blogger.

Pierre Lacerte

In December, Superior Court judge Claude Dallaire rejected Michael Rosenberg, his son Martin Rosenberg and Alex Werzberger's $375,000 claim against Pierre Lacerte. On his blog Accommodements Outremont, Lacerte has for the past seven years chronicled chassidic community members' alleged infractions of municipal bylaws in the Montreal borough of Outremont.

The three plaintiffs first took Lacerte to court in 2008.

They claimed Lacerte singled them out for harassment and breach of privacy, repeatedly photographing them as they came and went from the synagogue across the street from his home. They said their reputations had been tarnished by Lacerte's continuous ridicule of them.

Dallaire found that the blog's content did not breach any laws and no evidence that Lacerte is motivated by anti-Semitism, as the trio alleged. Lacerte often uses biting satire and parody to make his point.

The Rosenbergs and Werzberger, represented by lawyer Julius Grey, had not as of last week decided whether to seek leave to appeal to the Supreme Court.

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Daughter gives precious gift to her mom

Family takes part in Canadian kidney donor exchange program

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

June 2, 2011, was a day the Carr family will never forget.

"Not because it was our dad's birthday, but because of the early morning call that our mother had been rushed to the hospital suddenly – going into cardiac arrest four times before learning that survival through the night was unlikely," said Leah.

The next few days were a blur, but, despite the odds, Leah's mother Suzan, who had not been sick prior to the scare, fought tirelessly to survive. Her body recovered, except for her kidneys.

Until recently, Suzan was on peritoneal dialysis for 10 hours a day.

On March 19, her fate changed drastically when she received a new kidney. Leah's life changed as well, as she became a donor.

To facilitate the kidney transplant, Leah and her mother participated in Canada's groundbreaking Living Donor Paired Exchange (LDPE). The LDPE, a partnership between Canadian Blood Services and transplant programs across the country, facilitates living kidney donation between patients with a willing but incompatible donor and someone in the same situation.

For a person requiring a kidney, receiving the organ from a living donor is optimal because it provides the best long-term outcomes for patients.

In Suzan's case, Leah donated a kidney to a stranger in Hamilton and her mother received a kidney from a stranger in Toronto.

Continued on page 13

From left, Barry Carr, Leah Carr, Devon Carr, Stephanie Carr and Suzan Carr at the March 13 event ***[Joshua Allen photo]***

ABOVE AND BEYOND

When my husband died suddenly, my whole world stopped. I didn't even know where to begin with the arrangements. It was 2am. I called Benjamin's. To my surprise, Michael Benjamin himself answered the phone. They took care of every imaginable detail. They even had umbrellas for guests when it rained at the gravesite. I will never forget their wonderful care.

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U.S.-Russian tensions could affect Iran file

According to Reports

by PAUL MICHAELS

Last week's news was understandably dominated by two major international stories unrelated to Israel and the Middle East: Russia's military takeover and annexation of Crimea, and the baffling disappearance of Malaysian Airlines Flight 370.

Although on the surface they're both unrelated to Israel and the Middle East, each has implications for the region.

Aviation security is always a key concern for all nations, but especially for the highly unstable Middle East. The perplexing questions raised in the Malaysian case, even though far away in Asia, make this a compelling story worldwide – one that brings attention, once again, to the unique features of Israeli airline security procedures. (A lengthy, but not uncontroversial, *AP* story carried in the March 15 *Toronto Star* headlined "Does Israel go too far in its airport security?" is just one example of this focus.)

On a different order of geopolitics, Russia's aggressive assertion of power in its immediate neighbourhood – including its continuing threat to the rest of Ukraine – is yet another reminder that Russian President Vladimir Putin appears unaffected by the prospect of U.S.-led sanctions against Russia. Putin is determined to flex his muscles in the face of what many analysts decry as weakening American resolve in other global trouble spots. Others cut U.S. President Barack Obama more slack, noting that his reset abroad is an understandable response to enormously costly but ultimately ineffective military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, the resultant massive U.S. debt, and pressure to focus on domestic ills.

Yet much of the world still looks to American leadership abroad, wisely exercised, but firm. Perhaps nowhere is this required more than with respect to Iran's nuclear program and its military projection into the wider Middle East, especially its support of Bashar Assad's butchery in Syria, aided by its Lebanon-based proxy force Hezbollah and Shia fighters from Iraq. (To fill out this picture, we should also add Iran's financial and military support of Islamic Jihad and Hamas in Gaza, including its recently intercepted shipment of advanced missiles reportedly intended for smuggling into Gaza – a story mostly ignored internationally and only tepidly condemned, rather late in the day, by the American administration.)

Backed by Russia, Iran can only feel emboldened by Putin's belligerency and disdain for the United States.

Not to be forgotten, of course, is Russia's own participation in the P5+1 negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program. With friction growing between Russia and the United States over Ukraine, and elsewhere, how much more difficult will these already problematic negotiations become? And, despite American denials, how much weaker will the already partially relaxed trade and financial sanctions against Tehran become?

As the latest round of nuclear talks began last week (the same week Russia annexed Crimea), Emily Landau of Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies wrote a piece in *Ha'aretz*, "Is the U.S. determined enough to confront Iran?"

Far from Tehran's being constrained, as is commonly assumed, by the interim agreement reached last fall with the P5+1, Landau argues that "in some important respects, Iran's nuclear program is… progressing dangerously."

"The most important issue that constitutes, rather than a retreat, a 'roll-forward' of the program regards research and development on ever more advanced generations of Iranian centrifuges," Landau notes.

In the meantime, contrary to a statement from the U.S. State Department during the Crimean crisis that Russia was expected to "remain an active partner" in the Iran nuclear talks, *AP* reported on March 19 that "U.S.-Russian tensions over Ukraine spilled over into nuclear talks with Iran… with Moscow's chief envoy at the negotiations warning that his country may take 'retaliatory measures' that could hurt attempts to persuade Tehran to cut back on programs that could make atomic arms."

Almost no serious analyst actually expected Russia to play a positive role, but this is further evidence of how Russia may actively undermine efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

An already messy situation fraught with serious doubt about where Iran's nuclear program is headed just got messier – and more dangerous.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

SPIDEY PURIM

Window cleaners at the Schneider Children's Medical Center in Petach Tikva, Israel, decided to cheer up children who couldn't celebrate Purim because of their illnesses. Dressing up as Spiderman, they surprised the children on various wards.

[Israel Sun photo]

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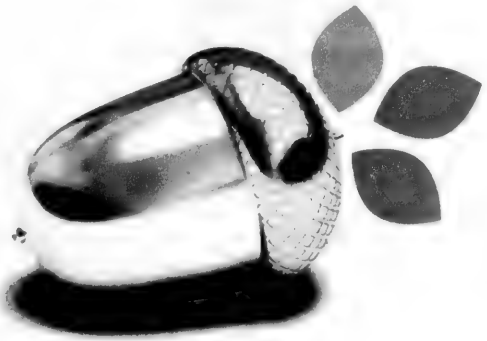

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History and Back Story

Leon Wieseltheir, literary editor of the *New Republic* magazine, put it best when he described the recent book *My Promised Land* and its author, *Ha'aretz* columnist Ari Shavit, as "splendidly unobliging." There's no doubt about it: for Shavit, the history of Israel is not complete without acknowledging, as he defines it, both the good and the bad. Put it all together and none of it makes sense. But, Shavit asks, who says it has to?

My Promised Land is all about contradictions, so it only makes sense that any discussion of it reflect that fact.

As he told *The CJN* a few weeks ago, Shavit argues the story of the Jewish state is defined by two overriding themes: "occupation" and "intimidation" (by which he means the existential threat posed to Israel by its Arab and Muslim neighbours). *My Promised Land* is his meditation on how that came to be and what it might take to escape from the dual burden of occupation and intimidation. Shavit concludes that reversing course on the former is the only path forward, though he acknowledges doing so won't guarantee alleviation of the latter. It won't be easy – it may be impossible – but for Shavit, it's worth a shot. *My Promised Land* is daring, at times very moving, and worth a read.

But for some readers, *My Promised Land* will be full of half-truths, inconsistencies and stylized history, and all of it should leave readers suspicious about Shavit's true intentions. Indeed, it is hard to believe he is an Israeli himself. In particular, the chapter entitled "Lydda, 1948" calls into question Shavit's judgment. At the very least, the author is guilty of not telling the whole story. The expulsion of Lydda's 40,000 Arabs during the War of Independence was but one part of Israel's battle for survival against the Arab world. To single out Lydda as the focal point is unfair and irresponsible.

There is another issue with *My Promised Land*: Shavit engages in historical navel-gazing about a country and a people he suggests has neither the time nor the inclination to look backward. Israelis, the author claims, are too caught up in the now – the constant fear of attack on the one hand, and a lust to live life to the fullest on the other – to indulge in history lessons. If that's the case, then what is the point of *My Promised Land* in the first place? What's so revolutionary about this book?

Is *My Promised Land* an honest portrayal of Israel or the work of a man moulding history to fit his agenda? One thing is for sure: it's a frustrating read, just as Shavit intended it to be.

• • •

"Back Story" is a feature of the new *CJN* – debuting April 10 in case you missed the news – that I'm particularly excited about. The basic conceit is this: every week, you'll read a story from Judaism's past and learn how it fits into the larger narrative of Jewish history. Some stories will be uplifting, others tragic, but all will contribute to your understanding about how we got here, and perhaps hint at where we're going next.

yoni

Dry Bones

PAINFUL CONCESSIONS DEMANDED OF ISRAEL INCLUDE UPROOTING JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND PULLING OUT OF THE WEST BANK.
LISTENING FOR THE PAINFUL CONCESSIONS DEMANDED FROM THE PALESTINIANS.
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What happened to 'never again'?

During World War II, many alarms were sounded to the West that the Nazis were exterminating thousands of people in death camps. Activists called for the United States to bomb railway lines leading to concentration camps, but to no avail. The slaughter of innocents continued until the end of the war. Now the United Nations has learned that North Korea is duplicating, on its own citizens, the horrors performed by the Nazis.

There is a concern that a resolution condemning North Korea before the United Nations Security Council would be useless, since China would veto the resolution. Am I not correct that the General Assembly of the United Nations can override the Security Council in spite of a veto and then the matter could be referred to the International Criminal Court of Justice for prosecution of Kim Jong-un and his cronies?

What happened to the pledge "never again"?

Bert Raphael
Canadian Jewish Civil Rights Foundation
Toronto

Please don't call them custom tailors

I read the article about the Lichtenstein brothers who make suits ("Brothers make suits that are Made2Measure," *The CJN*, March 13). I commend these young adults for their entrepreneurship, but please don't call them custom tailors. The artistry of custom-made suits involves a lot more than taking some measurements and sending them off to a factory in China to be sewn.

My father was a custom tailor with a shop on Eglinton Avenue for many years. My dad took pride in transforming a piece of cloth into a perfectly fitting suit.

It was true artistry, from the cutting of the pattern down to the hand-sewn button holes and lining that my mother finished the suit with. If the fit wasn't to his satisfaction, he would rip the arm off or the whole back and redo it.

Former customers would tell him decades later that they still have the bar mitzvah or wedding suit he made them – and that it was the best suit they ever had.

Unfortunately, true custom tailoring is a dying trade, and the workmanship cannot be duplicated by factory workers. Please don't misrepresent what this business really is.

Frances (Woznica) Woolfson
Whitby, Ont.

Thanks for a good read

For the first time ever today, I read *The Canadian Jewish News* (March 20), which arrived with my morning paper. For the most part, I thought the articles were balanced, but I think you should have included a story from someone supporting the proposed charter of values to allow the reader at least to see the arguments on the other side.

Best article, at least for me, was "Is criticism of Israel anti-Semitic?" It is my experience that some on the far left, knowing that overt anti-Semitism is unacceptable, are using exaggerated criticism of Israel as a proxy.

However, I found the article by NDP MP Charlie Angus to be self-serving ("Cultural approach important in end-of-life care"), as I would expect from a politician.

All in all, though, a very good read.

Don Brazier
Mount Royal, Que.

Shul attendance is no joke

I found the headline on the front page article (*The CJN*, March 13), "Skip synagogue with our DIY method" irresponsible and inappropriate. As synagogue attendance dwindles across North America and intermarriage rates soar, I expect the printed voice of the Canadian Jewish community to support Jewish observance.

To suggest that synagogue attendance is a "do it yourself" activity marginalizes organized religion and further jeopardizes the tenuous existence of many synagogues in our community.

As a regular synagogue attendee and long-standing shul board member, I am insulted by the tongue-in-cheek tone of the article. Certainly *The CJN* can find enough meaningful topics in the Jewish world to headline the weekly paper.

Peter Klauber
Dollard des Ormeaux, Que.

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Naim Kattan, archetypal Diaspora Jew

Sharon Abron Drache

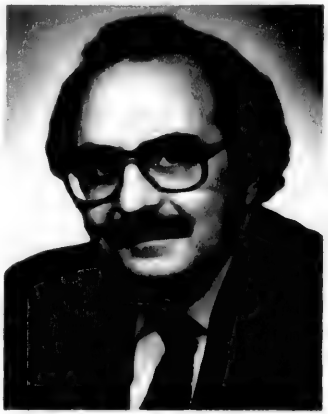
"Apart from and yet a part of" is a common phrase used to describe Diaspora Jewry, but it has never applied better to any Jewish Canadian than it does to Naim Kattan, prolific francophone writer of novels, essays and literary criticism. Of his numerous books (40 by his count), only five have been translated into English.

It was back in the mid-1980s, as a freshly-minted literary journalist that I began devouring Kattan's work, *Adieu Babylon* (1975) and *Les fruits arrachés* (1977), translated by Sheila Fischman in 1976 and 1979 respectively, as *Farewell Babylon* and *Paris Interlude*. Both are thinly disguised memoirs portraying their fictional protagonist Meir's colourful, hybrid childhood and his initiation into adulthood, accessed via his preferred world of ideas revealed in literature, and by his discovery of "woman," symbolically singular for Kattan because women represent cultural mediation and the source of community he longs to be a part of, but again and again chooses to be distanced from.

His numerous collections of essays repeat the theme pursued in his first collection, *Le réel et le théâtral* (1970), translated as *Reality and Theatre* in 1972 by Alan Brown after it won the Prix-France Canada in 1971. In them, Kattan explores cultural, religious and linguistic differences between occidental and oriental ways of perceiving reality.

He writes, "I am irresistably drawn to this magnetic universe with its seductive multiplicity, but just at the point of being absorbed and swallowed by it, I draw back: the actor doubles his function, I become a spectator."

In 1982, 11 of his short stories were translated by Judith Madley and Patricia Claxton, appearing as *Neighbour and Other Stories* in the prestigious New Canadian Library series of McClelland and Stewart. It was a collection "infused with dislocation – emotional spiritual and cultural," wrote William French,



Naim Kattan

then premier books columnist at the *Globe and Mail*.

I responded to these four Kattan books in my own reviews for Jewish and secular newspapers, claiming Kattan as the most cosmopolitan of our contemporary Jewish Canadian writers, with the exception of A.M. Klein (1909-1972).

Kattan, whose name shares with Klein's the meaning "little," demonstrates a similar cosmopolitanism, particularly visible in Klein's last collection of poetry, *The Rocking Chair*, and his acclaimed novel, *The Second Scroll*.

Kattan's fifth and last book available in English is *A.M. Klein, poet and prophet* (2001), translated by Edward Baxter. The slim volume written for secondary school students is, by its very classification, limiting for Kattan, yet he manages to drive home how much he admires Klein for his exploration of literary traditions in the Bible and the Talmud.

Born into an intellectual Jewish family in Baghdad in 1928, Kattan spent his formative years in two worlds, Jewish and Arab. He and his brother, Nessim, were the only Jews in a group of feisty young teenagers who met every evening in a café to talk about creating a national Iraqi literature. In *Farewell Babylon*, reissued in 2006 by Raincoast in Canada and subsequently by David Godine in the United States, Kattan writes, "Living on the fringe of the Muslim world, we could sense its strangeness, which was often transmuted into exoticism. For us, it was also a world of hostility and compromise. We were close to the Muslims and consequently it was imperative that we avoid their blows, appeal to their goodwill. As long as they left us alone."

Sadly, they did not. In 1941, after the British forces defeated the German-backed Iraqi insurgents, and before they could secure Baghdad, angry Bedouins began the Farhoud, the massacre of the city's Jews. Taking refuge on the roof of his house, 13-year-old Kattan recalls thinking, "I am going to die even before I have started to live," when miraculously, the carnage stopped just short of his family home.

The long process of obtaining visas began. Kattan occupied himself by writing and selling stories to literary magazines. In 1945, he won a scholarship to study at the Sorbonne, and because of the danger for Jews in his homeland, he bade farewell to Baghdad. It would be several years before he would be reunited with his family who had emigrated to Israel and were living in *ma'abarot* – provisional camps hastily erected throughout the country that housed some 257,000 refugees by the end of 1951.

Although Kattan's language of choice is French, his first language is Arabic. At his Baghdad school, the Alliance Israélite Universelle, he learned French, English and Hebrew. Kattan's "apart from and yet a part of" destiny was rewakened on his first annual class trip to the ancient ruins of Babylon. His English teacher's word still reverberate: "Only the Jews can feel the upheaval of a living past under these piles of stone. Nothing ties the Arabs to Babylon. When they conquered it, we were already there. We are the true natives, we came here as captives, the slaves of Nebuchadnezzar. But we triumphed over defeat. On this ground we wrote the Talmud. The descendants of captives, the sons of slaves were great scholars, great philosophers. Are we worthy of our ancestors?"

In the 1990s, Kattan decided to close the circle that he began when he left Iraq for France in 1945, immigrated to Canada in 1954 and settled in Montreal. Currently, he divides his time between Montreal and Paris, living six months at a time in each city. The "apart from and yet a part of" quality that began to shape his existence on that terrifying night on the roof of his family home in Baghdad during the Farhoud, and that was reinforced on his school's annual visits to Babylon, has become an entrenched and continuously sought-after pattern.

Sharon Abron Drache's most recent book is a collection of linked short stories, Barbara Klein-Muskrat then & now.

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Passover baggage and Pesach magic

Sara R. Horowitz
in Toronto

I once had a dream about luggage. In my dream, I was packing for a trip and couldn't seem to sort out the appropriate clothing for the destination. I kept piling up clothing and other gear, attempting to stuff everything into different suitcases. But try as I might, I couldn't get myself packed. Finally, I realized the problem. My baggage was all wrong. My last dream thought was: I can't go where I want because of my baggage.

My first thought upon waking was "Hello, subconscious! Could a metaphor be any more transparent?" Appearing literally as luggage in the dream, baggage is used to signify not so much the physical stuff we take with us when we travel, but the internal stuff that comes with us wherever we go – traces from our past and things in our present that encumber us, weigh us down, burden us and keep us from moving forward.

I thought about that long-ago dream recently while transitioning myself from the easy excesses of Purim revelry to the daunting excesses of Passover planning. Pesach is a kind of reckoning, different from the solemn reckoning of the High Holidays halfway around the calendar, but sober in its own way. It brings to mind where you've come from and where you're headed.

Family seders offer a telling snapshot, hinting at what occurred during the past year. Sometimes the snapshot includes new faces – friends from university whose home is too distant for them to get there for the holiday, significant others, new spouses, babies and toddlers. Sometimes faces are missing: someone's moved to a different part of the world, someone's been widowed, someone's divorced, someone's feuding.

For many, seders are always tinged with nostalgia, with a longing for an unrecoverable past. My late Aunt Elaine, for example, held mega-seders for the extended family and a growing network of friends. Often there were 40 or 50 people chanting, singing and eating. Her seders were a happening thing, the place to be. Yet I remember her confiding in me that she always missed my grandfather's seders – missed, that is, the seders of her childhood in her father's home. That, for her, was the real Pesach. Her own seders were Proustian searches for time past.

Perhaps she also missed the magic of being a child on Pesach. For an adult, that magic is replaced by the labour of production – food production, stage production, cultural production – those very aspects that make the festival so magical for children. Yet we adults, too, need a taste of magic. Sometimes we find it in the voices of children gathered around the table. Sometimes we catch it in a wisp of a melody handed down from ancestral Pesach celebrations.

But sometimes the logistics of magic-production dampens the magic for those who create it for others. Pesach is a home-centred festival whose centrepiece is the seder, but whose behind-the-scenes orchestration extends backwards, exhaustingly, for days, even weeks. I remember some years coming to the seder bone-weary, grateful that all that needed to be on the table could somehow be found on it and realizing that with all my list-checking and preparations, I hadn't carved out a space for spiritual preparation. I'd thought about menus, but not meaning.

It's not that this ritual labour – or labour for rituals – is divorced from spirituality and meaning. On the contrary, all "this work," as both the wise and wicked children call it, is designed precisely to induce a turn to the spirit. But for me, at any rate, there needs to be also a contemplative space, a pause in the frenetic juggling of work, family, and festival demands, to drop the mundane and to focus on what is transcendent and sublime.

There's a delicious irony in all this – a weaving together of burden and privilege, of enslavement and redemption – in short, the mixed baggage of our biblical ancestors who fled the land of their oppression in triumph and in fear, carrying the flat bread that symbolized both poverty and freedom. Their challenge was not so different from ours: how to turn complicated baggage not into an encumbrance but into spiritual riches.

Oh, and my dream about my baggage? The next day, I bought myself a new suitcase.

There's more to world Jewry than Israel and America

Rabbi Dow Marmur
in Toronto

At a conference last month on the theme of "Winds of Change," held at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, a session was devoted to "Israel and World Jewry." Two of the three panelists and the moderator were olim from the United States, while the third, though born in Israel, had worked as a rabbi in America.

None of the speakers mentioned any Diaspora country other than the United States. The 1-1-/2 million-plus Jews in Europe and thriving Jewish communities in Latin America and Australia weren't even on their radar.

In an attempt to widen the scope of the discussion, I intervened to say that I'm a product of four Jewish diasporas, none of them American. My purpose was to alert the panel to the fact there are Jews who live neither in Israel nor the United States yet are very much part of world Jewry. Like a listener in Uruguay who made a similar point via the Internet, I was virtually ignored.

Canadians are familiar with American provincialism. At conferences on this continent, Canada is often listed between California and Colorado, because most organizers like to think that, at least as far as the Jewish community is concerned, Canada is little more than another American state.

After Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit to Israel, with an entourage that included many Jews, Israelis had some intimations of Canadian Jewry, but they, too, tend to look at the non-American Diaspora, and particularly Europe, as inhospitable to Jewish life and only relevant as a potential source of aliyah. Most of what they know seems to come from reports of anti-Semitic incidents there.

By contrast, Jews in Canada, perhaps because they're also on the outside, have good reason to care about the warm winds of change in all of world Jewry.

Take, for example, Germany, the birthplace of virtually every modern religious stream in Judaism. Because of immigration from the former Soviet Union, there are now some 120,000 Jews in the country. In order to serve and develop non-Orthodox Judaism, the Abraham Geiger College was established about 15 years ago. Named after one of the founders of liberal Judaism in the 19th century, it trains rabbis and cantors for home and abroad.

It isn't the first liberal institution of its kind in Europe. In 1956, the Leo Baeck College came into being in London. It's named after the legendary liberal rabbi who led German Jewry during the Nazi period before he was sent to the Therezienstadt concentration camp.

Thanks to Leo Baeck College graduates, the Reform and liberal movements in Britain have become important and integral parts of Anglo Jewry. Some alumni are now also spiritual leaders abroad, including Germany. At one point, four of them served different congregations in Canada.

Recently, a sister institution to Geiger College came into being to train professionals for Conservative communities in Germany and elsewhere. And now the two colleges have been linked to the School of Jewish Theology at the University of Potsdam near Berlin. The school, established last November and funded by the German government, is arguably the first of its kind in the world and telling evidence of another very strong wind of change in world Jewry.

The German schools are reaching out to non-Jews. Their academic director, Admiel Kosman, a respected Israeli poet and scholar, recently told the weekly *Der Spiegel* that "we are training rabbis for the whole society, not just for the Jewish community." He stressed that just as Jews have much to learn from other faiths, so do Germans have much to learn from Judaism and that he's committed to "openness on a lot of levels."

Because the founder of the Hartman Institute, the late Rabbi David Hartman, had been the spiritual leader of a congregation in Montreal before making aliyah, the institute has strong links to Canada in addition to its base in the United States. But though it's concerned with Jews everywhere in their relation to Israel and is also engaged in contemporary theology across religious divides, it doesn't seem to have yet taken sufficient notice of what's happening outside Israel and North America.

Perhaps one day, all who care for winds of change in the Jewish world will pay due attention to the full gamut of contemporary Jewish life, for – to paraphrase the Canadian bank slogan – it's richer than you think.

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Mikeys save lives in honour of one who lost his own

18 people revived by network of portable defibrillators

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Talmud teaches us that "Whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world."

In the case of the Mikey Network, that now comes to 18 entire worlds saved – families remaining intact, wives with their husbands, children with their parents – all thanks to the presence of a portable defibrillator about the size of a lunch box.

The Mikey Network's website counts 17 lives saved thanks to the presence of its public access defibrillators (PADs), but it doesn't take into account the latest beneficiary of the widely available medical devices.

The 18th person – a portentous number in Jewish tradition, as 18 also signifies "life" – is a middle-aged guy who was playing hockey at a rink in Aurora when he collapsed on the bench. Quick use of the defibrillator's paddles got his heart beating and raised the number of lives – and universes – saved by one.

L'chayim, as they say.

To date, there are some 1,500 Mikey defibrillators across the province (and a few elsewhere) in public venues as diverse as community centres, gyms, swimming pools, schools and shuls.

In the Jewish community alone there are more than 20 units, including a number at elementary and high schools, synagogues and even two at cemeteries.

More than 200 schools in the Greater Toronto Area already have Mikeys on hand, and on April 22, the Mikey Network will formally announce a $500,000 program that will provide 250 units to the Peel District School Board over the next three years.

For housing developer Hugh Heron, the prevalence of the Mikeys – he hopes the name becomes an accepted shorthand for the defibrillators – is a testament to a fine friend and valued colleague. To Irit Salem, it provides a blessed memory to her late husband, after whom the Mikey Network is named.

Twelve years ago, Mike Salem was playing golf at a course in Muskoka when he began to feel ill. He hit his first shot but by the time he was ready to hit his second, his heart had stopped. He was miles away from any medical attention and, as the Mikey Network says in its promotional literature, "Mike passed away doing what he loved best, playing golf."

The Mikey Network was created in his memory by Heathwood Homes and the Heron Group of Companies, where Salem was a partner.

Mikey Network representatives, from left, Morty Henkle, Irit Salem and Hugh Heron *[Paul Lungen photo]*

Heron, chair of the Mikey Network, recalled Mike Salem as "larger than life. He was an amazing individual. He was a special person. He brought something to the table. He brought something into our lives as a partner and a friend."

For the Israeli-born Irit, the success of the network is particularly gratifying:

"It's a great honour to keep his name alive," she said. "It's amazing that because of him, so many people have been saved."

You can count Andrew Rosbrook as one of them. The Toronto police officer was running the GoodLife half marathon last May when he suffered a cardiac event just a few metres from the finish line. Quick use of a Mikey, donated to Toronto Emergency Medical Services, saved him.

The Mikey Network receives requests for the PADs on a regular basis. Morty Henkle, executive director of the organization, handles the requests and determines in conjunction with others to what extent the recipient should contribute to the costs of the units, as well as the CPR training that accompanies them.

"One organization that understood the benefit of Mikeys was GO Transit," Henkle said. "Now, we have 125 defibrillators on trains and in stations. They have saved lives."

In addition, 128 Mikey defibrillators have been allocated to families with children suffering heart problems. The presence of the defibrillators in the family home allows the youngsters to lead as normal a life as possible, without worrying whether help can arrive in time if the child suffers a cardiac incident.

The Mikey Network has developed relationships with the Hospital for Sick Kids in Toronto, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa, and with McMaster Children's Hospital in Hamilton, which recommend youngsters who could benefit from the devices.

"Last Christmas, a two-year-old baby in Nobleton was saved by a defibrillator," Henkle said.

Heron, Salem and Henkle want to make the devices as prevalent as fire extinguishers, which are just about everywhere. Why not? Heron and Salem ask. Fire extinguishers save property, but Mikeys save lives.

And heart attacks can happen anywhere. Approximately 40,000 incidents of sudden cardiac arrest occur in Canada each year, 7,000 of them in Ontario.

About 17 to 20 per cent take place outside the home. Quick use of a defibrillator can increase the chance of survival by 50 per cent, the organization says.

What makes the Mikey particularly attractive to laypeople is its ease of use. The machine provides verbal instructions and once the paddles are placed on the chest of the person suffering a cardiac incident, the machine diagnoses the problems and determines whether a shock is required.

Each machine costs $2,500. The Mikey Network's corporate sponsors provides some of the funds, and the charity solicits donations from the public. Since its inception, the Mikey Network has raised more than $3 million, placed more than 1,500 life-saving Mikeys in public places across Canada, trained more than 12,000 people in CPR/AED (automated external defibrillator) and saved 18 lives, including three students in Toronto high schools.

TanenbaumCHAT students, from left, Jonathan Gordon, Talia Niedzviecki, Eden Kleinhandler and Esther Benlezrah make masks for the school's Purim project.

School's Purim project reaches out to others

CJN Staff

Students and staff worked together as a school community at The Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel Family Education Centre in Vaughan, Ont., on a weeklong mishloach manot chesed project to reach out to their neighbours in honour of Purim.

Together, the school community made more than 100 mishloach manot packages, which were then hand-delivered to the residents and program attendees at the Reena Community Residence on the Schwartz-Reisman Centre's Lebovic Campus.

Students spent their lunch hour playing games, singing Purim songs and creating holiday arts and crafts. Money raised for the project was donated to Mazon Canada.

TannenbaumCHAT students Daniella Ekstein, left, and Lianna Freedman, carry a box of mishloach manot packages ready for delivery.

TannenbaumCHAT students, from left, Lori Maresky, Lauren Ohayon, Sivan Shayo, Mia Kobrin, Romy Segall and Jenna Segall have mishloach manot packages ready for delivery.

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Middle schoolers create outdoor mini libraries

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School are the first in the Greater Toronto Area to take part in the Little Free Library project, which promotes literacy with its "take a book, leave a book" policy.

An initiative that began in 2009, the goal of the Wisconsin-based non-profit is to build small outdoor community libraries – about the size of large birdhouses – to be placed in neighbourhoods and for community organizations.

As part of a Literacy Week project, held annually from Jan. 27 to Feb. 1, students at Danilack in grades 6 to 8 built 17 library boxes using wood, nails, hammers and glue.

The 17 boxes will be placed at each of the four Associated branches, as well as at two fire stations in Vaughan, at Chai Lifeline, Zareinu, DANI Toronto, B'nai Brith centres, daycares, food banks and nursing homes.

This year, the school's Literacy Week activity was themed "For the Love of Reading," and Nadine Sheinberg, Danilack's teacher librarian, felt that building community libraries fit the theme perfectly.

Danilack students Alie Eisen, left, and Brooke Rubinoff paint one of the libraries built by students as part of a Literacy Week project.

"Normally, every year for Literacy Week, we do something – a big idea... Our principal, Brenda Dzaldov, actually saw an article about [Little Free Library], which she showed me in September," Sheinberg said.

"When it came time to do Literacy Week, it was a natural thing. We thought, we'll build these and then we started to think about how we would connect with the community. We generally do tzedakah projects with the school and we think about reaching out. This was sort of the perfect combination... to give back to the community and to continue to instil that love of reading."

The process started in November when Sheinberg and some teachers began reaching out to different organizations to establish which ones wanted to receive a library, before registering as members of the Little Free Library organization.

"The idea was that each class would build their own little free library. Part of our activity for Literacy Week was that we had the kids come in on a rotating basis and they built their little free libraries, and we also had book drives running. People have been donating books, which we're going to be putting in these libraries, so every library will be packed full and donated."

An educational organization called You Can Do It also came in to give the students instructions on how to build them.

The outdoor libraries are constructed to withstand the elements and are meant to be self-sustaining.

"They're made of wood, but it's waterproof wood. We had it sourced. And they've been painted with outdoor paint and they're sealed, and there is a vent so the books don't get mildew," Sheinberg said.

She said the students have completed building them, and they're ready to be delivered.

"This week we'll be contacting the organizations to see when would be best and then we're having kids sign up, kids who want to come with us, and we'll be organizing, in conjunction with each organization, a time to go and drop if off and have a mini-celebration," Sheinberg said.

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Fundraiser held for Kidney Foundation

Continued from page 3

"This is how the paired exchange works. There are a chain of people who give and receive kidneys across Canada on the same day," Leah said.

After the surgery, Leah's full recovery will take six to eight weeks.

"I can't drive for two weeks or lift anything heavier than a laptop for eight weeks. Recovery will be a challenge, but nothing compared to the challenge my mom had being on dialysis 10 hours a day."

To celebrate this life-changing experience, Leah and her brother, Devon, along with their closest friends, created a fundraiser for the Kidney Foundation of Canada on March 13, World Kidney Day. It was held at the Uptown Loft in midtown Toronto.

"It is important to spread awareness of kidney disease because one in 10 people are affected and you don't hear about it frequently enough. A lot of cases wouldn't be as bad if they had been treated sooner," Devon said.

Leah and her brother initially hoped to raise $5,000 through their event. Their goal was exceeded within 24 hours. In total, the siblings raised more than $25,000 for the foundation.

"The public response has been overwhelming and amazing. First of all, our friends who formed the committee with us made this personal and about them as much as us. We are lucky to have so many amazing friends. The event sold out fast, and there were so many other people who wanted tickets. Well over 100 people donated, some that we haven't been in touch with for years. This has been the most positive experience," Leah said.

Suzan, who attended the event, said she was shocked that her children were able to find the time to organize the fundraiser. "I am amazed at the outpouring of donations from family and friends and everyone's generosity. My children have always excelled and lived their lives giving back. I couldn't possibly be prouder."

She said she hopes the event brought more awareness to the fact that so many people are waiting for kidneys, yet so few organs are available.

"Hopefully more people will sign their donor cards or just consider donating as they would be saving a life. Many live with only one kidney."

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Darchei Noam sponsors lecture on the Jews of Libya

CJN Staff

In 1948, nearly one million Jews lived in the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Today, only a handful remain.

Facing pogroms, expulsions and persecution, Jews fled their Arab host nations for friendlier locations. One of them, Regina Malaka Bublil left Tripoli, Libya, in 1967 after nearly being murdered.

On Sunday April 6, Bublil, whose married name is Gina Waldman, will discuss the Jews of Libya at a public lecture at Congregation Darchei Noam, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

A resident of the United States for the last 35 years, Waldman is co-founder of JIMENA, Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa.

The San Francisco-based organization is dedicated to preserving Mizrahi (eastern) and Sephardi culture and history, as well as exposing the Mizrahi and Sephardi story of oppression and displacement.

Waldman's address is part of a series of lectures at Darchei Noam on "The Jewish Exodus from Arab Lands 1947-1967."

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Reform rabbi reflects on legal battle

First to get state funding after Israeli court case

Frances Kraft
Special to The CJN

When Reform Rabbi Miri Gold was pursuing a lengthy legal battle to receive her salary from the Israeli government – like Orthodox rabbis in Israel – she would "conjure up faces" of North American supporters she had met, as if they were actually in court with her.

Rabbi Miri Gold

Moral support is "of crucial importance," she told *The CJN* March 19.

"When a small group comes from a congregation in North America to visit, and we see that we're with like-minded people, it gives us much more strength to keep going. We don't feel so isolated."

Israel, in turn provides "nourishment and identity" to Diaspora Jews, she believes.

Rabbi Gold was in Toronto to begin the first leg of a three-city Canadian tour sponsored by ARZA Canada, the Zionist arm of the Reform movement. She was scheduled to speak at four synagogues and to meet with high school students at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto before heading to Montreal and then Ottawa after Shabbat.

The main reason for her trip here was to speak on behalf of ARZA Canada and raise money for Reform preschools in Israel. As well, she planned to fundraise for a new building for her congregation, Kehilat Birkat Shalom, on Kibbutz Gezer, a 300-member kibbutz between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. The congregation is currently housed in a "one-room schoolhouse." Funding for the new building is well underway, and there is a time-sensitive component because of a government grant being made available by the local regional council, she added. She also expected to talk about her legal battles.

The culmination of her case in May 2012, when Israel's Supreme Court decided to pay salaries to rabbis of non-Orthodox council and farming communities, was a "historic precedent" and "a major step forward toward achieving religious pluralism in Israel," according to Rabbi Gold's bio.

But it wasn't until December 2013 that the government transferred $86,000 to the Reform movement in Israel to pay the salaries of the rabbi and three of her colleagues. The sum represents only a partial retroactive payment, with more to follow this year "if we filled out more forms," Rabbi Gold said. She is sanguine about the fact that the funding is from Israel's Culture and Sport Ministry. "Judaism is cultural in many ways," she noted.

Ironically, when she made aliyah in 1977, the future rabbi thought it would be easier to be Jewish in Israel than her native Detroit. In some ways, that's been true, she said, but not in others.

For one thing, Rabbi Gold has become a high-profile figure not just for her court case, which she launched in 2005, but also because she was a rarity as the third woman to be ordained by Jerusalem's Hebrew Union College in 1999.

Prior to the court's decision, the Reform movement in Israel paid 70 per cent of Rabbi Gold's salary, and her congregation funded the remainder. "The money coming from the government will certainly ease the burden on everybody."

Hers was "clearly a test case," Rabbi Gold said, noting that the legal decision applies only to rabbis who live in a regional council or community with up to 5,000 people. "City rabbis are not yet getting money, but it's a start."

She said she doesn't regret that her case took so long to resolve. "Things have changed, slowly but surely… I think Israel's more ready for it now.

In recent years, Rabbi Gold explained, the Israeli public has become increasingly sympathetic to the cause, because more Israelis have been exposed to Reform Judaism, either overseas or at life-cycle events in Israel, which has about 40 Reform congregations. Things were different when she was originally approached by the Israel Religious Action Center, the public and legal advocacy arm of the Reform movement in Israel, to petition the Supreme Court.

Part of the delay in resolving her case was a reluctance on the part of the government to refer to non-Orthodox rabbis as rabbis rather than cultural leaders, she said. "Thankfully IRAC and the Reform movement insisted that they recognize that the money was going to rabbis."

A longtime kibbutznik with a low-key manner, Rabbi Gold, an alumna of the University of Michigan, entered rabbinical school somewhat late in the game at the encouragement of family and rabbinic friends. She had spent 10 years working in the kibbutz kitchen and a year working with small children. After a stint in Boston, where her husband served as a kibbutz/Reform movement shaliach in the 1980s, she gradually assumed a quasi-rabbinic role on the kibbutz.

At the time of her ordination, one article referred to Rabbi Gold as "Harav Cookie," a nod to her love for baking and the giant chocolate chip cookies she used to sell to a Jerusalem ice cream parlour, as well as to the name of the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Palestine (Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook) in the early 20th century. Mostly, though, people call Rabbi Gold by her first name, which is how she prefers it.

The rabbi still bakes for fun and relaxation. Her husband, David Leichman – a Jewish educator – is an accomplished ice cream maker. The couple, now the parents of three grown children, met while they were working in the kitchen of the *garin* (settlement group) that they joined when they made aliyah.

"I really see the Jewish People as a family," said Rabbi Gold, who cited instances of mutually respectful relationships she has with some members of the Orthodox community.

"Not everyone has the same lifestyle, opinion, or political ideas. Hopefully, in a well-functioning family, people are loyal to one another, and they weather disagreements, and stick together on some level."

Teen program set for April 6

CJN Staff

Some 500 Toronto-area teens will participate in a day of community service and improvement projects as part of J-Serve, the Global Day of Jewish Youth Service, on April 6.

J-Serve is a worldwide tikkun olam program in which more than 10,000 Jewish teens from across North America, Europe and Israel participate in service projects on the same day in communities around the world

J-Serve is the Jewish service component of Youth Service America's annual Global Youth Service Day and coincides with the seventh annual ChangeThe-World Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge. The province's three-week challenge kicks off April 6 in partnership with Volunteer Canada's National Volunteer Week. Canada's largest celebration of volunteers, volunteerism and civic participation.

The J-Serve Toronto event, hosted by BBYO in partnership with the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, is one of more than 100 simultaneous international events aimed at encouraging community building and connections across religious and societal lines.

Participants can choose from more than a dozen options.

This year marks the fifth year Jewish youth from the Toronto area will participate, thanks to funding by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation.

Those interested in participating can find additional information on the J-Serve Toronto website, www.jserve.ca, or by contacting J-Serve Toronto co-ordinator Kevin Goodman at kgoodman@jserve.ca or 416-635-2883 extension 4461.

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Ms. Harris is the curriculum and assessment manager for the Language and Literature and Language Acquisition of the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), and will lead sessions in Language and Literature (English) and Language Acquisition (Hebrew and French).

Joining her will be our IB Coordinator Dr. Revalyn Faba Sack, who has held IB leadership roles in Thailand, Norway and China, among others and has collaborated in the global review and design of Language Acquisition IB workshops.

This prestigious training session will be attended by fellow IB schools around southern Ontario, including Toronto French School, Branksome Hall, Ridley College, as well as several other private and public schools, with whom our ongoing collaboration is a source of great pride.

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LEGACY HERITAGE FUND

Group tries to raise funds to fight case in Supreme Court

Councillor backs TTC opposition to 'anti-Israel' ad

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Toronto City Councillor James Pasternak is urging the city's legal department to fight a court challenge to the Toronto Transit Commission's decision to bar an anti-Israeli ad from the transit authority's property and vehicles.

Pasternak said the authors of an ad, called "Disappearing Palestine," are promising to challenge the TTC's decision in court.

"It is our understanding that Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is trying to raise $50,000 to take the TTC to the Supreme Court," he said.

The city must be ready "to vigorously defend the TTC's position," he said. "These ads are false, historically inaccurate, demonizing and have no place in the TTC. The city of Toronto does not want world conflict zones re-enacted in our public places."

The ads feature a panel of four maps, below which is a photo of a young person surrounded by Israeli soldiers. A petition accessible on the CJPME website calls on supporters to write to the TTC in favour of the ads, which purport to show "Israel's land grabs and transfer of its civilian population into the occupied Palestinian territories."

CJPME said it raised $35,000 to be able to post the ads in two major Canadian cities.

The TTC turned down the CJPME's first request to place the ads last April.

Pasternak said the TTC did so "because they contained statements which could incite discrimination against members of the Jewish and Israeli communities. This violated the TTC's advertising policy... It is certainly not in keeping with the city's efforts to be a respectful and tolerant space. Nor does it follow the TTC's mandate to ensure passengers 'feel safe and secure' on Commission property."

A review board upheld the decision in October.

Pasternak said it was important for the TTC to fight any court challenge to its advertising policy. Otherwise, the transit authority could lose control over the type of ads it would permit.

"If this group is successful, it [would] set a very dangerous precedent where the public transit system could be littered by ads," Pasternak asserted.

CJPME said it "expects to have to go to court in the coming weeks/months to ensure that the 'Disappearing Palestine' ads go up in the TTC."

It called on supporters to provide financial assistance for the endeavour.

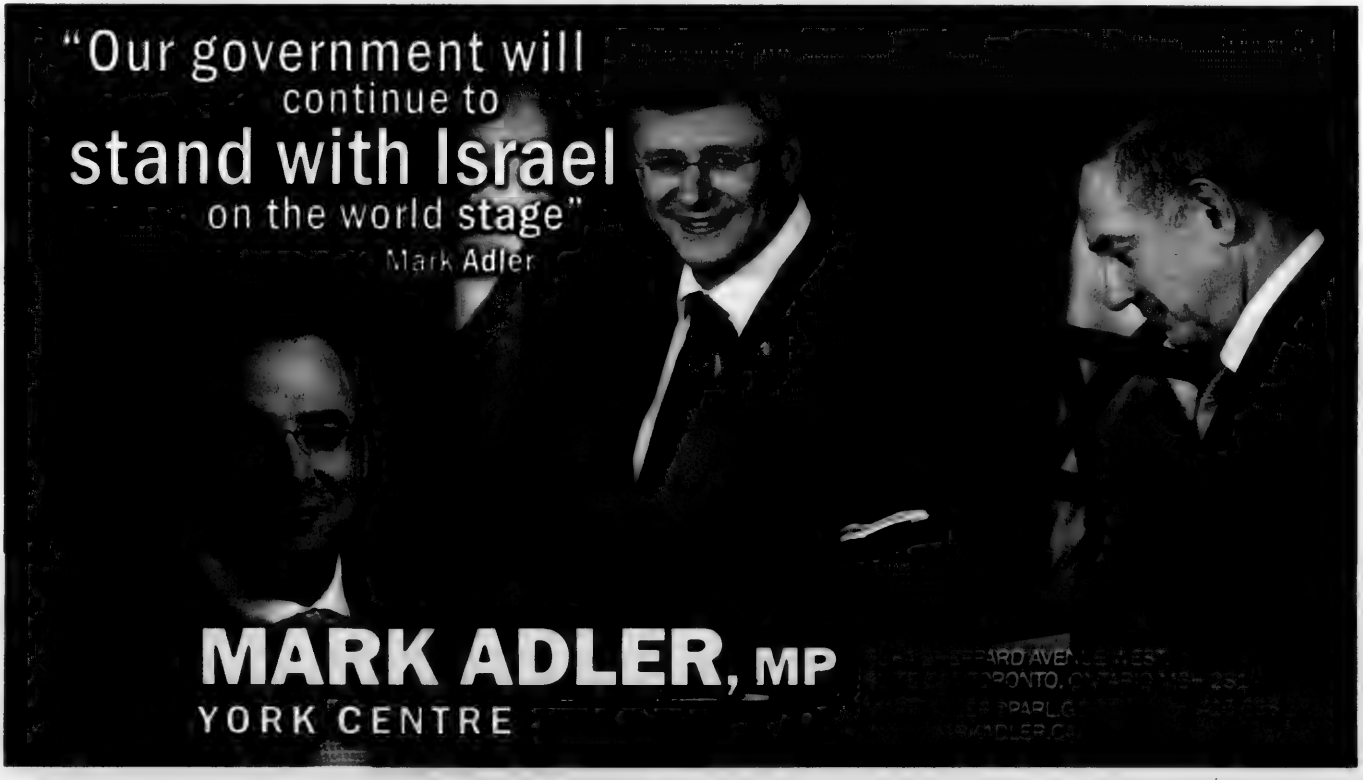
In addition to its transit advertising campaign, CJPME supports an economic boycott of Israel, it calls on performers to avoid appearing in Israel, and it has accused Israel of practising apartheid.

CJPME describes itself as "a secular, non-partisan pan-Canadian grassroots organization with about 43,000 supporters across Canada, of whom about 4,000 are in the GTA."

Last year, the Palestine Awareness Coalition successfully placed a "Disappearing Palestine" ad in Vancouver's TransLink transit system that included the caption, "5 Million Palestinians are Classified as Refugees by the UN."

In 2006 the B.C. Court of Appeal overturned a TransLink policy of rejecting partisan ads. TransLink had previously refused to carry political advertisements from the B.C. Teachers Federation and the Canadian Federation of Students.

James Pasternak



UJA preparing to launch community cookbook

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Is your bubbie from Brazil? Is your aunt from Iraq? Or maybe your mother is from Morocco?

United Jewish Appeal's Kitchen Cabinet team wants to hear from you.

UJA Women's Philanthropy Division hopes to empower Toronto's diverse Jewish community one recipe at a time in its community-wide recipe search.

Its looking for contributions to its *Bathurst Street Kitchen Cookbook*, scheduled to be published next January, which it hopes will be a repository of go-to recipes, a modern-day culinary resource of Jewish Toronto's favourite dishes.

Kitchen Cabinet co-chairs Elisa Morton-Palter and Karine Krieger have gathered a group of volunteers that includes Lissie Sanders, Naomi Oelbaum and Brenlee Gales. Chairs of the recipe review committee are Carolyn Tanner-Cohen and Bonny Reichert. Chair of the recipe hunters and gatherers committee is Daniella Kuhl.

"*The Bathurst Street Kitchen* aspires to become a culinary legacy by and for Toronto's Jewish community. This will be a cookbook and resource that is used for cooking and not just for looking," Morton-Palter said.

The committee has reached out to every segment and ethnicity in the community in every part of the city and offered them the opportunity to participate.

***The Bathurst Street Kitchen Cookbook* co-chairs, from left, Brenlee Gales, Karine Krieger, Lissie Sanders, Elisa Morton-Palter and Naomi Oelbaum**

"We have reached out to all of the Jewish communities – Peruvian, Moroccan, Israeli, Indian, Russian, Latin, Ethiopian and Orthodox – in our great city," said Kuhl.

"This will be the first-ever Toronto Jewish community cookbook," Morton-Palter said with pride. "The goal of the cookbook is for Jewish Toronto to feel there is a place for them."

It will include favourite recipes for Jewish holidays – old and new, healthy and not so healthy – such as the best appetizers, soups, salads, sauces, sides, mains and desserts, from the traditional to the contemporary and everything in between.

Aside from culinary guidance, the cookbook will provide clues about the various sub-communities themselves.

"We have enlisted two women who were former chairs of the Toronto Jewish Archives to help us tell the story of the community through archival photography," Sanders said.

"There will be a story that goes along the bottom of the cookbook that will show the community by illustrations and will talk about how the community has evolved."

The committee expects to receive some 1,000 recipes and will include 250 to 300 recipes in the final product.

"We won't be able to publish every recipe, but we will publish the name of everyone who contributed, whether their recipe was used or not," Morton-Palter said.

"If we have five chicken soup recipes submitted, we might do a taste test to decide which goes in. We are asking to have a family member or friend taste test the recipe themselves to make sure it comes out as beautifully as when you make it yourself."

Proceeds from the cookbook will support UJA programs that help women and children. "We would love it for the cookbook to go into the homes of every new immigrant, newly married couples, and to be part of a welcome wagon for UJA Women's Philanthropy," said Sanders. "An online sub-website of UJA Federation [of Greater Toronto] will be added to include the recipes that didn't make the book, with online suggestions, such as what to serve for your Shabbat dinner."

Deadline for submissions is April 7. To contribute your best recipe, visit www.jewishtoronto.com/recipe.

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First Jewish MP to hold portfolio

Joe Oliver becomes federal finance minister

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

Joe Oliver became Canada's first Jewish finance minister last week.

He took his oath of office in a discreet March 19 mini Tory cabinet shuffle at Rideau Hall, which gave one of the country's most important posts to a man who made his name on Bay Street, but is a relative political neophyte in Ottawa.

Oliver, who turns 74 in May, succeeded Jim Flaherty, who stepped down the previous day from the cabinet post he held for eight years. Flaherty had been reported to be facing health issues over the last year.

Oliver, who represents the Toronto riding of Eglinton-Lawrence, is one of three Jewish MPs on Parliament Hill. The others are Liberal Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal) and Conservative Mark Adler (York Centre).

"It's a great day," was all that Oliver reportedly said as he arrived for his swearing-in. There was no press conference afterward.

In a statement issued later that day, he said, "I'm honoured that Prime Minister [Stephen] Harper has appointed me to continue on our low-tax plan for jobs and growth as Canada's minister of finance. I am firmly committed to continuing our Conservative government's steady course of creating jobs and growing the economy in all regions of Canada.

Joe Oliver is sworn in as finance minister last week.

"Although our economic fundamentals are strong, we must protect our gains in the face of global economic uncertainty."

Oliver will "continue his government's work to create jobs, strengthen the Canadian economy and balance the budget by 2015," Harper said in a statement issued by his office earlier in the day.

On hand for the swearing-in were Harper, Gov. Gen. David Johnston, MP Greg Rickford (Kenora), who took over as natural resources minister, Oliver's previous post, and Ed Holder (London West), who became minister of state for science and technology.

Oliver was first elected in May 2011, defeating Liberal incumbent and former cabinet minister Joe Volpe by several thousand votes. He was quickly named natural resources minister, succeeding Christian Paradis, and spent much of the last three years focused on energy issues, including supporting the controversial Keystone XL pipeline.

The finance appointment represented a prestigious promotion within cabinet.

Born and raised in Montreal to a dentist father and teacher mother, he earned arts and civil law degrees at McGill University and then an MBA at the Harvard Graduate School of Business.

He went on to a 40-year career in the financial sector as an investment banker with Merrill Lynch, executive director of the Ontario Securities Commission, and as CEO of the Investment Dealers Association of Canada.

Oliver has been a strong supporter of Israel and has spoken and been active in the Jewish community, including as a board member at Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital.

He has visited Israel six times, including three trips as natural resources minister. His latest came in January when he accompanied Harper on the latter's first visit to the Jewish state, at which time Oliver took part in meetings and roundtable discussions with Israeli business leaders on bilateral issues involving technology and innovation.

Oliver is currently married to Golda Goldman, has two sons, Jeffrey and David, two step-sons, Eric and Jeremy.

IN CONVERSATION WITH....

SUNDAY MARCH 30th, 2014 AT 7:30 PM
AT BETH SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE

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Michael Oren, *Former Israeli Ambassador to the United States*

Please join Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich in conversation with Daniel Gordis on his newest book:
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UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM
Canadian Council for Reform Judaism URJ Canada Steering Committee

At the URJ Biennial in December 2013 a resolution put forth by the National Social Action Committee was passed urging the Reform Movement in Canada to take up the cause of the Aboriginal community.
The first step has been identified as educating our members about the challenges that exist.
We invite you to attend these upcoming programs and be part of this initiative.

Canada's First Nations: Legibility, Traumatic Memory and Economic Marginalization with Dr. Michael Dan

Sunday, April 6, 2014
10:00 AM
Temple Emanu-El
120 Old Colony Rd, Toronto, ON

Dr. Michael Dan is the President and CEO of Gemini Power Corporation.

Dr. Dan works to help First Nations develop sustainable industries on traditional territories. He will share some of the insights he has gained after working for seven years alongside First Nations communities in Northern Ontario to develop hydroelectric projects.

[illegible]

Thursday, April 10, 2014
7:30 PM
Holy Blossom Temple
1950 Bathurst St, Toronto, ON

Throughout his business and political careers, The Right Honourable Paul Martin has been devoted to the cause of the First Nations, Métis, and the Inuit.

After he retired from political life in 2006, Mr. Martin founded the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative, a charitable organization (MAEI). MAEI's activities focus on providing educational opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada.

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Canadian was part of plan to capture Mengele

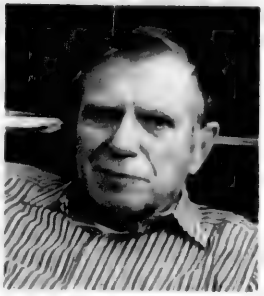
Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — An ill-fated plan some 30 years ago to capture Dr. Josef Mengele, know in Auschwitz as the Angel of Death, might have cost Ethan Rubinstein his life if the mission hadn't been aborted at the last minute.

Rubinstein is a Winnipeg doctor who spends most of his life tracking down viruses. But the head of the infectious diseases unit at the University of Manitoba's Department of Internal Medicine has in the past had a semi-secret side to him. And one of those secrets was brought to light by Israeli writer Yossi Melman in a recent edition of the *Jerusalem Report*.

Mengele was the doctor who determined who would live and who would die at Auschwitz. He also led a team of doctors who conducted medical experiments on many of the prisoners. After the war, Mengele disappeared. It was long rumoured that he had escaped to South America and was living under a series of aliases. He drowned while swimming off the Brazilian coast in 1979 and was buried under a false name, but his remains were disinterred and positively identified by forensic examination in 1985.

However, Rubinstein and a team of former Mossad agents did not know that Mengele was already dead when they were recruited in 1983 to capture him and bring him back to Israel for trial.



Ethan Rubinstein *[Myron Love photo]*

In a recent interview with Rubinstein in his office, the former Israeli paratrooper acknowledged that he was employed by the Mossad in various activities in his younger days.

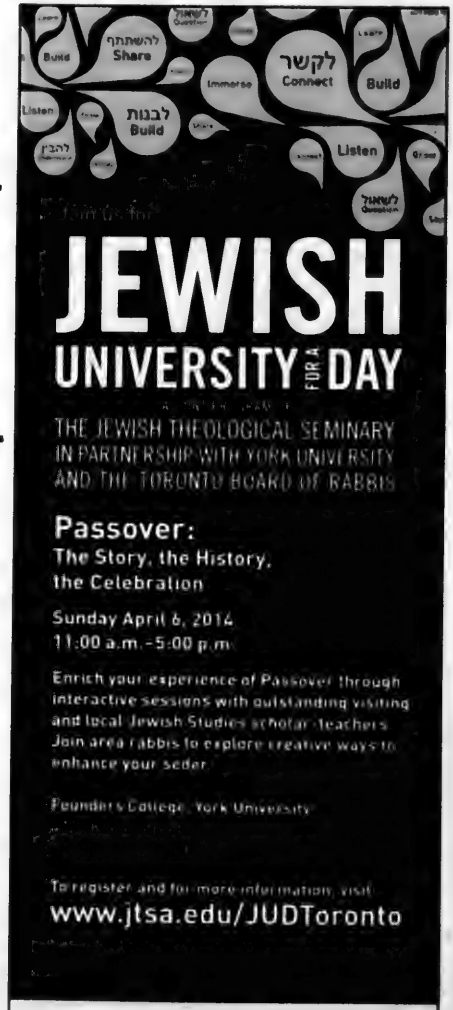
"I still enjoy adventure," he said.

During his time working with the Mossad, Rubinstein met Mossad operative Peter Zvi Malkin, a member of the team that captured Adolf Eichmann, smuggled him out of Argentina and brought him to Israel to stand trial for his crimes against the Jewish People and humanity.

In 1983, Yossi Melman wrote, a lawyer in Paraguay named Carlos told a visiting Dutch journalist that he knew where Mengele was being hidden and he would be prepared to reveal the location for a hefty price. While the Mossad wasn't interested in following up, Malkin, by then retired and living in New York, was.

Malkin met with Carlos. The former Mossad agent put together an off-the-book team of former Mossad people, former Israeli air force pilots, a

Continued on page 24



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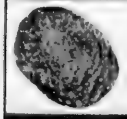
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Reena in the News

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or
Tuesday evening, April 15, 2014

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Arlene Margolese, Manager, Volunteer Services, Family & Cultural Services
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Salt and pepper to taste
2 tbsp (30 mL) mixed dried basil and oregano or Italian seasoning
2–3 tbsp (30–45 mL) minced garlic
¾ cup (185 mL) chopped dried apricots
½ cup (125 mL) coarsely chopped sun-dried tomatoes (dry packed)
¼ cup (60 mL) balsamic vinegar
¼ cup (60 mL) honey
2 tbsp (30 mL) olive oil
½ cup (125 mL) white wine
2 bay leaves

GARNISH
Chopped parsley

Grease a large roast pan or line it with parchment paper. Rinse the chicken pieces well and pat them dry with paper towels. Trim the excess fat. Place in the prepared roast pan and season the pieces on both sides with the salt, pepper, dried herbs, and garlic. Add the apricots and sun-dried tomatoes to the pan. In a bowl, combine the vinegar, honey, and olive oil and drizzle evenly over the chicken pieces, coating them thoroughly. Pour the wine around the chicken and add the bay leaves. Cover the pan and refrigerate for several hours or up to 2 days. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Uncover the chicken and let it stand at room temperature for 30 minutes, and then place it in the oven. Bake for about 1½ hours, basting often. When done, the skin will be golden and the juices will run clear when the chicken is pierced with a fork. Remove the bay leaves and discard. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the chicken mixture to a serving platter. Drizzle some of the pan juices over the chicken and garnish with parsley. Pour the remaining pan juices in a gravy bowl, skim off the fat, and serve on the side.

Yield: 8 servings

For more fabulous recipes, pick up a copy of the Mosaic cookbook now! Order online at **MOSAICCOOKBOOK.COM**, at 514.345.2645, ext. 3308 or at Linen Chest and other select locations.

FEDERATION CJA | WOMEN'S PHILANTHROPY

Hate speech change not intended to silence Israel critics, CIJA says

Joel Jacobson
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — Advocates for Palestinian rights are obsessed with Israel and are delirious to think a change to Canada's hate speech laws are intended to silence critics of Israel, says a high-ranking official with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

"These people must also think Elvis, JFK and Marilyn Monroe are residing on a desert island somewhere," Richard Marceau, CIJA's general counsel and senior government adviser, said in a phone interview from Ottawa.

He emphasized what is being proposed as a change to Bill C-13, the federal government's proposed cyberbullying law, "is nothing new. It just brings into line, with several provincial antibullying and hate laws, section 718.2, subsection A, subsection I of the Criminal Code of Canada."

In a story in the March 20 edition of the *Halifax Chronicle Herald*, Paul MacLeod of the newspaper's Ottawa bureau reported that the change to Bill C-13 would expand the definition of groups that can be the subject of hate propaganda under the Criminal Code. The code now lists people distinguished by colour, race, religion, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation. Bill C-13 adds age, sex, and mental or physical disability, as well as national origin.

Some legal experts, Marceau included, say this is likely a mere housecleaning amendment to bring the Criminal Code in line with the wording of other statutes.

However, Seriously Free Speech, a British Columbia-based group formed to defend critics of Israel, sees it as a backdoor way to crack down on criticism of Israel and they plan to be vocal about it.

Speaking by telephone from British Columbia, the organization's co-chair, Brian Campbell, told *The CJN* there has been "a pattern of the Conservative government equating criticism of Israel as a political entity with anti-Semitism. Adding national origin to the hate speech section of the Criminal Code makes it possible to use that section as criticism of Israel. There's a definite tone and climate to the change [to the law]."

He said it would take a change of government or a change in the policy toward Israel to alter the thinking of Seriously Free Speech, formed in 2007 in response to a lawsuit brought by then-CanWest newspapers against a parody of Israel in a *Vancouver Sun* story.

Included in its list of principles, taken from its website, the organization states: "We reject all forms of hate speech, including antisemitism, Islamophobia and racism."

It also claims: "We believe that political criticism of Israel's policies and actions, including characterizing it as an 'apartheid state' or campaigning for boycott, divestment and sanctions, is legitimate political speech, the expression of which must be protected. Such speech does not constitute anti-semitism."

Campbell said his group "will be publicly opposing [the change contained in Bill C-13]. We believe it is more than just housecleaning. We still believe that it is an attempt to make criticism of Israel hate speech."

In a statement, the Department of Justice said the amendment is designed to match the wording of a protocol from the Council of Europe, a human rights organization. The change would have the Criminal Code mirror the council's definitions of racist or xenophobic material.

In fact, the code already refers to national origin in a section about sentencing. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms also mentions national origin.

But some pro-Palestinian groups and the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association say they're skeptical, partially because of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's recent speech in the Knesset in which he referred to events such as Israeli Apartheid Week as "the face of the new anti-Semitism."

Israeli Apartheid Week calls for boycotts, divestment and sanctions directed against Israel until it changes its policies toward the Palestinians.

"In much of the western world, the old hatred has been translated into more sophisticated language for use in polite society," Harper said.

"People who would never say they hate and blame the Jews for their own failings or the problems of the world instead declare their hatred of Israel and blame the only Jewish state for the problems of the Middle East."

Some critics see Harper's speech, and the hate law change, as part of a trend to directly equate criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism.

Critics also raise concerns that the hate-speech amendment is packaged under a cyberbullying bill rather than being debated on its own merits.

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Canadian camps get philanthropic funds

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Stuart Guttman could not have sounded happier.

The director of Camp Massad in the Laurentians had just learned that his Jewish camp would for the second straight year be one of only two in the province – the other is Camp Kinneret-Biluim – to receive $1,000 each in funding from the New York-based Jewish Teen Funders Network (JTFN) to develop self-created philanthropy programming.

"Last year was our first year," Guttman told *The CJN*. "This year we will also be very involved."

According to its website, the JTFN (jtfn.org), which was created in 2006, is the "central address for Jewish youth philanthropy programs across North America," responsible for creating to date about 150 Jewish teen and philanthropy programs. Most of the JTFN's own funding comes comes from the Maimonides Fund based in New Jersey.

Outside Quebec, only five other Jewish summer camps in Canada – B'nai Brith Jewish Community Camp in Kenora, Ont., Camp Ramah and Camp George in Ontario, Camp Kadimah in Nova Scotia, and JCC Camp Shalom in British Columbia – are among the 50 in the United States and Canada deemed eligible for JTFN funding this year.

More significantly, suggested Guttman, it points to the fact that camp is often the starting point for Jewish community involvement that has a realistic chance of lasting a lifetime.

"Camp often sets the curriculum," Guttman said. "Jewish camp has emerged as one of the strongest identifiers for continuing community involvement."

In the case of 67-year-old Camp Massad, which is modern Orthodox in its approach and steeped in Hebrew language, JTFN involvement has included trips to the city to see Jewish agencies and even a visit to the camp by Federation CJA representatives.

The teens at the camp then decide – guided by Jewish values – what the best use of the money will be through the "foundation" they create. Camp Massad also has its own leadership training and development and counsellor training programs that complement the JTFN initiative.

In general, Guttman said, Quebec's four most established Jewish community camps – Massad, Kinneret-Biluim, Y Country Camp, and Camp B'nai Brith – are holding their own and consult monthly, even though each is seeking to attract new campers for their own camps from the same Jewish community pool.

Guttman said the camps also get support from the Bronfman Israel Experience Centre, and an official from one of the camps – but representing them all – visits Israel annually to help make Israel a continuing touchstone of the camping experience.

"It's not as if there are any real trade secrets," Guttman said. "We have open lines of communication. The idea is that camp is for everybody, but not every Jewish camp is for every child."

PURIM PARTIERS: Toronto City Councillor James Pasternak, right, joined residents at 6250 Bathurst St. for their annual Purim celebration on March 16. The event is organized by the Oholei Yoseph Yitzchak Congregation. Pictured with Pasternak are Shraga Kalvari, left, and Rabbi Yirmi Cohen.

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Mission aborted after tip received

Continued from page 20

former special forces soldier and Rubinstein, who was assigned the task of drugging Mengele – once the group nabbed him – interrogating him and watching over him during the flight to Israel. A Jewish businessman in Panama agreed to underwrite the operation financially and provide the plane.

"Peter [Malkin] and I were longtime friends and saw each other frequently," said Rubinstein who, at the time, was a researcher in infectious diseases at the Sheba Medical Center near Tel Aviv. "I went along for the adventure and for revenge."

The team was making its final preparations for the trip, Rubinstein said, when Malkin received an anonymous tip that Carlos was lying and they were heading into a trap. In true spy-story style, Malkin broke into Carlos' hotel room and found evidence to confirm the tip.

"It's a good thing that we aborted the mission," Rubinstein said.

As for Carlos, Melman notes that Malkin invited Carlos to a meeting in Paris a couple of months after the aborted operation. The Paraguayan was never seen again.

"I don't know for sure," Rubinstein said. "But I would like to think that our guys took care of him."

Rubinstein came to Winnipeg in 2005 to head a new HIV/AIDS treatment program for Manitobans suffering from the disease. He noted that in western countries, HIV/AIDS is now a chronic condition. In Africa and elsewhere, it is often still a fatal disease.

He is also doing research treatments for anthrax and MRSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus), a bacterium that causes infections in different parts of the body and is tougher to treat than most strains of staph because it's resistant to some commonly used antibiotics.

Mengele's Argentine identification document (1956) [*Wikimedia Commons photo*]

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For further information and submission requirements please contact Stephanie Olin Chapman at schapman@ujafed.org. All proposals must be submitted by 4 pm April 9, 2014.

Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus

Open dialogue helps navigate Mideast conflict

Talia Bensoussan
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

On March 13 at the McGill University Faculty of Law, more than 40 students attended a student-run initiative led by Max Libman and myself that promoted dialogue about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The roundtable discussion event was called "Perspectives: Fostering progressive and peaceful dialogue on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." The program was initiated in response to extreme views, both pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian, that had been expressed about Israeli Apartheid Week posters displayed around McGill's campus. The posters presented a one-sided view of the conflict using statistics and graphic imagery about the situation in Gaza and the West Bank. They were on display all day without a spokesperson present to provide context to the words and pictures or alternate views about the conflict.

As first-year law students, Max and I felt strongly that rhetoric, on both sides of the debate, does nothing to promote the sort of progressive discussion that could help bring a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Together, we decided to hold an open dialogue in which students were welcome to share their ideas and perspectives about the conflict in the Middle East. All viewpoints were shared in a neutral setting with the goal of promoting peace, democracy and respect for others.

Law students with backgrounds in business, international development, peace and conflict studies, history, comparative religion and political science attended the discussion. Due to their varied academic backgrounds, students approached the conversation from different angles. For example, students with an economics or finance background spoke about the possibility of sustainable development programs in Gaza. Students who have studied history referred to Israel's legitimate right to exist and to Jews' historical connection to the land. Emphasis was placed on how a political conflict has become an everyday civilian preoccupation. Students creatively grappled with complex issues including a two-state solution, the right of return, the importance of economic development and the value of equality.

The format of the discussion fostered openness and respect. Tamim Al-Afghani, a fellow first-year law student, along with Max and myself, mediated the event. We began by setting out the rules of conduct in order to create an educational environment of collaboration and sharing instead of one of judgment. All perspectives were addressed to the mediators, who managed the flow of dialogue. Although many participants spoke passionately, there was no tolerance for aggressive language or prejudice and generalizations.

As one of the mediators, I was fortunate to be able to truly listen to all perspectives instead of focusing only on my own opinions. Over the course of the discussion, I learned much from my peers.

For example, I learned that language is extremely important when discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Words have the ability to evoke emotions, but are also easily misconstrued. On the one hand, some individuals believe that the word "apartheid" is a misrepresentation of the situation in Israel, Gaza and West Bank, while others believe that it is precisely the right word for characterizing the political and social situation there. While some may feel offended by the severity of the word because of its association to South Africa, others believe it evokes the appropriate emotional reaction to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

I also learned that history cannot be removed from the conversation. It is virtually impossible to separate modern-day political tensions from their historical roots. That history, too, evokes emotional responses on both sides of the conflict. Most importantly, I learned that it is possible to conduct a constructive and respectful dialogue about the Middle East. Too often, it is the loudest, most extreme voices that are associated with the conflict. This event showed me that there are many voices in between that are reasonable, intelligent and respectful.

Max and I hope to continue these open discussions in other faculties of law and arts in Montreal in order to share our belief that dialogue, respectful communication, and acceptance are key to finding a just solution in the Middle East. By truly listening to views that differ from one's own view, individuals can expand their knowledge base and increase their level of sensitivity to all sides of the conflict.

Film focuses on violence against women

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

A documentary called *Honor Diaries*, which highlights the plight of oppressed women in Muslim-majority societies, will have its Toronto premier this week.

Gender-equality activist, author and public speaker Raheel Raza, one of the nine women featured in the film, said she hopes the documentary will raise awareness about issues including female genital mutilation, honour-based violence and forced marriages.

"I am a woman living in a country where I have freedom and equality, and I came here for that, but in my country of birth, every woman doesn't have freedom and equality, so I want to be the voice for those who are silenced," said Raza, who is originally from Pakistan.

She said that while she is encouraged by the fact that there is more awareness of the subject today, the problem persists and there is still a "barrier of silence" that needs to be broken.

"When we look at the statistics of the actual violence taking place against women, it's on the rise, unfortunately. I think that in the West it is on the rise because of political correctness. People don't want to speak about it. These are toxic issues that are not easy to talk about. I understand that. But our mandate is to expose, educate and eradicate," Raza said.

"Let me assure you that these tribal practices have crept their way into western countries. So we need to be conscious. When we speak about it happening in other countries, we are creating awareness, and unless we expose these issues, it can happen in our own societies, right here in Canada."

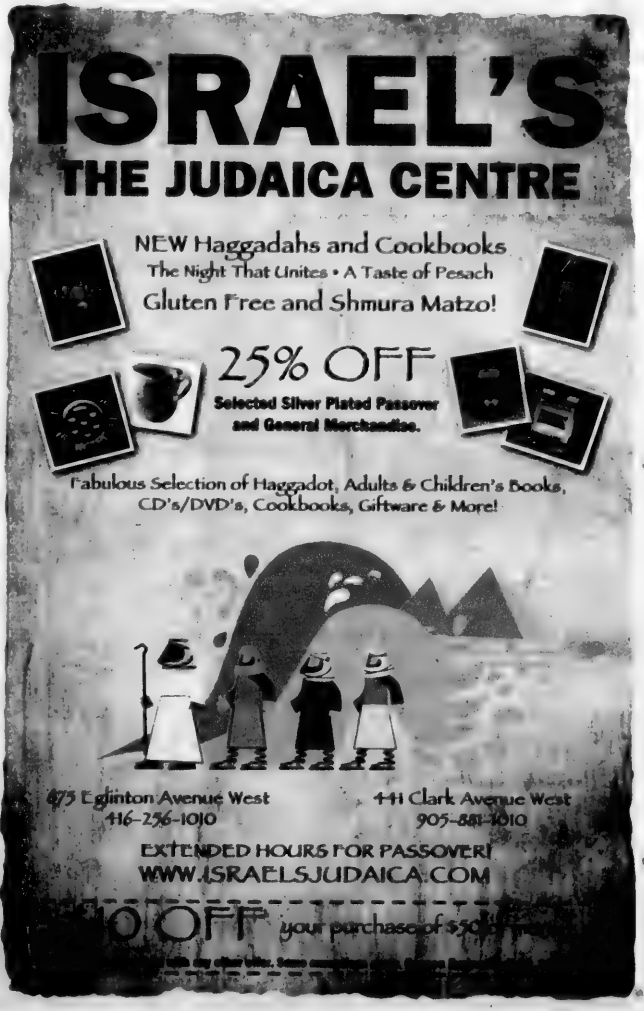
Although the film is centred on the nine female activists, there is one man, Raza's husband, who is featured in the documentary.

"I told the producers about the kind of work we're doing, the activism, and we need the support of men, and I, personally, in my life, could never have done the work that I do without the support of my husband and my sons," she said. "I think it's important for audiences to see that there are Muslim men who are supportive of the cause. That is sort of the lighter side of the film, because it's a very heavy film."

The film focuses on women in Muslim-majority societies, but women of all backgrounds can relate, she added.

The film will be screened March 30 at the Colossus Woodbridge theatre in Vaughan, Ont., at 10 a.m.

To reserve seats, call 416-505-1613 or email razzaz55@yahoo.com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Ve'ahavta working to help First Nations

Continued from page 1

Meanwhile, Ve'ahavta, the Canadian Jewish humanitarian and relief organization, is partnering with Aboriginal communities in the Treaty 3 area to improve the health of First Nations peoples.

With a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the support of philanthropist Larry Tanenbaum; Phil Fontaine, former chief of the Assembly of First Nations; and former Prime Minister Paul Martin, Ve'ahavta will send young people to communities in the Kenora area, near the Manitoba border, to support local community health programs.

In interviews with Dan, Sarah Zelcer, Ve'ahavta's director of national and international programs, and Martin, the long-standing ties of the Jewish and First Nations communities were stressed.

"It wasn't that long ago that we were like them, second-class citizens in the countries we live in," Dan said.

The hydro project that Gemini is promoting – it's still seeking bureaucratic approvals – will over time be turned over to local First Nations communities, providing an income stream while encouraging financial self-sufficiency, he said.

"It's much more than just a business deal," Dan continued. "It's trying to help this community become more self reliant. It's taking all the smarts and knowledge we have on Bay Street and applying it to a community that was left to fend for itself without much success."

"It's much more than a project now. It's a lifelong connection to the community," he added.

Zelcer, of Ve'ahavta, said, Bri'ut (Hebrew for health) is a capacity-building program that will co-operate with the Kenora Chiefs Advisory to support community led health promotion programming in seven Anishinabe reserves over the next 3-1/2 years.

The program will see seven graduate students studying public health or social work under the direction of their host communities to promote health.

Michael Dan, second from right, participates in a ceremonial dance with members of the Lac LaCroix First Nations (LLCFN) at a powwow last August. Dan was presented with a hand-sewn deer skin vest for his guidance and friendship. Seen here, from left, are LLCFN elder and shaman Kalvin Ottertail; Chief of the LLCFN Norm Jordan; Dan; and Sequia, Chief Jordan's partner.

"We see Bri'ut as our entry point into building meaningful relationships with Aboriginal communities which are based on partnership, collaboration, mutual respect and trust. Our goal is to develop more programs which focus on supporting Aboriginal communities in Canada in the areas of health and education," Zelcer said.

Ve'ahavta is hoping to involve Toronto synagogues in "a movement within the Jewish community that seeks to better understand the issues affecting Aboriginal Canadians, to build partnerships with Aboriginal communities, and to work hand in hand toward promoting a more equitable Canada."

Contacted at his office in Montreal, Martin noted that "the Canadian Jewish community has for some time shown a great interest in the plight of Canada's indigenous people. This is very much to the credit of the Jewish community."

Martin, who spearheaded the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative, which includes a five-year pilot project funded in part by the Judith and Lawrence Tanenbaum Family Foundation, said Aboriginal Canadians are the youngest and fastest-growing segment of the Canadian population. He urged young Canadian Jews to "get involved with young Aboriginal Canadians. That will lead to better understanding," he said.

Tanenbaum said his involvement in Native issues can be traced back to a visit to the White Dog Reserve in northern Ontario nearly five years ago. Accompanying Martin at the time, he said he "was moved by what I saw and what heard that day.

"I take great pride that the Jewish community is engaged with and working on behalf of Canada's Aboriginal people in many facets.

"The former Canadian Jewish Congress was deeply involved in programming with First Nations [and] the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs... participated in the Commission on Truth and Reconciliation, as well as mentoring Aboriginal leaders in advocacy and leadership.

"I think we all view this work as part of our community's tradition of tikkun olam. It is very basic, but so essential. We seek to make our community, province and country a better place. It begins with helping others, and it is something that is rooted in the traditions of our people that were taught to me by my parents."

Martin will discuss his education initiatives in Toronto at Holy Blossom Temple on April 10, while Dan is scheduled to speak at Toronto's Temple Emanu-El on April 6 on First Nations' traumatic memory and economic marginalization.

Businessman Michael Dan, left, joined Chief Theresa Spence in her teepee at Victoria Island on the Ottawa River during her hunger strike last year. Also present were Phil Fontaine, former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, and Bernie Farber, senior vice-president for government and external relations for Gemini Power Corp.

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Spitting Israeli wine (a good thing)

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Time was when critics would spit out a nasty word or two about Israeli wine – that is if they mentioned it at all. Recently, they're doing all the sniffing and gurgling and spitting because Israeli wine has come into its own. Today, a virtual tasting of some of the best.

Writing in *Business Week*, influential wine guru Robert Parker and colleague Mark Squires tasted some "Heavenly Wines from the Holy Land." Squires rated four wines 90 points or higher (i.e., excellent) including Domaine du Castel 2004 Grand Vin (92 points). "This unrefined and unfiltered cab, merlot, and petit verdot blend is beautiful. Aged for 24 months in new French oak, it is bursting with flavour and simply delicious." **[http://bit.ly/kwine20]**

What are some of the names to watch? *Wine Enthusiast* named Golan Heights Winery its "2012 New World Winery of the Year," saying that it "continues to raise the standards and improve the image of Israeli wines, emphasizing its high quality and vast potential." Golan Heights produces three brands: Gamla, Golan and Yarden. **[bit.ly/kwine21]** A year earlier, Hugh Johnson's renowned *Pocket Wine Book* bestowed a full four stars on Domaine du Castel and 3-4 stars on Yatir, an Israeli boutique winery in Tel Arad. **[bit.ly/kwine22]**

What sign confirms that an Israeli winemaker is in the big leagues? For Micha Vaadia of Galil Mountain Winery, the sign reads "Costco." As Vaadia explained to the *Globe and Mail*'s Beppi Crosariol, when the giant wholesale club began selling his wines to a general market in the United States – and not just people looking for a Purim or Passover beverage – he knew he had made it. Crosariol adds, "Galil Mountain's wines are very good, among the better offerings in a country with a storied ancient oenological history, but only a recent revival." **[bit.ly/kwine23]**

And then there's Gary Vaynerchuk, the hyperkinetic host of a wine webcast, justly described as "totally uncorked" by *Time* magazine. Here's his set-up: "Kosher wines! Are these the most overlooked wines in the world? Maybe, maybe not. But what has happened in the last 36 months has erased decades and years and centuries of atrocious, crapass, disgusting, awful, dirty, unacceptable, undrinkable, pitiful, efforts in the kosher wine section." Watch Vaynerchuk sip, spit and pronounce his verdict on several moderately priced wines. **[bit.ly/kwine24]**

Vaynerchuk spent a more recent column gurgling on a couple of high-end wines (a 2008 Herzog Clone Six Edition Cabernet at $120 and a 2007 Capcanes La Flor del Flor de Primavera at $80). Let's just say he recommends saving your dollars by drinking the cheaper vino. **[bit.ly/kwine25]**

How good are Israeli wines? I'll leave the last word to the late Daniel Rogov. "The region surrounding the Sea of Galilee is not producing wines to rival those of the great chateaux of Bordeaux. That is not the issue. What is important is that a group of highly talented chefs and winemakers are moving in all of the right directions, and whether one lives in or pays a visit to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa or any of the more provincial cities or towns of Israel, no one will suffer from a lack of excellent food and fine wine." **[bit.ly/kwine26]**

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You gotta have faith!

Sephardi Window
Rabbi Ilan Acoca

On my recent trip to Montreal, I had the great privilege to be blessed by the Tosher Rebbe.

For those who don't know who he is, the Tosher Rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, was born in Nyirtass, Hungary, in 1921, and relocated to Montreal after World War II.

Why would a Sephardi rabbi from Vancouver visit a Hungarian rebbe in Montreal?

The answer is simple. Sephardi Jews always practised their Judaism through simplicity and faith. My mother recalls that as a child, whenever the Hacham walked by, people were hurrying to kiss his hand and get his blessing. My late father mentioned to me on numerous occasions how as a child he used to accompany Rabbi Shlomo Hacohen, the av beit din of Oujda, Morocco, to the Minchah service. There was a certain awe and decorum when the Hacham was present. His background and philosophy weren't important. What mattered was that he represented the word of God, and that meant we owed him respect. This straightforward conviction was indoctrinated from a young age.

We often forget to mention the value of faith.

The main aspect of the divine service of the person in this world is to clarify and make strong his faith in God until it will be clear and refined in his eyes, the truth of the existence of the Creator.

All the mitzvot that a person performs are done in order to strengthen this faith, as it is written (Psalms 119), "All your mitzvot are faith," meaning that all the mitzvot must bring the person to the revelation of faith, so that he will merit to believe in God truthfully."

Rebbe Nachman of Breslev taught that we must pray for everything we need: "God may give you food and clothing and everything else you need even though you do not ask for them. But then you are like an animal. God gives every creature its bread without being asked. He can also provide you in the same manner. However, if you do not draw your life through prayer, then you are no different than an animal. A man must draw all the necessities of life from God through prayer alone.

"When it comes to matters pertaining to this world, it is never possible to be completely satisfied. If you want physical pleasures, you will always be lacking something. For example, someone might be able to satisfy his desire for food, but he will not have the honour he would wish. Regardless of what you do have, you will always be deficient in some area. But when you make it your main ambition to serve the Almighty, you will feel a sense of wholeness. The pleasure of serving the Creator is so intense that it is above any other pleasures. Hence, when you have this virtue, you are missing nothing."

Let us all internalize this crucial lesson in *emunah* and live our lives in a more fulfilling manner.

From performance to tranformation

Class Act
Daniel Held

Like any Jewish parent, I couldn't help but *shep naches* when I went to my daughter's preschool Purim party. There she was, dressed in her bumble bee costume, clapping and singing and shaking her gregger to Purim songs.

Now, a little less than a month away from seder night, the pressure is on to get her *Mah Nishtanah* skills to match her *Old McDonald* expertise.

As Jewish parents, we thrive on our children's Jewish performances. I grow a little taller when my daughter calls grape juice "Shabbat juice," when she struggles through a brachah, or when she takes a siddur from the pews in shul, opens the pages and mumbles incoherently.

This pride, of course, isn't limited to preschool. In the coming years, there will be siddur services and stunted Hebrew conversations with Israeli cousins, model seders and choir festivals, Israeli dance exhibits and, a long way down the road, a bat mitzvah. For each, we'll pull out our camcorder, iPhone or whatever the latest recording device will be, jostle for position with other eager parents, smile, shed a few tears and think to ourselves, "Wow, we're so proud of the Jew our daughter has become."

The performances are wonderful family moments and offer opportunities for us to support and praise our children's Jewish growth, but they cannot stand alone.

Judaism is not about performance. It's about transformation.

Too often Jewish education – in day or supplementary schools, camps or other settings of learning – is boiled down to a performance. For educators and students, this means hours upon hours spent rehearsing, rote memorization, transliteration and choreography. For parents, this means praise of a product rather than a process.

Viewing Jewish education through the lens of a series of performances belittles the transformative nature of the endeavour. Jewish education is about helping learners consider Judaism in the context of their lived experience: teaching children to integrate Jewish values and knowledge sets into their everyday lives.

In addition to costumes and songs on Purim, our children need to consider the triumph of the Jews over Haman and realize the challenges and opportunities of Jewish life in a Diaspora. While they're learning the *Mah Nishtanah*, they must grapple with the difficult journey from slavery to freedom As they prepare for a siddur ceremony, they should reflect on the place of prayer in their own lives. And when it comes to a bar mitzvah, they must deal with the realities of adult Jewish life.

While educators strive to use performative Judaism as a pathway toward the transformative, these lessons are best driven home by family.

In addition to smiling while re-watching videos on my iPhone, I need to ask my daughter about the meaning of the performances, experiences and lessons she learns in school, the values she is acquiring and how they apply to her life.

It's not enough to be proud that she calls grape juice "Shabbat juice." Rather, we have to start teaching her what makes Shabbat special, beyond the juicy treats. Only through these conversations can we shift from performative to transformative Judaism.

Worrisome bar and bat mitzvah trends

From the Bimah
Rabbi Yael Splansky

Congregants send me links to articles and videos of outrageous bar and bat mitzvah parties. You've seen them. The glitter and glam, the celebrity bands, the curvy professional dancers, the bar mitzvah boy jumping out of a cake. Usually when people send me this stuff, they include a note like: "Can you believe this?" or "What's become of us?" And yet we can't take our eyes off it. Like a car accident, it's horrifying and strangely compelling at the same time.

To be honest, over-the-top parties don't worry me as much as some other trends I see:

• A list, B list: Inviting guests to the party, but not the service. The main event is at the Torah, when bar and bat mitzvahs take their place among the Jewish People. That's the "*Shehechiyanu* moment" everyone wants to witness. Parties are great fun, but that moment when everyone huddles around the Torah? Priceless.

• Performance without learning: Take a crash course with a private tutor and anyone can learn to read Torah. But the honour of reading Torah on behalf of the congregation is fully received when there has been regular attachment and learning. Our kids are confident when they're at home in the synagogue and feel they're our trusted and treasured representatives on the bimah.

• Destination bar and bat mitzvahs: Some travel to read Torah in an old synagogue in Europe or the Caribbean, or in Israel. These family vacations are terrific and memorable, but they're private and "over there." I always encourage families to make a memory here, too, so that the child knows Judaism happens right where you live and that there's a community right here that needs you and cares about you. Done right, the two ceremonies – here and there – can reinforce one another in important ways.

• DIY bar and bat mitzvahs: Filling a venue with family and friends for a private affair misses the mark when it comes to a bar or bat mitzvah child. The whole purpose is to teach and to show that in Jewish life you don't "do it yourself." As a bar or bat mitzvah, you do it with, for and because of the Jewish People. As a bar or bat mitzvah, you never go it alone. Jewish life is highly personal, but not private.

Above all, we need to remember that a bar or bat mitzvah is a person, not an event.

In his book, *To Have or To Be*, Erich Fromm, the psychologist and social philosopher, challenges us to use verbs of being rather than verbs of having. Rather than say, "I *have* three children," we can say, "I *am* a parent to three children." Rather than say, "I'm *having* my bar or bat mitzvah at my synagogue," we can say, "I *am* becoming a bar or bat mitzvah. And I *will be* called to the Torah at my synagogue." Rather than, "We are *having* the party at such-and-such a venue," we can say, "We *are* celebrating at…" It's a valuable exercise. Statements of ownership come more easily than statements of being, but statements of being get to the heart of who we are and who we are not.

When one of our bar or bat mitzvahs takes to the bimah, time is suspended for a moment. You can see it on the faces of the parents. They are in another world. Awestruck. It's a profound moment when past, present and future collide, when the individual and the Jewish People turn to one another and strengthen one another in whole-hearted embrace.

When everyone's eyes are on the bar or bat mitzvah, I put my eyes on the parents. That rare look on their faces is more than priceless. That's the gaze of the sacred.

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Itzhak Perlman

Famed violinist prepares for Toronto concert

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

On March 31 at 7:30 p.m., violinist Itzhak Perlman takes to the stage at Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall for a benefit concert in support of Chai Lifeline, the Canadian arm of the international organization that provides social, emotional, and financial support to seriously ill children and their families.

The Israeli-born, New York-based virtuoso will be performing with Cantor Yitzchak Helfgot, the renowned soloist and chief cantor of the Park East Synagogue in New York.

Tickets to the Chai Lifeline concert are available at www.chaiconcert.com.

What will the audience hear you and Cantor Helfgot perform?

They are going to hear a variety of Jewish music. It's going to be a little cantorial music, a little popular Jewish music for voice and violin and there is going to be some traditional prayers and some klezmer.

Are you playing with an orchestra?

There will be some music with orchestra, some with a small band and some will be with just piano and bass. I think that's what makes the show so nice, there is a lot of variety, with different sounds and styles. You know, I myself enjoy it.

Have you and the cantor worked together before?

Oh yes, many times and we have gone on tour together. We have been in Toronto together as well, last year.

How does being Jewish influence your art, if at all?

I don't know if it influences my art. I feel my art is my art, and I'm Jewish and it is two separate things. I don't think because I'm Jewish my art is a certain way. Obviously, a concert like this, is because I am Jewish. It is not like I was to play the Beethoven violin concerto, I would say I am playing it in a certain way because I am Jewish. I don't think so. I'm playing it a certain way because I'm me. This concert, which is something I grew up with, obviously has a lot to do with the fact that I'm Jewish. When I was growing up in Israel, I listened to this kind of music, so it was part of my growing up. That definitely not only influences the way I play this, but the fact that I do like to hear the sound of a cantorial voice together with my violin.

Have you had a professional moment that you have thought, am I ever lucky?

Yes all the time. Every time that I play and something comes out beautifully, or even when I listen to music that moves me, I always say I am so lucky. I cry certain times when I listen to music that moves me…my God, this is something, that I can actually have such a reaction to music.

You often appeared on American television at a young age, exposing classical music to the masses. How did this affect your career?

The media and television definitely affected my career. It was just a question of exposure. When you play a concert in a hall that seats 3,000 people, which is a pretty nice size hall, then you play five minutes on television that exposes you to millions of people, it is obvious that the media is extremely important in making sure the music is on the front burner of peoples' ears. The way my career started, in rather a funny way was appearing on the Ed Sullivan Show when I was 13 years old, so my kind of karma if you will, had a lot to do with TV. I have been doing a lot of public television and going on talk shows and it greatly affects a career.

What has it been like to perform alongside some of those who have inspired and influenced you musically?

I performed with conductors as I was growing up. I am a little young for the older conductors and a little old for the younger conductors. I'm in the twilight zone of age. I recorded with Carlo Maria Giulini, who I admired so much. And I performed with conductors like George Schulte or Pierre Boulez.

Playing with Isaac Stern, who I grew up listening to, or to Yehudi Menuhin —you always take something from people that you hear. The important thing is to use it and make it your own and not to say, I admire this person and I am going to do exactly what this person is doing. I have problems with students, sometimes they think they have to do exactly what this other person does that sometimes can be dangerous. Isaac Stern was already performing when I was five years old. So when you grow up and you perform with the same person that you heard through your childhood, it is a very special thing.

You've lent your talents to film soundtracks…do you have plans to do more of that?

The film soundtracks that I have done were not a plan. I was approached. Basically, it is up to the composer and the sound he wants to hear on a movie track. With *Schindler's List* for example, John Williams said to me, 'I can hear a violin and I'm just wondering if you would be able to do it.' Of course, when I knew the whole story and the subject, it was a no brainer to do something like that.

You and your wife Toby are planning a special event this summer called "Bows & Batons: 4 Days of Music & Music Appreciation with Itzhak Perlman and Friends" from August 18-22 in Saratoga Springs, New York. Tell us about it.

My wife started a music program and this summer it will be the 20th anniversary. It is for talented young string players between the ages of 12 to 18. There is also chamber music as well, for older kids. That is something that I have been involved in, it is a program that is all year around.

For this gathering in Saratoga, my wife is the director of the program, and we will be having some people from the program. The audience will be there for some interesting chamber music and what goes on behind the chamber music. We call it an informational musical event. Also, I will be conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra on one of those days, so they will be exposed to both a rehearsal and the concert.

Your wife Toby is a fellow violinist, have you ever performed together?

We met at a music camp, which actually inspired her music program. We were both studying with the same teachers. We have never performed together.

Are any of your five children musical?

Four out of the five are musical. I have a daughter who is a professional pianist and another who plays the flute, and one who sings and a son who plays in rock bands. They are into it, although not all of them are professional in music, but they are all musicians.

Itzhak Perlman

Your classical music fans may not know that you also play jazz and have recorded with Canada's late jazz pianist Oscar Peterson, what was that like?

I am not a jazz player. I try to play jazz. Jazz is not my day job. That thing I did with Oscar Peterson was simply because I admired Oscar Peterson because he was an amazing, incredible pianist and I always loved to hear him play. When the opportunity arised, I thought it would be just nice to do something together. He was very kind to bear with me.

After a couple of takes with this recording I tried to improvise. Improvising in jazz is quite common, however improvising for a classical musician is something not done usually. One time I was improvising and our director said, you know it sounds a little bit like klezmer and that is the first time that I actually discovered that I could actually play klezmer, when I was actually trying to do something in jazz and it sounded maybe a little too Jewish. That was a side effect of trying to do jazz.

You have family from Toronto including a distant cousin, TV personality Howie Mandel.

I've never met him, but we've exchanged a couple of letters.

When you are not traveling the world performing, what do you do for fun when you unpack your violin case?

Just spending time with my family. Between the five children, we have grandchildren and I like spending time with them. Not often, but sometimes I go to a sporting event or to the movies. I just try to stay put at home. For me that is the best way of spending time, is not to travel.

report to the

Baycrest

Get your game on for Baycrest!

Are you a Scrabble master or a Monopoly tyrant? Or maybe you're a Trivial Pursuit pop culture savant? Whatever your game, the inaugural Game Night for Baycrest will launch on Saturday April 5, 2014. This one-night-only, unique event will challenge your skills while helping raise awareness about Baycrest.

The brainchild of the GTA's Young Leaders for Baycrest committee, Game Night is dedicated to promoting Baycrest's innovations in care, brain health and as a world-renowned research facility on dementia to a new generation of supporters.

"A healthy brain is a must at any age. We wanted to do something different and fun to raise awareness about Baycrest and came up with a board game night," explains committee co-chair Erica Godfrey. The idea took off. Dozens of households across Toronto and New York are signed on to host a Game Night.

So how do you play? Interested volunteers are being asked to open their homes and host 10 to 20 friends and/or family members for an informal, relaxed night of gaming and talk about Baycrest. Gamers will hear all about Baycrest's work and impact in Ontario and around the world, and why taking care of your brain when you're young can help you live a longer, healthier life.

Committee member Lauren Greisman says her generation needs to rethink what Baycrest means to all demographics, not just older adults. "As younger adults, we have a duty to educate our friends about Baycrest and what it has to offer, because a lot of people only see it as a home for the elderly. It's not. It's time for our generation to get more involved," she says.

Generating more support for Baycrest, whether through volunteerism or donations, is the primary goal of Game Night, Hailey Remer, a committee co-chair adds. "Ultimately, it's about looking out for the collective future of all community members," Remer says.

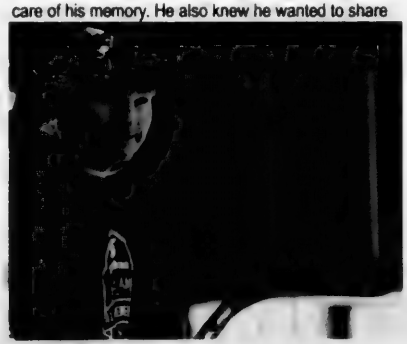
Baycrest Game Night planning committee. Back row, from left: Erica Godfrey, Hailey Remer, Kailee Meckinger & Caren Finkelstein. Front row: Carolyn Pearl, Lauren Greisman & Rebecca Kornblum. Absent: Lauren Kimel-Wise.

For more information or to sign up, visit **baycrest.org/gamenight**

McSorley credits Baycrest for helping him fight memory loss

Want to know why Wayne Gretzky's former on-ice bodyguard chooses to support Baycrest?

After retiring in 2000, Marty McSorley began feeling the effects of a punishing 17-year NHL career sometime around 2009 and realized he had to begin taking better care of his memory. He also knew he wanted to share his experiences with pro and amateur hockey players so they too could take better care of their brains. Five years ago, when his lapses in memory and diminishing hand-eye co-ordination began, so did his relationship with Baycrest Health Sciences.



Marty McSorley

McSorley, who will be 51 in May, has taken part in the annual Scotiabank Baycrest Pro-Am since 2009 as a member of the NHL Alumni Association. Now in its ninth year, the 2014 Pro-Am takes place May 1 – 3. "It's a natural fit," he says.

"With the Scotiabank Baycrest Pro-Am, I have the best of many worlds. I get a chance to play, which I've always loved to do. I love the game, and to get the opportunity to sit in a locker room with real fans who have raised a lot of money for Baycrest research and care, and to talk about the game with them is just terrific," says McSorley. "I'm a hockey fan first, and Pro-Am participants are the same. So I get a chance to share my love of the game with those guys. Add to that all the alumni who play, like Guy Carbonneau, Paul Coffey, Wendel [Clark] and Dougie [Gilmour], I enjoy being around them and have a lot of respect for them."

Equally as important, he has come to learn about how to deal with his own symptoms from head trauma, both through Baycrest research as well as through his friendships with doctors and researchers here over the years.

"Personally, I'll sometimes be driving down a highway and I'll have trouble remembering where I'm supposed to go. I've sometimes pulled off the road and called my wife to check where I'm supposed to be. Or I'll walk into a room and not know why I was there," he says. "These days, if I'm going out to buy some things or do some errands, I have to make notes for myself to remind me where I'm going and what I'm doing. And then there are the little things that strike me, from forgetting my wife's maiden name to how to spell certain elementary words. Some days are harder than others and that's my reality. And I'd never have thought twice about these things if it hadn't have been for my exposure to Baycrest."

continued on page two

Holiday connection - *A message from the Baycrest Foundation's Interim President*

Passover is around the corner.

Baycrest is a special place year round, it is particularly so during the holidays. In my discussions with donors, clients and community members, time and again I hear how we've managed to create a special environment for those who wish to partake in Passover traditions, particularly the *seder*, the festive holiday meal. Children and grandchildren of aging parents and grandparents tell me they cherish this aspect of what we do, because they see how the Baycrest family embraces their own and provides a spiritual lift and care during this time.

I remember when my own family members became too ill to go to synagogue or enjoy a *seder* at home. It was a tremendous comfort to know they could continue to participate meaningfully in ceremonies along with other residents and to see how much they welcomed being part of their new, extended Baycrest family. They were able to feel completely engaged despite their illnesses, since during the holiday each floor of the hospital, Apotex and the day centres hold their own Passover programs for staff, clients and their families, where elements of the holiday are explored with residents.

Baycrest's dedication to nurturing spiritual needs is just one of the unique ways we maintain a strong connection to our cultural beginnings while simultaneously looking forward to the future of care.

In the stories that follow, we celebrate the Rotman Research Institute's 25th Anniversary and highlight the exciting ways we continue to engage donors and supporters of all ages and walks of life, from our 9th annual Pro-Am hockey tournament to our new Game Night initiative - led by a devoted younger generation of Baycrest leaders - to a warm friendraiser in Florida.

As you prepare for your family's gathering, consider how Baycrest has touched the life of someone you know and stay connected.

I encourage you to reach out and let me know your thoughts. Email me directly at gfoster@baycrest.org, visit our website, or find us on your favourite social media channel. I look forward to hearing from you.

Chag sameach,

Garry Foster
Interim President, Baycrest Foundation

Stay connected! Visit Baycrest.org

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McSorley talks Pro-Am, Baycrest and hockey *continued from page one*

One of the practical strategies McSorley uses from Baycrest research to offset his cognitive decline is getting plenty of rest before any drive of 30 minutes or longer – something he said has helped him tremendously in the last few years. He's also keen to become a Baycrest research subject in the near future.

"The NHL Alumni Association, through Baycrest, has an arrangement for alumni to get tested and checked up at the Centre. I haven't had the opportunity to do that yet, but I certainly will. I had friends and family members who suffered the effects of dementia. So it really strikes a chord. I want to see what they find, then do it again two or three years down the road to see if there's been any progress or regression cognitively with me," he notes. In the meantime, he says, it's imperative that people keep supporting Baycrest, whether through the Pro-Am or other channels, so the research and education about Alzheimer's and dementia can continue.

McSorley also has some final words of advice to those who think they might be suffering from memory loss unrelated to the normal aging process.

"To anybody who has suffered head injuries: go through the medical process of checking yourself out, so you can better understand and look for signs of dementia or cognitive impairment. There are things you can do to slow the process and keep yourself sharp.

And see you at the Pro-Am!"

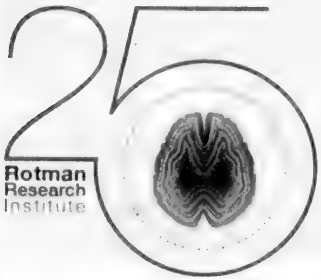
To register or find our more about the Scotiabank Baycrest Pro-Am, visit **scotiabankproam.com**

Marty McSorley

A quarter-century of discovery: Rotman Research Institute turns 25!

Back in 1989, Driving Miss Daisy was Best Picture, SkyDome opened in Toronto and the Berlin Wall came tumbling down in Europe.

At Baycrest, we were marking our own auspicious occasion – the inauguration of the Rotman Research Institute (RRI). In 2014, we are proudly celebrating 25 years as trailblazers in the area of brain research.



"There is a good case to be made that the RRI revolutionized research in cognitive neuroscience by assembling some of the greatest thinkers in cognitive theory and innovators in neuroscience methods to make the fundamental processes of our mind accessible to research," says Dr. Randy McIntosh Baycrest's Vice-President of Research and Director of the RRI. It's a "great honour and privilege" to lead the group, he says.

It has been a remarkable journey, and gratifying to those who work at the institute who have witnessed its rise to international stature in a relatively short period of time.

And it's in large part due to donors. By funding everything from research studies to staff, donations have enabled the RRI to attract and retain world-class scientists with innovative ideas.

The RRI boasts 26 scientists, including two prestigious Canada Research Chairs, and 29 postdoctoral fellows. More than 380 active research studies are underway, with more than 11,500 research study participants. It all bodes well for the future.

The Kunin-Lunenfeld Applied and Evaluative Research Unit at Baycrest supports translational research, leveraging the findings of RRI studies and caregiving practices to accelerate the development of our own programs and treatments. Dr. McIntosh is excited by the potential to help create new models of care that make use of RRI research.

"With the rapid development of mobile technologies, we can do work that takes the lab into the real-world to better appreciate the challenges someone with cognitive impairment faces and develop more effective customized solutions," he says.

Informed by a new research strategic plan, RRI is poised for another 25 years of growth and discovery to help clinicians address the brain health needs of people everywhere. **www.baycrest.org/research25years/**

Baycrest receives $1M from The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation

The Mood and Related Disorders Clinic at Baycrest Health Sciences has received a second major gift of $1 million from The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation. The first came in 2004, in the form of seed funding for the creation of the clinic.

This time, the money comes with a matching promise of $1 million from the Baycrest Foundation to enable the Mood and Related Disorders clinic to increase its reach to more vulnerable seniors across the province while also expanding research on the benefits of non-drug therapies like mindfulness-based stress reduction and problem-solving therapy in older populations.

Geoffrey H. Wood

It will also allow the clinic to increase the frequency of its telepsychiatry consultations and follow-ups to remote and underserviced areas of the province, and launch a new geriatric mental health website that provides educational resources to older adults and their caregivers.

"We are very grateful to the Wood Foundation for their generous support of this program. The new funding will allow us to serve more individuals suffering from mood disorders, utilizing a broad array of innovative interventions," says Dr. David Conn, Vice-President of Education at Baycrest.

In just under a decade, the Baycrest Mood and Related Disorders Clinic has established itself as one of Canada's leading models of care for older adults struggling with depression, stress, anxiety, chronic illness, pain and bereavement.

"We had a wonderful experience with Dr. Conn and his team in helping to establish the Clinic with our first gift. We kept in touch and thought we could now help to encourage new advances in treatment. We are pleased to be able to collaborate with Drs. Conn and Cindy Grief, Medical Director of the Clinic, in their exciting new endeavours," says John A. Broley, President of The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation.

Celebrate Jewish Heritage Month with Baycrest

Looking for something a little off the beaten path for Jewish Heritage Month this year? Come see what's happening at Baycrest, where a world of *Yiddishkheit* awaits in May 2014. The following events and exhibitions are just a few of the things you can expect to experience starting in late April.

• **April 29, 2014** – Opening ceremony storytelling and klezmer music in the Winter Garden.

• **Ongoing** – *Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life* featuring more than 180 photos of Holocaust survivors who are in Baycrest programs and/or residents.

• **Ongoing** - *Origins of Judaic Symbols* at the Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum.

• *The Golden Age of Yiddish Theatre in Toronto*, a collection of archival photographs, performance posters, and personal reflections.

• *People of the Book* - The Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles exhibits its art.

• *My Yiddishe Momme*: Artwork created by members of the Freeman Family Day Centre.

Jewish HERITAGE MONTH

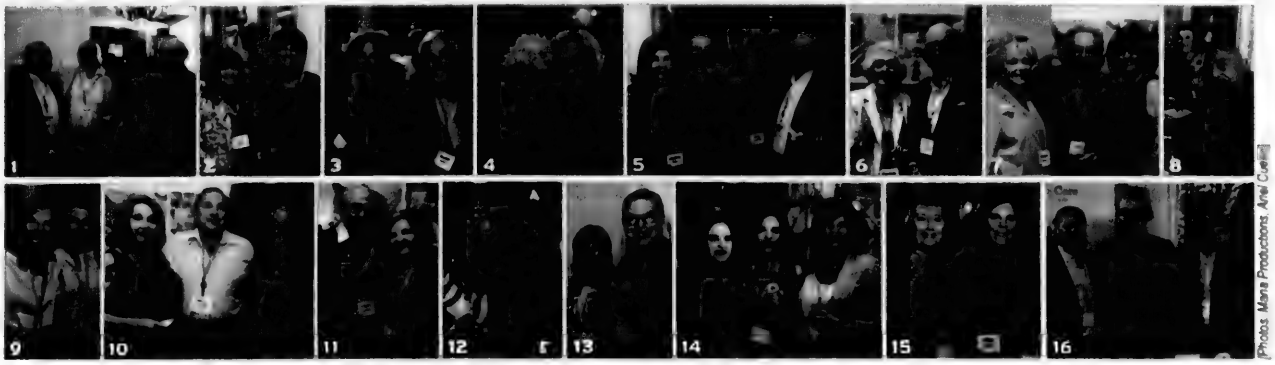
• *Yiddish Wit & Wisdom* - Student artist Shauna Taylor illustrates Yiddish witticisms and proverbs in her unique illustrative style.

• **May 29** – Closing ceremony featuring a Yiddish musical program in the Jacob Family Theatre.

Help Baycrest continue providing excellence in cultural programming. **Donate today baycrest.org/give**

Baycrest on the Beach - 'Friendraising' in the sunshine state

In February, the Baycrest Foundation held its first-ever Baycrest on the Beach event. Graciously hosted by Gina & Paul Godfrey, Marya & Herman Grad, Honey & Barry Sherman, Fran & Ed Sonshine, Rochelle Reichert and Henry Wolfond, more than 100 guests – both old and new friends of Baycrest - gathered in Sunny Isles Beach, Florida. They shared powerful stories about their deep connections with Baycrest and learned more about how we are changing what it means to age. Baycrest President and CEO Dr. William Reichman entered into lively and poignant discussions with guests about how Baycrest is leading the way on subjects such as - how to spot the early onset of dementia, how to maintain a healthy brain and how Baycrest will help people to age well at home.



Photos: Mona Productions, Ariel Cuell

Pictured left to right **1.** Ed Sonshine, Herman Grad, Shelly Silverberg & Jerry Cohen **2.** Gina Godfrey & Honey Sherman **3.** Tootsie & Gerry Halbert **4.** May Karp & Toby Farb **5.** Andrea & Trevor Cohen with Fran & Ed Sonshine **6.** Florence & Sid Cooper **7.** Eleanor Appleby with Fred & Bryna Steiner **8.** Dr. Max and Gianna Glassman **9.** Pauline Menkes & Ofra Menkes **10.** Marty & Lucy Grinstein with Sharyn Jacob **11.** Harry & Sara Gorman **12.** Judy Bronfman & Anita Goodman **13.** Debbie & Warren Kimel **14.** Rachel Grad, Marya Grad & Micki Moore Simpson **15.** Dianne Harris & Mina Schwarz **16.** Laurence Goldstein, Chair of the Baycrest Foundation, Dr. William Reichman, President and CEO of the Baycrest Centre & Garry Foster, Interim President of the Baycrest Foundation.

Baycrest hosts 2014 Better Aging Summit

On Feb. 13, 2014 Ontario Health Minister Deb Matthews and Minister Responsible for Seniors Mario Sergio, along with some 170 leaders in geriatric medicine and education from around the province, learned all about Baycrest care, research and community during the *Better Aging: Ontario Education Summit* presented by the Council of Ontario Universities. From left, Garry Foster, Interim President of the Baycrest Foundation, Minister Sergio and Dr. William Reichman, President and CEO, Baycrest, tour the campus.

Baycrest Greeting Cards

Early bird deadline discount until April 4th, 2014!

Pay $8 per card before the deadline.
After April 4, cards are $9 each when ordering 10 or more or $10 for a single card.

New for this year -
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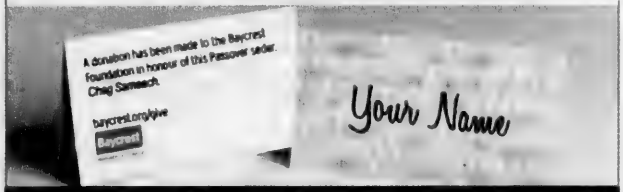
$25 for a pack of 10 place cards or $40 for 20.
Consider Baycrest for all your Passover greetings.


A donation has been made to the Baycrest Foundation in honour of this Passover seder.
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The Baycrest Foundation Report to the Community is published quarterly to celebrate donors and the impact of their philanthropy on aging and brain health. Please address your comments or ideas to the editor at: Baycrest Foundation, 3560 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON M6A 2E1 • 416-785-2500 x 2011 • donations@baycrest.org • Editor: Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf • Graphic Specialist: Shari Nepom • Contributors: Anne-Marie Tobin, Corinne Rusch-Drutz

To find out more about ways you can support the Baycrest Foundation, please contact **donations@baycrest.org** or visit **baycrest.org/give.**

Khamenei posts Holocaust denial on Twitter

JTA

WASHINGTON — Jewish leaders condemned Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, for again questioning the Holocaust.

"#Holocaust is an event whose reality is uncertain and if it has happened, it's uncertain how it has happened" was posted March 21 to a Twitter account, @Khamenei.ir, believed to reflect Khamenei's policies.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

"Once again, the injection of Holocaust denial by an Iranian leader shows the world how such deep-seated hatred exists at the helm in Iran," Abraham Foxman, the Anti-Defamation League's national director, said in a statement.

"We have seen the Ayatollah spew his vehement animosity toward Jews before on other national occasions in Iran, and these statements once again show the bigotry and hypocrisy of this regime," Foxman said.

Also condemning the remarks were the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and the World Jewish Congress.

The recently elected Iranian president, Hassan Rouhani, and foreign minister, Javad Zarif, drew much attention late last year for acknowledging the Holocaust.

Rouhani has since qualified his remarks under pressure from hardliners in the Iranian regime, reflecting an Iranian policy – often expressed by Khamenei – of questioning whether the Holocaust occurred or if it is exaggerated.

Khamenei, like some other Iranian leaders, does not acknowledge or deny the veracity of social media accounts bearing his name, but the comment appeared to reflect the content of a speech he gave Friday for Nowruz, the Iranian New Year, which media reports said included an attack on some western nations for criminalizing Holocaust denial while criticizing Iran for controlling speech.

"Absolute #freedom doesn't exist anywhere in world. Even countries that claim 2 have freedom, set redlines on which they're utterly strict," the Twitter account in his name said. "Does anybody dare talk about #Holocaust in Europe? #freedom".

Hamas makes text threats

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli cellphone owners received text messages from Hamas threatening rocket attacks and kidnapping.

The four messages, sent on the 10th anniversary of Israel's assassination of Hamas leader Sheik Ahmed Yassin, were delivered last Saturday evening.

"A warning to Zionists. Kassam rockets are waiting with you. If you want the life then leave our country," said one message in Hebrew.

"Al-qassam has chosen you to be The next Shalite ... Be Ready," read another message, referring to former captive Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit, who was kidnapped in 2006 by Hamas and freed five years later in a lopsided prisoner exchange.

The messages were also sent to government ministers and their spokespeople, as well as some journalists, according to *Ynet*. It was not possible to call back the numbers from which the messages were sent.

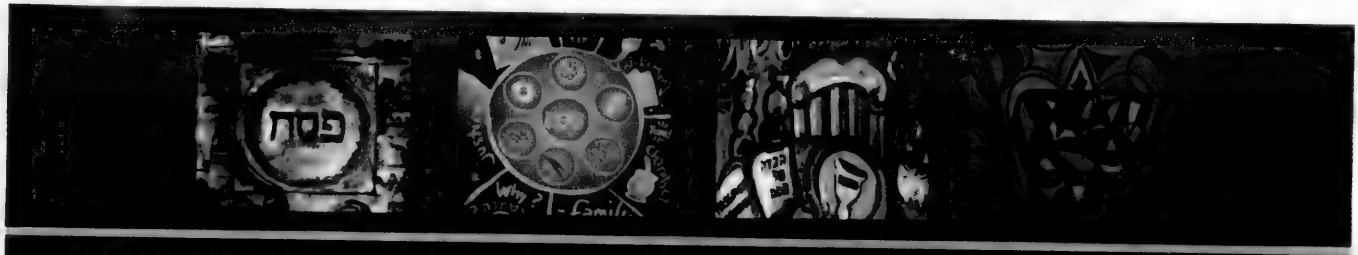
Abbas issues conditions for peace

JTA

JERUSALEM — Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said the Palestinian leadership won't agree to a peace deal unless it includes a completely sovereign state with a capital in eastern Jerusalem.

Abbas reportedly made the statement March 22 during a meeting of his Fatah party's Central Committee.

In expressing its support for Abbas, the committee called for Israeli withdrawal – military and civilian – from the West Bank; rejected Israel's conditioning a peace agreement on recognition as a Jewish state; and for a resolution of the Palestinian refugee crisis based on United Nations resolution 194.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Russian sanctions could put Israel in World Cup

JTA

Israel would take part in the 2014 World Cup if the head of international soccer's governing body heeds the suggestion of two U.S. senators to sanction Russia over its Crimea actions.

In a letter earlier this month, Republican senators Mark Kirk of Illinois and Dan Coates of Indiana urged FIFA chair Sepp Blatter to suspend Russia from the World Cup in Brazil as punishment for its takeover of Crimea.

If Russia is banned from participation, its place would be assigned to Israel, which finished third in Group F at the 2014 FIFA World Cup qualification, trailing Russia and Portugal.

"In light of Russia's military occupation of a sovereign Ukraine, we respectfully ask that you urgently convene an emergency session of FIFA to consider suspending Russia's membership in FIFA, stripping Russia of the right to host the 2018 World Cup, and denying the Russian National Team the right to participate in the upcoming 2014 World Cup in Brazil," the senators' letter said.

Russia, the letter said, "does not deserve the honour of either hosting the World Cup or participating in one."

According to Article 3 of the FIFA statutes, the letter said, "discrimination of any kind against a country, private person or group of people on account of ethnic origin, gender, language, religion, politics or any other reason is strictly prohibited and punishable by suspension or expulsion."

On March 21, Blatter reiterated that Russia will host the 2018 World Cup, but did not comment on participation in the upcoming World Cup.

During the Balkan crisis, Yugoslavia was banned from playing in both the 1992 European Championship and the 1994 World Cup.

The United States and the European Union already have imposed economic sanctions against Russia following its occupation of Ukrainian military bases and other facilities.

Israeli actress says rabbinate refused to convert her

JTA

JERUSALEM — An Israeli television celebrity said the Chief Rabbinate is refusing to convert her to Judaism because of her acting career.

Alin Levy, a 24-year-old reality TV celebrity whose Ukraine-born mother is Christian and whose father is Jewish, discussed her situation with Israel's Channel 10 in an interview that aired earlier this week.

She said she received a call from the rabbi handling her conversion informing her that *dayanim*, or rabbinical judges, decided to stop her conversion because they had learned details about her acting career and acting school, and decided they were incompatible with conversion.

Levy, who immigrated from Ukraine to Israel with her parents when she was four years old, was a participant in Israel's *Big Brother* reality TV show and is studying acting at the Yoram Levinstein acting school, according to Channel 10.

She said she had opened a file to undergo Orthodox conversion and told the rabbinate about her acting. The report did not say which office of the Chief Rabbinate handled her request and did not name the rabbis handling her case.

A spokesperson for the Religious Affairs Ministry told Channel 2 that conversion requires a fundamental change in an applicant's lifestyle. The response, as quoted by Channel 2, did not contain any specific reference to Levy's case.

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PM lauds West Bank raid to nab terrorist

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the security forces that took part in a deadly operation in the West Bank to arrest a Hamas terrorist.

The suspect and at least two others were killed in the raid in the Jenin refugee camp on Saturday morning.

"Our policy is to attack those who attack us and who are planning to attack us. Both were applicable in this case," Netanyahu said Sunday at the beginning of the weekly cabinet meeting.

Netanyahu commended the units in the raid for "carrying out a very important operation in eliminating someone who endangered Israeli citizens."

The suspected terrorist was identified as Hamza Abu Alhija, who was wanted for involvement in shooting and bombing attacks, as well as planning future terror attacks against Israeli civilians and Israeli soldiers, the Israel Defence Forces said in a statement.

Abu Alhija barricaded himself in his home with other Hamas operatives, according to the IDF, then opened fire on Israeli forces, wounding two, before attempting to escape while continuing to shoot. Israeli forces responded with live gunfire, killing him.

In the ensuing riot at the scene, Palestinians from Jenin threw rocks, firebombs and explosives at the Israeli forces. The Israelis responded with live fire, killing at least two other Palestinians, who were identified as belonging to Islamic Jihad and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, the military wing of the ruling Fatah party.

Benjamin Netanyahu

Three Palestinian terrorist groups – Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades – issued a joint statement warning that they will take revenge on Israel and the Palestinian Authority for the deaths.

"The resistance in the West Bank is alive and won't die, and the Zionist enemy can't guess from where the resistance will attack. The blood of Jenin martyrs won't go in vain," the groups said in a statement, according to the *Times of Israel*.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' office condemned the incident, calling it an "escalation" by Israel. The statement also called on the United States to get involved before the teetering peace negotiations are completely "ruined."

Baltimore Jews protest murderer's new trial bid

JTA

BALTIMORE — Some 200 Baltimore Jews attended a hearing to protest the possible release of a man who was convicted of murdering an 11-year-old Jewish girl in 1969.

Attorneys for Wayne Stephen Young, 68, are requesting a new trial based on a 2012 ruling by the Court of Appeals of Maryland, the state's highest court, which found that many convictions before 1980 are invalid because jurors were given unconstitutional instructions, the *Baltimore Sun* reported. Dozens of people convicted prior to 1980 have been set free due to the ruling.

Young was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Esther Lebowitz and has been denied parole 12 times. He claimed during his trial that he was temporarily insane.

Esther was missing for two days before her body was found half a mile from her home. She died of 17 blows to the head.

"It would be a travesty of justice to allow a murderer that confessed to doing such horrible things to be freed," Frank Storch, a co-founder of the Northwest Citizens Patrol, told the *Sun*.

Storch organized buses to shuttle the Baltimore Jewish community members to the courthouse for the March 20 hearing. He said he was 12 when Esther was killed and recalls well the search for her, the *Sun* reported.

Her family, which has since moved to Israel, did not attend the hearing, though they reportedly were aware of it.

Baltimore Circuit Judge Edward Hargadon said he would issue a written opinion in the coming weeks. Young did not speak at the hearing.

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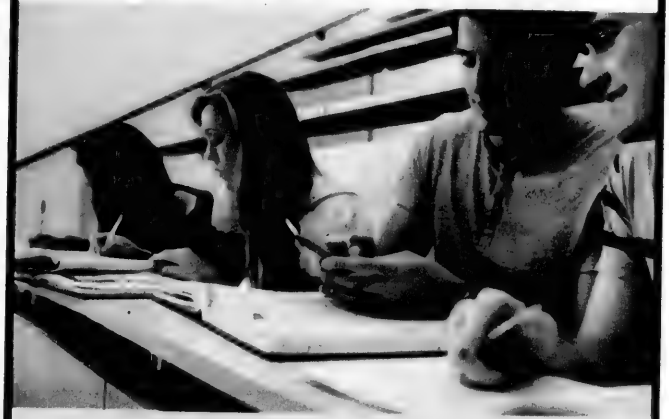

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Tzimmes for the holidays

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

I actually didn't grow up with tzimmes. I'm not sure why. My mother quite likes it although her mother, my grandmother, made it by coarsely mashing carrots, which she served with cooked tiny matzah balls, which my mother recalls as being quite savoury as opposed to sweet.

It wasn't until I got married, many, many moons ago, and we went to my sister-in-law's for Passover, that I truly got acquainted with tzimmes. Since then I have realized that there are as many tzimmes variations out there as there are cooks.

As I've written before, I'm partial to sweet things, especially when meat is involved, so tzimmes speaks to my heart. The combination of spices such as cinnamon and ground ginger, paired with sweet potatoes, carrots and prunes, is a luscious unification, one that compliments almost any main dish of lamb, chicken or brisket. For those of you who, like me, had never made your own tzimmes growing up, I have included a classic version, made with only vegetables. It can easily be made ahead and reheated. The beef tzimmes is what you might call a fine stew, best made with flanken or short ribs, but equally delicious made with stewing beef.

CLASSIC TZIMMES

2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
5 large carrots, peeled and sliced
1 tsp. cinnamon
3/4 tsp. salt
4 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-in. chunks
1 cup dried apricots
2 tsp. grated orange zest
2/3 cup fresh orange juice
1/4 cup honey
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1 1/2 cups pitted prunes

Preheat the oven to 350. Lightly spray a 13x9-in. glass baking dish; set aside.

In a large saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onion, cook, stirring, for 3 minutes. Add the carrots; cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Stir in the cinnamon and salt until the carrots are well coated. Transfer to the prepared pan. Stir in the sweet potatoes, apricots, orange zest and juice, honey and lemon juice.

Cover with foil; cook in the centre of the preheated oven for 30 minutes. Stir in the prunes. Cover again and cook for 30 to 40 minutes or until vegetables are very tender and well glazed. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

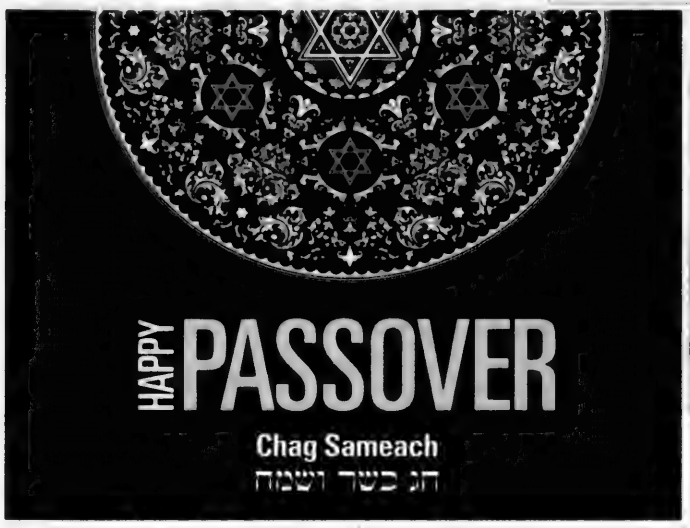
BEEF, CARROT AND SWEET POTATO TZIMMES

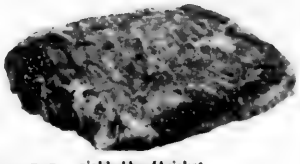
3 tbsp. vegetable oil
3 lb. flanken or 2-1/2 lb stewing beef
2 onions, finely chopped
1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. salt
3/4 tsp. ground ginger
1/2 tsp. pepper
pinch freshly ground nutmeg
3 cups beef stock
1/2 cup kosher for Passover red wine
2 tbsp. honey
4 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
3 carrots, peeled and thickly sliced
1 cup pitted prunes

Heat 2 tbsp. of the oil in a large Dutch oven. In batches if necessary, brown the flanken on both sides. Transfer to a plate; keep warm.

Add the remaining oil to pan. Reduce the heat to medium. Add the onions; cook, stirring, for about 5 minutes or until softened. Stir in cinnamon, salt, ginger, pepper and nutmeg until the onions are well coated. Return meat to the pan. Pour in the stock, wine and honey. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1 hour.

Add the sweet potatoes, carrots and prunes to the pan. Cover and cook for 1 to 1-1/2 hours or until the meat is falling off the bones and the vegetables are fork tender. Makes 8 servings.





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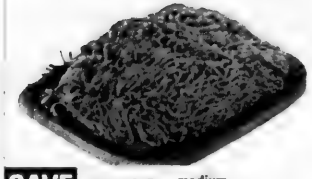

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Enjoy a gluten-free seder

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

The following two recipes come from *Gluten-Free Goes Gourmet* by Vicki Pearl of Brooklyn, N.Y. Her new kosher cookbook contains 100 gluten-free, dairy-free, corn-free recipes that she has made many times for family and friends, and they are now being made by her clients and friends. Vicki has been involved for many years in helping families who have members with gluten sensitivity.

Gluten-Free Goes Gourmet contains recipes that use wholesome and natural ingredients, relying mainly on fresh poultry or meat and plenty of fresh vegetables and fruit, rather than foods that have ingredients that you can't even pronounce! This is not a Passover cookbook, but the recipes below are perfect for Passover or all year round.

VICKI PEARL'S TWO TONE VEGETABLE KUGEL

It's this simple to serve a nutritious gourmet side dish. The orange of the sweet potato layer contrasts beautifully with the deep green of the broccoli layer.

2 large sweet potatoes
1 1/2 lb. frozen broccoli florets
2 large eggs
2–3 heaping tbsp. mayonnaise, divided
2 tbsp. potato starch, divided
2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
1/8 tsp. garlic powder
1/8 tsp. onion powder

Preheat oven to 350. Grease or line a 9-inch round or square baking pan or dish.

Peel and cut sweet potato into large chunks. Place chunks in a large pot filled with water set over high heat. Bring to boil. Add a pinch of salt. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, for 20 minutes or until potatoes are soft. Drain potatoes; return to pot and mash with a potato masher. Stir in 1 of the eggs, 1 tbsp of the mayonnaise, 1 tbsp. of the potato starch, and half of the salt, mixing well.

In a separate large pot, bring water to a rolling boil. Add a pinch of salt. Add broccoli and cook over high heat, uncovered, for 10 minutes.

Drain broccoli; return to the pot and mash with a potato masher. Stir in remaining egg, 1 to 2 heaping tablespoons of mayonnaise, remaining potato starch and salt, and garlic and onion powders, mixing well.

Spoon broccoli mixture evenly into bottom of prepared pan, smoothing surface. Top with sweet potato mixture, spreading evenly.

Bake in centre of preheated oven for 1 hour or until the top is golden. Yield: 6 to 8 servings. Freezes well for up to 3 months

Note: To create a third tier, boil 1 1/2 lb. of chopped cauliflower (fresh or frozen) in lightly salted boiling water. Mash and add 1 egg, 1 heaping tbsp. mayonnaise, a pinch of salt, and onion and garlic powders. Spread on top of broccoli layer. Bake as directed.

Vicki shared the following recipe as a response to parents coming to her, anxious to get their children to consume more protein. Some children flat out didn't like chicken, for some it was an issue of texture, and for others, chicken bones were off-putting. She chose to go with cutlets for the latter reason, eliminating the need to deal with bones. White meat has less texture than dark meat, eliminating that problem as well. Potato chips, as everyone knows, tend to be a favourite among young diners, so in they went, as did a mild but pleasing mayonnaise-based marinade. The combination was successful, and some parents, once their kids tasted this recipe, have even gone on to add this coating to bone-in chicken.

VICKI PEARL'S CRISPY CHICKEN ON SKEWERS

Yum! Yum! Crushed potato chips and a touch of sweetness, all wrapped up in one package. Kids love this one.

2 lb. chicken cutlets (6 large slices), pounded thin and cut into 2-inch strips
1 bag (8 oz.) kettle-cooked potato chips

Marinade:
3/4 cup mayonnaise
2 tbsp. honey
2 tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. paprika
12–15 12-inch skewers

Preheat oven to 350. Place skewers in a baking pan filled with cold water to prevent them from splintering.

In a small bowl, stir together mayonnaise, honey, salt, garlic powder, and paprika.

Crush potato chips either by adding to the bowl of a food processor and pulsing several times until crushed or by placing in a Ziploc bag, squeezing the air out, and rolling a rolling pin over bag. Place crushed chips on a piece of parchment paper.

Dip chicken strips into marinade, coating well.

Remove skewers from water; pat dry. Thread one to two chicken strips onto each skewer. Lightly roll chicken skewers in chips, coating well. Suspend skewers along the edges of a 9x13-inch baking pan.

Bake in centre of oven for 40 minutes. Yield: 6 to 8 servings.

Continued on page 44

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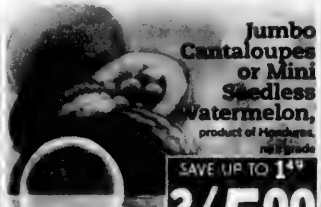

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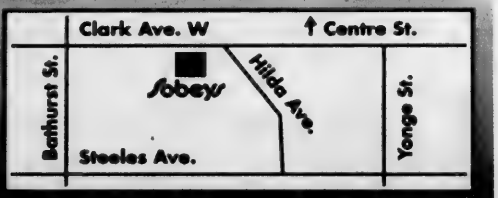

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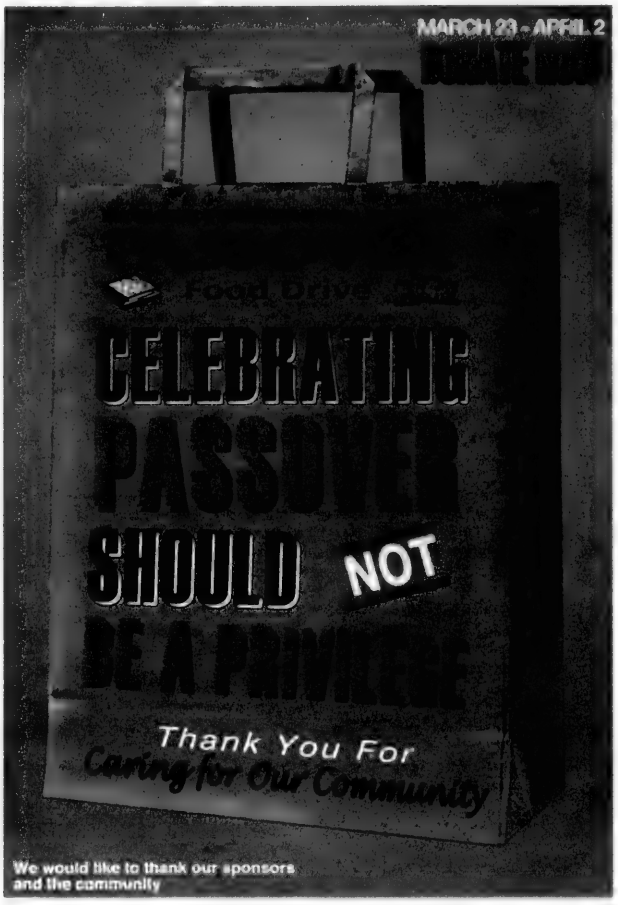

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Passover and diabetes

Jennifer Libman
Special to The CJN

Holidays are an integral part of Jewish life. And a huge part of observing holidays, especially Passover, is sharing holiday meals with friends and family. Sticking with a healthy lifestyle during Passover can be difficult for many people, but for those with diabetes, a chronic disease that affects nine million Canadians, it can be especially challenging.

So how do you manage your diabetes during Passover without forfeiting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle? For starters, make sure to continue eating regular meals, never going more than about six hours without eating. This is especially important on the seder nights. If you're hungry before the Haggadah is read, you'll be starving by the time the meal is served. This can result in overeating and will make it difficult to keep your blood sugars in control. Instead, have a snack in the late afternoon before the seder begins.

When filling your plate, think about what a balanced meal looks like. Ideally, you want half your plate to be filled with vegetables, while the remaining half is split equally between healthy proteins and whole grains. This balance will help to keep your blood sugars stable. And don't forget to pay attention to all the extra bites and small handfuls of food you taste. It's easy to ignore the small second helpings you have but these extra foods can add up.

Perhaps more important than what you eat during the seder meals is what you eat during the rest of the holiday. Many people seem to think that Passover is an excuse to indulge in heavy meal after heavy meal, but by cooking with fresh, wholesome ingredients and focusing mostly on vegetables, small amounts of chicken or fish, and whole grains like quinoa, managing your diabetes during Passover is easy. Surprisingly, eating healthy foods on Passover can actually be both simple and delicious and can even be done using foods that you already eat throughout the rest of the year.

Finally, don't forget to stay active. Physical activity improves your body's use of insulin which helps lower your blood sugars. Adding 30 minutes of activity each day during Passover will help you stay healthy throughout the holidays.

New Passover recipes promise culinary flair

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

Every now and then there is a new recipe book that combines easy-to-make dishes with tantalizing photographs.

A Taste of Pesach, a project of Yeshiva Me'on Hatorah (Roosevelt, N.J.), is one such book, a hardcover recipe book that promises to reinvent your Passover menu and inspire you with creative culinary twists and turns during this hungry time of year.

Many schools and communities have tried the same technique of compiling a recipe book to sell as a fundraiser, and that's how this one had its genesis seven years ago. But while most of those fundraiser books have a short lifespan before they're recycled or mislaid, *A Taste of Pesach* is unlikely to follow the same trajectory. For one, it's a gorgeous book you can't wait to page through, and one you'd be proud to hand over as a gift to a newlywed daughter or close friend. For another, it's chock full of irresistible culinary eye candy, with recipes that are for the most part easy, and call on ingredients that are readily available. Look through the book and you find yourself murmuring, "hmmm… I can do this."

The mothers who volunteered the 150+ recipes for *A Taste of Pesach* are a diverse group, but they all want the same things at the end of the day, write the editors in their introduction.

"[We want] food that will get rave reviews, [is] user-friendly, [has] visually attractive recipes with accurate cooking times, has yields and recipes that have broad appeal and that works. We're just like you," they write.

Most of those recipes don't require a huge spirit of adventure in the kitchen, but rather, call for a minor stretch in their use of different ingredients than you might typically incorporate. The sweet potato crisps salad, for example, is a lettuce-based green salad to which strips of fried sweet potato are added as a garnish just prior to serving. The image of this dish is so tempting, it makes you want to reach in and steal a piece of crisp off the topping. This is true for the majority of the recipes, each one prefaced with a photograph, and categorized by chapter into appies, soups, salads, fish, poultry, meat, sides, dessert, cake and cookies and gebrokts.

The recipes are accompanied by handy tips on how to make their preparation easier and faster, or how to plate it most attractively. There are traditional old favourites like gefilte fish, chremslach and kugels, and more modern twists or reinvented dishes like unstuffed cabbage, pastrami and spinach stuffed chicken, and cashew butter muffins.

Extra eye candy is offered in the chapter headers, which display images of seder plates reflecting different times, styles and tastes. Passover is not a time of year that usually excites Jewish taste buds, but *A Taste of Pesach* promises to add flair, creativity and innovation on your table – without even stretching your culinary skills to their limits.

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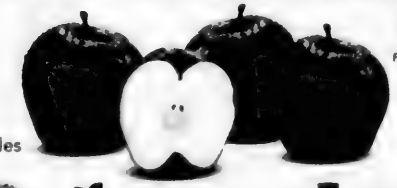

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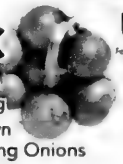

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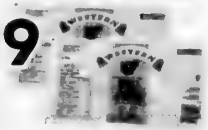

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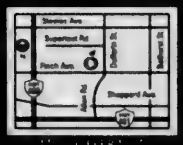

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VISA
AMERICAN EXPRESS

Gluten-free recipes are a real treat

Continued from page 40

Cookbook author and pastry chef, Paula Shoyer, author of *The Holiday Kosher Baker* (Sterling), offers a thoroughly modern approach to Jewish holiday baking that includes both contemporary and traditional recipes, more than 45 of which have been skillfully tailored for Passover. Recipes for low-sugar, gluten-free, vegan and nut-free treats are also included. Shoyer is currently hard at work on her next cookbook, tentatively called *The New Passover Menu*, with food and decadent desserts, to be published for Passover 2015.

PAULA SHOYER'S PISTACHIO COOKIES

Paula writes: "Paula Jacobson, who graciously shared this recipe with me, is a professional recipe tester and editor. I always smile when I think of her, because at every event she wears a spectacular hat that rivals any royal head covering. Baking does not get much simpler than a cookie with 4 ingredients, and these cookies have the perfect combination of crunch and chew."

3 cups shelled, unsalted pistachio nuts (about 1 1/2 lb. nuts in their shells)
3 large egg whites
1 cup sugar
2 tbsp. confectioner's sugar to dust cookies

Preheat oven to 325. Place the pistachio nuts into the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Process until the nuts are finely ground.

In a separate bowl, use a whisk to mix together the egg whites and sugar. Add the ground nuts and mix until combined. Place in the fridge for at least 20 minutes.

Cover two cookie sheets with parchment paper. Scoop up a little less than 1 tablespoon of dough at a time and roll into balls. Place on the cookie sheets one inch apart.

Bake for 16 to 18 minutes, or until lightly browned. It's okay if the cookies are still a bit soft when you remove them from the oven because they will harden while cooling.

Slide the parchment onto a wire rack. When the cookies are cool, use a sieve to dust them with confectioner's sugar. Store covered at room temperature for up to four days or freeze for up to three months. Makes 40.

PAULA'S CARROT CAKE

This is another easy cake that is great as a snack or fancy enough to serve to guests. When Paula made her first version of a Passover carrot cake, she was disappointed that the grated carrot strands separated from the batter. She did some research to see how to fix the problem and learned that Shirley Corriher, author of the fabulous baking bible, *Bakewise*, recommends using finely chopped carrots instead of the grated strands. The result is a cake speckled with bright orange dots throughout.

Vegetable oil and 1 tbsp. gluten-free cake meal or potato starch for greasing pan
6 large eggs, separated
1 1/4 cups sugar, divided
1 tsp. cinnamon
2 cups almond flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 cup gluten-free cake meal or potato starch
2 cups chopped carrots (use a food processor with the metal blade until you have tiny pieces), about 4 large carrots
Confectioner's sugar for dusting, if desired

Preheat oven to 350. Grease a Bundt pan with the vegetable oil, and then sprinkle it with the tablespoon of gluten-free cake meal or potato starch. Shake the pan to coat it evenly and tap out excess.

Put the egg yolks, 1 cup of the sugar, and the cinnamon into a medium or large bowl and beat for one minute with an electric mixer on medium speed. Add the almond flour, baking powder and gluten-free cake meal or potato starch and mix well. Add the chopped carrots and mix to distribute.

In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites on high speed until soft peaks form. Reduce the speed to low and add the remaining 1/4 cup sugar a little at a time, and then turn the speed back to high and beat another minute. Use a silicone spatula to fold the whites into the batter in 4 to 5 parts, mixing increasingly more slowly with each addition.

Pour the batter into the prepared Bundt pan and bake for 50 minutes, or until a skewer inserted comes out clean and the top is golden.

Let the cake cool for one hour and then turn it out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Dust with confectioner's sugar. Store covered at room temperature for up to four days or freeze for up to three months. Serves 12 to 15

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Cozy one-dish wonders for Passover

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

No one can say when one-dish meals were invented, but they have been around for quite some time. Pottage made from locally gathered vegetables and herbs as well as meat from hunted wild animals was likely the first one-pot meal. Most cultures can boast their own version of the one-pot meal.

The Jews are well known for cholent, a traditionally slow cooked Sabbath stew, the French are known for pot-au-feu, a French stew of oxtail, marrow and vegetables, and the Italians are famous for minestrone, a complete meal in a pot.

One-dish meals are often the cozy and familiar comfort food we look forward to. They offer a convenient method of making meals without a lot of bother. Not everyone has the luxury of being able to prepare three different dishes, a protein, a vegetable and a starch, to provide a perfectly balanced meal every evening. This especially difficult during Passover.

One-dish meals have many other benefits. They offer quick prep times, often involving simple ingredients. You usually need to use only one energy source, significantly saving on energy costs. One dirty pot uses less detergent and water during clean up, not to mention the pleasure of only having to clean only that one pot.

Additionally these recipes can often be doubled and a portion frozen for another day, a double savings on all counts. Many one-pot meals can be altered to please fussy eaters by exchanging ingredients. Furthermore, in many recipes, you can leave out the meat and add more vegetables and/or potatoes for a tasty vegetarian option. If you are looking for a manageable option for a weeknight Passover dinner look no further than one-pot meals. Make one of these three interesting new meals for a fresh and appealing change for everyone at your table this Passover.

BEEF STEW SOUP WITH DUMPLINGS

Is it a stew, or is it a soup? Whatever the answer, make this one-pot wonder in the largest pot you can find. This marvellous meal won't stay around for long.

Soup
1 1/2 lb. stewing beef, fat removed cut into bite sized pieces
4 tbsp. potato starch
3 tbsp. vegetable oil plus 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
3 large cloves garlic, sliced
6 stocks celery, sliced into 1/4-in. pieces
3 zucchinis, cut into bite sized pieces
4 large carrots, sliced into 1/4-in. pieces
2 red peppers, cut into bite sized pieces
2 yellow peppers cut into bite sized pieces
4 cups beef or chicken stock
1 1/2 cups red wine
2 tbsp. fresh rosemary, chopped finely
1 tbsp. dried chives
2 tsp. salt or to taste
1/2 tsp. pepper or to taste
12 oz. white mushrooms sliced

Dumplings
3 tbsp. vegetable oil
3 eggs, beaten
1 cup matzah meal
1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
1 tbsp. dried chives
1/2 cup soda water

Mix dumpling ingredients together well, cover and refrigerate until needed.

Heat 3 tbsp. of oil in a large, heavy bottomed pot. Coat beef in potato starch and, in two or three batches, brown in hot oil. Remove browned beef to a bowl.

Add 1 tbsp. oil to pot, and sauté garlic until soft. Pour wine into pot and, with a spoon, scrape up any crumbs stuck to the bottom of the pot. Return beef to the pot and add the remaining soup ingredients, except mushrooms, to the pot.

Cover ingredients with water to reach 5 to 6 inches above the ingredients. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to medium low. Simmer covered over medium low heat for 1-1/2 hours, or until beef is tender. Stir occasionally. Add additional water if necessary. After soup has cooked for 1-1/2 hours, take dumpling mixture from fridge and, with oiled hands, or using medical style gloves, make small balls, about the size of a gumball, and drop them one at a time into the soup. Add mushrooms and increase heat to medium high for 25 minutes more. Taste for seasonings, add more salt and pepper if needed. Freezes well.

ONE-PAN LEMON CHICKEN AND POTATOES

8 boneless/skinless chicken breasts
6 skinless chicken legs, thigh attached
3 tbsp. vegetable oil
zest of 4 lemons
2/3 cup fresh lemon juice
2 tbsp. sugar
10 garlic cloves, finely diced
4 tbsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. freshly ground pepper
1 can of cucumbers in brine, drained and rinsed
3 lemons, sliced with seeds removed
2 lb. fingerling potatoes

Continued on page 47

Comfort food for dinner

Continued from page 46

Preheat oven to 450. Place tinfoil in the bottom of a large lasagna-style baking pan. Use the vegetable oil to grease the bottom of the pan. Mix together lemon zest, fresh lemon juice, sugar and garlic. Wash the potatoes and cut them in half lengthwise. Place face up in the bottom of the pan.

Mix together the salt and pepper and sprinkle about 1/2 over the potatoes. Place the chicken over the potatoes and sprinkle the remaining salt and pepper mixture over the chicken. Take 4 large pickles and dice them up. Sprinkle them over the chicken and pour the lemon mixture over the chicken. Finally place the lemon slices over the chicken.

Cover the pan with foil and bake for 1 hour. Remove the foil and continue to bake for 15 minutes to brown the chicken. Serve the chicken and potatoes with the lemon sauce from the pan. Garnish with remaining pickles and baked lemon slices.

DECONSTRUCTED CABBAGE ROLLS

1 large cabbage, cored and cut into bite sized pieces
2 lb. lean ground beef
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 cups celery, finely chopped
1 cup green pepper, finely chopped
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 cup matzah meal
1 egg, beaten
2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper
1 tsp. fresh garlic, minced
1 cup raisins

Sauce
1/2 cup vinegar
1 can tomato puree, 28 oz.
2 cans, diced tomatoes, 28 oz.
2/3 cup brown sugar, packed
salt and pepper to taste

In a bowl combine beef, matzah meal, egg, salt, pepper, garlic and raisins.

In a large Dutch oven or heavy bottomed stock pot, heat oil and sauté the onion, celery and green pepper until soft. Remove pot from the heat and add sautéed vegetables to the beef mixture and combine. Add 1 cup of water to the bottom of the pot. Put the cabbage in the pot.

Add the sauce ingredients to the pot and add the cabbage. Put pot back on the stove at a high heat. Make meatballs, about the size of ping pong balls and add them one at a time to the sauce and cabbage. Bring mixture to a boil and then reduce heat to medium. Do not stir until the meatballs have been cooking for a while and have toughened up a bit. Put lid onto pot.

Occasionally gently stir up the cabbage from the bottom of the pot to the top while distributing the meatballs evenly throughout the pot. Reduce the heat to simmer and continue cooking, covered, for a total cooking time of 2-1/2 hours.

PASSOVER CATERING

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Includes: Seder plate; matzo; old fashioned dill pickles; tzimmes with fresh prunes; yams and carrots; salt and pepper Gefilte fish.

25.99 per person - 10 person minimum

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Choose 1: Coleslaw or baby spinach salad with red onion, toasted almonds, Mandarin oranges and citrus vinaigrette.

Choose 2: Brisket au jus, BBQ chicken, baked salmon with orange miso glaze or grilled salmon teriyaki.

Choose 1: Garlic mashed potatoes with caramelized onions, vegetable farfel or herb roasted mini potatoes.

Choose 1: Green beans with caramelized onions and toasted almonds or candied roasted root vegetables topped with toasted pecans.

Desserts: Gourmet fresh fruit and Passover biscotti.

à la carte

Minimum order 10 people per selection.

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The secrets of mother's chicken soup

Judy Bart Kancigor
Special to The CJN

Ever wonder why, when dinner is ready, whether the meal includes soup or not, the cook exclaims, "Soup's on"?

Soup – a course as metaphor. Nourishment and comfort in a bowl.

Our language is replete with soup idioms. A facility to feed the hungry and poor is a soup kitchen. A revved up car is "souped up." If it has it all, it's "got everything from soup to nuts." A real cinch is "easy as duck soup." And when you're in the thick of it, you're "in the soup."

Soup is mysterious, deep and alluring – think witch's brew and blinding fog – the giver of life from whence we come, the prehistoric primordial soup. And don't even get me started on the whole *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series.

Say the word "soup" and instantly that tummy warmer from childhood comes to mind. The steaming bowl of tomato soup my mother fed me when I was sick. Holiday dinners with Aunt Irene's matzah balls and my mother's incredible chicken soup.

And incredible it is. Shortly after my cookbook was published, I found this message on my answering machine from my friend Diane Weiss in New Jersey: "Judy? I just made your mother's chicken soup, and my whole family is standing around the pot slurping with a straw!"

I know. I know. You think *your* mother's chicken soup is the best. Well, it's not. My mother's is the best, and here's why. You see, my mother adhered to the "if some is good, more is better" school of cooking. While this theory sometimes spells disaster, for chicken soup it is the method of choice. And this is one case where the method is as important as the ingredients. Here are my mother's tips for perfect results:

1. Even if you're not kosher, you must use kosher chickens. The jury is still out on why they taste so much better. Is it the method of killing? The freshness? The salting? The blessing? Who knows, but there really is a difference. (Note: Kosher chickens are salted, so watch that shaker!)

2. Pack it in! Oh, how my mother used to laugh when she saw chicken soup recipes from famous cookbook authors calling for a stalk of celery and two carrots. She used two *pounds* of carrots. In fact, she put the whole produce market in that soup, her deep golden brew, intensely flavourful, in short, an elixir of the gods. I hoard the leftovers to use instead of chicken stock (the real secret of my stuffing and gravy). Pack those vegetables into your pot, or conversely, use as little water as possible to produce the most intense flavour. Resist the temptation to get a little more soup by adding a little more water.

3. You must use fresh dill, and lots of it.

4. After cooking, reserve some carrots to be sliced into the soup later. Then squeeze the remaining vegetables well through a strainer for extra flavour. (Not like that. I mean *really hard*.)

I serve it with my Shiitake Mushroom Matzah Balls, but this year I'm adding homemade lokshen from Tamar Ansh's new cookbook, *Pesach – Anything's Possible* (Targum Press), which adds the requisite nostalgia factor. How well I remember my grandma making her own soup noodles very much like these.

This is Ansh's second Passover cookbook (*A Taste of Tradition: Pesach and Beyond* was the first), and she is also the author of the authoritative and well-received *A Taste of Challah*, both published by Feldheim. With *Pesach – Anything's Possible*, she brings her expected flair and creativity to Passover cooking with 350 wheat-free, gluten-free, and non-gebrochts recipes. "Gebrochts is where matzah in any form, even fully baked matzah or matzah meal, could potentially come into contact with water or other liquids," explains Rebbetzin Sarah Meisels in the foreword. "The communities who follow this minhag [custom] do not eat this on the first seven days of Pesach."

With dietary guidelines, special family customs and endless meals to prepare, cooking for Passover is often a daunting chore. Ansh's recipes, ranging from basic to gourmet, will resolve those dilemmas: Salmon Gefilte Fish, Pomegranate Chicken, Dairy Delights to serve all week like Eggplant Parmesan and Banana-Sweet Potato Soufflé, 34 kugels alone, including Tri-Layered Vegetable Kugel, Sweet Potato-to-Apple Tsimmes Kugel and Rebbetizin Meisel's Apple Blintz Kugel, and a tempting assortment of luscious desserts, including a rolled Chocolate Mousse Cake and Strawberry Shortcake. According to Ansh, with Passover, "anything is possible."

LILLIAN BART'S BEST CHICKEN SOUP

While her exact ingredients would vary as the mood hit her, here is her recipe from a typical day.

2 chickens (3 1/2 to 4 lb. each) with giblets (no liver), quartered
2 pounds carrots (yes, 2 lb., not 2 carrots)
2 large onions, cut in half
5 large ribs celery with leaves, cut in half
2 large parsnips
1 small sweet potato (6 oz.), cut in half
1 turnip (6 oz.), cut in half
1 rutabaga (6 oz.), cut in half
1 small celery root, cut in half (optional)
1/2 large green bell pepper, stemmed and seeded
1/2 large yellow pepper, stemmed and seeded
2 large bunches dill, coarsely chopped (about 1½ cups)
1/2 bunch curly-leaf parsley (about ¼ cup)
3 cloves garlic
kosher (coarse) salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
chopped dill, for serving (optional)

Place chicken in 16-quart stockpot and add water to barely cover. Bring just to boiling point. Reduce heat to simmer and skim off foam on top. Add remaining ingredients (except the optional chopped dill) and only enough water to come within about two thirds of height of chicken and vegetables in pot. Most recipes tell you to add water to cover. Do not do this! You want elixir of the gods or weak tea? As soup cooks, vegetables will shrink and will be covered soon enough. Simmer, covered, until chicken is cooked through, about 1-1/2 hours.

Remove chicken and about half the carrots, and set aside.

Continued on page 49

Toronto Kosher

PASSOVER 2014
PREPARED MENU

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Soup (1 LITRE)
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Matzah Balls (6 PIECES) $5.99
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Grilled Chicken Thigh $16.99 lb
BBQ Chicken Wings $8.27 lb
Stuffed Chicken Breast $10.99 ea
Stuffed Chicken Leg $11.99 ea
Sweet and Sour Chicken $13.89 lb

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Mushroom matzah balls go well with soup

Continued from page 48

Strain soup through a fine-mesh strainer into another pot or container, pressing on the vegetables to extract all the flavour. Scrape the underside of the strainer with a rubber spatula and add pulp to soup. Discard fibrous vegetable membranes that remain in strainer. If you're fussy about clarity (and we're not), strain again through fine tea strainer, but there goes some of the flavour. (See Note.) Cover the soup and refrigerate overnight.

When ready to serve, scoop congealed fat off surface and discard. Reheat, adding more dill if desired (and we do). Slice reserved carrots, add to soup, and serve. Take bows. Yield: About 3 quarts

Note: Wait! This just in! Last time I made the soup, I took all the itty-bitty vegetable particles from the second straining and put them in the blender with a little soup. This lighter mixture when mixed with the whole pot of soup isn't really noticeable, but the flavour… oh, my!

Source: *Cooking Jewish* (Workman) by Judy Bart Kancigor

SHIITAKE MUSHROOM MATZAH BALLS

I doctored up plain old matzah ball mix – and a fine product it is! – with shiitake mushrooms and scallions for a shtetl favourite with an Asian twist. (Not surprising. Jews have had a long love affair with Chinese food!) Go ahead and double or even triple the recipe (and you may have to), but be careful not to crowd the pot when you are cooking them.

1/4 cup melted chicken fat or vegetable oil
4 scallions, white and half the green part, thinly sliced
3 oz. shiitake mushrooms, stems discarded, finely chopped (1 to 1½ cups)
1 envelope matzah ball mix, such as Manischewitz
1/2 cup matzah meal
4 large eggs, lightly beaten
2 tbsp. finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
1 tsp. kosher (coarse) salt
1/8 tsp. white pepper
1 tsp. baking powder (see Notes)
2 tbsp. club soda, chicken broth, or water

Heat the chicken fat in a medium-size saucepan over medium heat. Add the scallions and mushrooms and cook, stirring often, until the mushrooms are soft, about 5 minutes. Set aside.

Combine the matzah ball mix with the matzah meal in a medium-size bowl. Add the eggs and mix well. Stir in the mushroom mixture (with the oil), parsley, salt, white pepper and baking powder. Add the club soda and mix thoroughly. Cover and refrigerate until firm, at least 1 hour.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and lightly salt it.

Form the mixture into balls that are a little larger than a marble, wetting your hands if necessary to keep them from sticking. Drop the balls into the boiling water and cook, covered, at a slow, steady boil (not a hard boil) until tender, about 30 minutes (depending on the size of the balls).

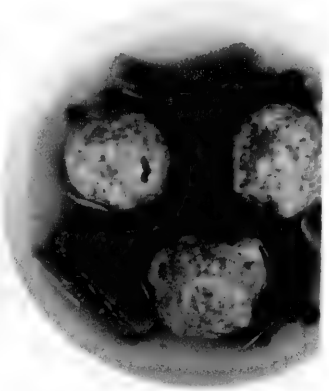
Carefully remove the matzah balls with a slotted spoon, and serve in soup.

Notes: For Passover use kosher-for-Passover baking powder, or if unavailable, it may be omitted.

You will find that after cooking these matzah balls, the cooking liquid is so flavourful, it is almost a soup in itself, particularly if you have used chicken fat. I use this broth instead of water in soups and stews and for cooking rice.

Makes 24 to 30 golf-ball-size balls

Source: *Cooking Jewish*



LOKSHEN

4 eggs
1/4 cup potato starch
1/3 cup water

Beat all ingredients together until as smooth as possible. Refrigerate a few hours. Remove any bubbles from top of mixture before frying.

Heat some oil in a frying pan, or use nonstick pan, over medium-high heat. When oil is hot, pour in some batter, and rotate pan, spreading batter evenly around pan. Fry about a minute. As blintz begins to curl, flip it out onto plate. Continue making blintz leaves with remaining batter.

Roll up the pile of egg blintzes and cut into thin strips. Serve in hot soup.

Serves 8-10.

Source: *Pesach-Anything's Possible* by Tamar Ansh

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Let the kids help cook for the holiday

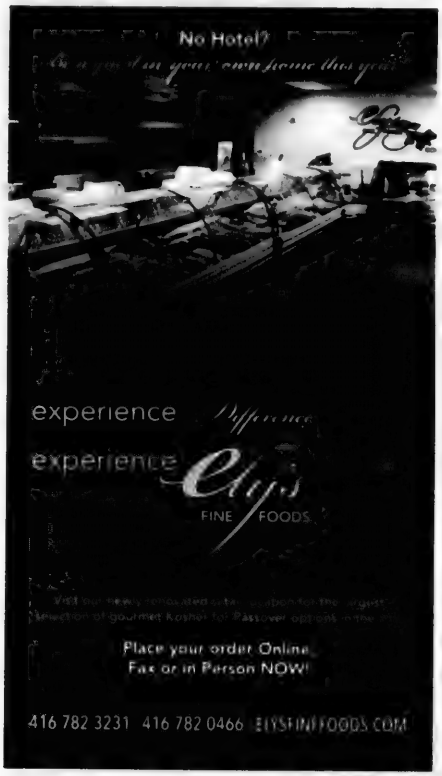
Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

Israeli cookbook author Tamar Ansh is a busy mom who loves to write, cook, bake, read and chat with her kids. Since her kids have recently taken over the kitchen, Tamar decided to share what they do with her readers. Her latest cookbook is cleverly titled *Let My Children Cook! A Passover Cookbook for Kids*. Ansh makes it easy for kids to share in the fun of cooking – at a time of year when parents can really use a little help. Kids will also discover how to cook delicious food on their own.

Let My Children Cook! contains over 80 delicious and easy Passover recipes with step-by-step instructions, and is geared to kids age eight and up.

There are many creative menu and presentation ideas specifically for young kids. Each recipe comes with an icon that indicates whether the food is meat, dairy or pareve. Colourful illustrations appear throughout the book, many of which teach important lessons, such as washing your hands before cooking, cleaning up when finished – and "put your pot of cooking food on the back burner and turn the pot handles toward the back."

The author has also included an arts and crafts section with four fun projects, including making Passover aprons and placemats for the seders.



CHEESY MATZAH PIE

6-7 squares matzahs
5 eggs
1 cup milk
2 cups cottage cheese
1/3 cup sugar
3/4 tsp. salt
3 tbsp. butter, melted
1 tsp. cinnamon

Beat the eggs and milk together in a bowl. Add the cottage cheese, sugar, salt and melted butter. Mix again.

Grease a 2-quart casserole or baking dish. Preheat the oven to 350.

Break the matzahs into medium-sized pieces. Arrange part of them in one flat layer on the bottom of the baking dish.

Pour some of the cottage cheese mixture over the matzah. Place the rest of the matzah pieces on top and then pour the rest of the cottage cheese mix over the matzah. Depending on the size of your baking dish, you may have enough matzah pieces and cheese mix for either two or three layers. The top layer should be the cheese mixture.

Sprinkle cinnamon all over the top of the "pie."

Slide your matzah pie into the hot oven and let it bake for 35-40 minutes, until it is set. Serve as is, or topped with sliced peaches or your favourite jam.

ROCKY ROAD BROWNIES

4 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
1 cup margarine or 1 cup oil
1 1/2 cups sugar
4 eggs
1 cup matzah cake meal
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup chocolate chips
2 cups mini marshmallows
1 cup walnuts, chopped
Topping:
1 cup mini marshmallows
1/2 cup chocolate chips
1/2 cup walnuts, coarsely ground

Preheat the oven to 325. Prepare a 9x13-in. pan by lining it with parchment paper or spraying it well with cooking oil spray.

Melt the chopped chocolate and margarine in a double boiler and stir well. Stir in the sugar. Cool slightly.

Whisk in the eggs one at a time. Stir in the cake meal and salt, and remove the pot from the heat. Stir in the chocolate chips, marshmallows and walnuts.

Pour this batter into the prepared baking pan and bake for 30 minutes or until set. Remove the pan from the oven and sprinkle the brownies with the additional cup of marshmallows.

Slide the tray back into the oven and bake 3-4 minutes more, until the marshmallows are puffed. Remove the pan from the oven and melt the second set of chocolate chips. Drizzle the melted chips all over the brownies and then sprinkle them, while the chocolate is still wet, with the last bit of ground nuts. Cut into squares and serve.

CRUNCHY CHICKEN CRISPS

Tamar Ansh's kids have friends who make chicken like this and have been asking me for ages to do it with them too. What a treat!

4 chicken legs, each cut in half so you have 4 drumsticks and 4 thighs
1/2 cup matzah meal or potato starch
1 tbsp. garlic powder
1 tbsp. onion powder
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1 tbsp. paprika
1 tsp. parsley flakes
1 large bag potato chips
4 eggs
cooking oil spray

And here's how you do it!

Wash off the chicken legs and take the skin off each one. Pat them dry and place them on a plate. Preheat the oven to 375.

Place the matzah meal (or potato starch) and all the spices into a bowl. Mix together with a fork.

Put all the eggs into another bowl, and beat them lightly with a fork.

In another bowl, crush the potato chips into very small pieces.

Spray a large baking pan with cooking oil spray. Dip each chicken piece into the matzah meal mix with the spices, then the egg, and then the potato chips. Lay it down in the pan and continue until all the chicken pieces have been double-coated.

Any matzah meal crumbs and/or potato chip crumbs that are left over must be thrown out. They had raw chicken dipped into them and cannot be eaten! Don't lick your fingers after dipping them into the potato chip crumbs. Wash your hands off really well after handling raw chicken.

Spray the chicken pieces with the cooking oil spray to coat. Slide the pan into the oven and bake for 50-60 minutes until the chicken is fork-tender. Do not overbake.

If you want to kick things up a bit, you can add 1 tsp. cayenne pepper into the spice and matzah meal mix.

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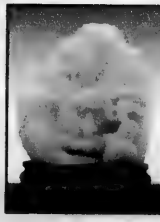

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Copyright infringement alleged over book

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

A documentary film producer and two of her colleagues are suing a Toronto investment manager and her publisher for copyright infringement over a book they say incorporates large swathes of material from their film.

Judy Maltz, Lisa Bird and Richie Sherman are asking for $3 million in damages from Jenny Witterick, who wrote the award-winning book *My Mother's Secret*, as well as from Penguin Books Canada. The filmmakers say the book lifts entire passages from their 2009 documentary, *No. 4 Street of Our Lady*.

"I've done nothing wrong and will be defending this case," said Witterick, founder and CEO of Sky Investment Counsel, a Toronto investment firm with approximately $1.8 billion in assets.

The film is based on a true story involving Maltz's grandparents, her father, and other members of their family who were hidden from the Nazis during World War II in a Polish woman's barn.

According to legal documents filed in Federal Court, "The [film] is a documentary based upon the true story of Franciszka Halamajowa, a Polish-Catholic woman who rescued 15 of her Jewish neighbors during the Holocaust in the small town of Sokal, then in eastern Poland and now in Ukraine, while cleverly passing herself off as a Nazi sympathizer.

"Amongst those saved by Halamajowa were Maltz's grandparents and father, two aunts and an uncle. Prior to the release of the [documentary film], this story was virtually unknown, recorded only in the posthumously published diary of the late Moshe Maltz who was one of those rescued by Halamajowa," the court documents say.

According to the court documents, Witterick viewed the film at a screening in November 2011 at Congregation Habonim during the annual Holocaust Education Week in Toronto.

Within a year and a half, Witterick had self-published her book, which received favourable reviews.

Penguin picked it up and it has subsequently been published internationally.

According to court documents filed by Maltz, who is also a senior correspondent for the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, "With the exception of certain limited fictional aspects... the plot of [Witterick's] book is almost identical to that of the [film]."

The court documents outline a number of areas that overlap in the book and the film, including the actual names of the Polish heroines, the story of a German defector whom they sheltered, the hiding of some of the Jews in the pigsty above her hayloft and others in a hole dug under the kitchen floor.

"The tragic events that befall the Jewish families before they manage to find refuge with the Polish mother and daughter are a key part of the dramatic build-up in the [film], as they are in the book," state the court documents. "Many of the creative devices that the [filmmakers] used to design the narrative of the [film] and to illustrate the personality traits of the main characters are also incorporated in the book."

Witterick, however, told *The CJN* that "all the characters in the book are fictional because I created them."

A Taiwanese-Canadian who immigrated at age eight, Witterick said she has long been interested in the Holocaust. She lives among Jews and her son's best friends are Jewish.

"I could never understand why people didn't like Jewish people. I've always been really interested in the Holocaust. I myself am a child of immigrants, and I understand what it's like to be on the outside and being an underdog. So this kind of Holocaust story really resonates with me."

Witterick said she self-published the book and donated all its revenues to a number of charities.

When Penguin agreed to publish it, she donated 100 per cent of the advance to charities.

"My objective was never to make money on this book. My objective was to write a book to help young people understand what happened in the Holocaust," she said.

The case has yet to be heard in court.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Helene Rudolph	**Mar 6/14**	**25 Montclair Road**
Sarah Lambert	**Mar 6/14**	**645 Castlefield Avenue**
Melvin Wise	**Mar 6/14**	**40 Rosehill Avenue**
Nathan Max Goldman	**Mar 7/14**	**9 York Downs Drive**
Michael Elliot Rossman	**Mar 6/14**	
Toby Kudlow	**Mar 8/14**	**133 Torresdale Avenue**
Kyle Brandon Traves	**Mar 7/14**	**10 Theobalds Circle**
Bernard Fratkin	**Mar 7/14**	**75 Wynford Drive**
Bess Stuart	**Mar 8/14**	**3560 Bathurst Street**
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Leo Klausner	**Mar 11/14**	**3900 Yonge Street**
Elizabeth Weiss	**Mar 12/14**	**25 Wilket Road**
Izzie (Jack) Kowal	**Mar 14/14**	**67 King's Cross Avenue**
Selma Silver	**Mar 13/14**	**3600 Yonge Street**
Tom Solomon	**Mar 13/14**	**515 Chaplin Crescent**
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HEBREW DASIC

Gerald Berley	**Mar 6/14**	**4 Elm Residence**
Necha Kulman	**Mar 8/14**	**247 Vaughan Road**
Stuart Gosewitz	**Mar 7/14**	**156 Creekwood Drive**

ROSENGARTEN, Bertha - We sadly announce the passing of Bertha Rosengarten in hospital, on Wednesday, March 19th, 2014. Married just shy of 68 years, the beloved wife of William Rosengarten, loving mother of Roz Tobias, Linda Rosengarten, Rob Rose, and Leonard Luksenberg. She dearly loved her grandchildren Heather Tobias, Moe Luksenberg, and is predeceased by Barry Luksenberg. Predeceased by her wonderful brother Moishe Freedman and sister-in-law Grace Freedman, and Bertha's parents David and Bella Freedman. She will be greatly missed by her adored nieces and nephews. She held a special place for Rob's children and Roz and Robs' grandchildren. Her caregiver, Sheryll Corrales has been a great help, particularly to Bertha's needs in these last difficult days. Bertha will always be remembered for the attentive care she gave to her Velvu and family.
At Benjamin's Park Memorial Chapel, 2401 Steeles Avenue West (3 lights west of Dufferin) for service on Friday, March 21, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. Interment Stashover Young Mens Section of Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park. Shiva Private. Memorial donations may be made to Bertha and William Rosengarten Endowment Fund c/o Baycrest, 416-785-2875 or www.baycrest.org/donations or to Beit Halochem Canada, 905-695-0611.

Noisy BDS doomsayers are bound to fail

Brian Thomas
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — I've just returned to Israel from the snow-covered, arctic wastes of the northeastern United States and Canada. As the Beatles once said, "Gee, it's good to be back home."

But oh what fun it was to be abroad, to represent Israel and to invite all and sundry to visit Israel and hear their reactions.

As I've explained before, there seems to be a push to make Israelis fearful that we're facing some kind of avalanche of isolation from the outside world. To scare us into believing unless we change our ways, nobody will like us any more. Somehow we're made to believe Israeli lives will be embittered by the concerted boycott, disinvestment and sanctions (BDS) movement. What a load of rubbish.

A long time ago, I wrote how a random security checkpoint delayed my return home from a concert. Just another minor inconvenience that all of us here in Israel suffer from time to time. We don't really whine about it like others would.

But sometimes good things come of these security checks: last year at the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly in Jerusalem, I found myself queuing at the security checkpoint for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech alongside Audrey Jacobs, OurCrowd's vice-president for business development. Having previously worked with Israeli advocacy group StandWithUs, she knew of my writing and invited me to an OurCrowd event at the King David Hotel.

OurCrowd is a little over a year old and allows individual accredited investors worldwide to identify, research and invest in Israel's leading startups. They are a merger of the best bits of a publicly accessible crowd funding platform like KickStarter, individual angel investing and a fully fledged venture capital fund. At the end of their first year, they'd already invested more than $35 million (US) in more than 30 Israeli start-up firms.

So when I saw they would be holding an event in New York while I was in town, I signed up. The event was beautifully organized and held at the law offices of Greenberg Traurig LLP, in the iconic Met Life building right above Grand Central Terminal. Greenberg Traurig was keen to stress the firm's commitment to helping Israeli companies with international legal work.

OurCrowd's founder, Jon Medved, fresh from a number of speeches at AIPAC, introduced OurCrowd to a range of both existing investors and people new to the whole concept. Presentations from firms currently raising money followed. They included a security company that fights cyber threats using cognitive behavioural profiling, a software company for managing big data and clouds for enterprises and mobile platform for the conference world. The big data company is notable as OurCrowd is beginning to expand beyond Israeli companies. Others clearly appreciate Israeli help with their fundraising.

A soldier of the IDF's elite Unit 8200 during training. Members of the unit often go on to develop valuable software products in the private sector. *(Flash 90 photo)*

I spoke with many people attending. Some were Jews, some were non-Jews, but all were absolutely positive Israel is the place to turn to for exciting growth and development. This was a room buzzing with positive energy toward the Jewish state from people who feel there is a torrent of positive ideas flowing out of the land. Clearly, only fools would boycott Israel, and to their own very great detriment.

The security company, in particular, stood out as yet another brilliant new idea in computer security stemming from Israel's dominance in the field. Of course, the founders of the firm got their start in the Israel Defence Forces' ultra elite signals intelligence unit, 8200. Their ideas and software for protecting online login identity could rapidly sweep the industry and foil fraudsters.

The overwhelmingly positive feeling toward Israel extended to other spheres. I like to tell people I'm from Israel and see their reaction. I always encourage people to come and visit. On this trip, as is often the case, I encountered very few negative reactions. I know the negative is out there, but I don't seek it and it rarely finds me.

Today's anti-Israel boycott is the runt-child of the state-level Arab boycott of the late 1960s and '70s. As this crumbled or became irrelevant, it was replaced by a rag-tag bunch of street theatre artists who happened to have well-financed political and media backing.

There is a small core of BDS zealots who falsely conflate pluralistic, democratic Israel with apartheid South Africa. They've been doing this so long that they're drinking their own Kool-Aid. Their attempt to break Israel through an economic, cultural and academic boycott is doomed, because the existence of a Jewish Israel is just and incomparable to the old South Africa.

Moreover, South Africa was a commodity exporter in the 1970s and its products were easily replaceable.

Modern Israel exports high-tech knowledge. Whether it's in the pure intellectual realm of chip designs, mobile device applications or ultra sophisticated medical devices, Israel's exports are not interchangeable with products from anywhere else.

Israel's exports are often key drivers of competitive advantage for those business and military customers who purchase them. There are usually no comparable substitutes, and choosing not to trade with Israel is more likely to harm the boycotter than Israel.

It's clear the benefits of trade with Israel are too great for anyone sane to overlook. And even if we're led to believe the European Union foreign policy team wants to punish Israel – while embarrassing itself smiling with the Iranian terror overlords – individual EU countries, companies and people can't bring themselves to turn down the benefits of working with Israel.

No matter how I look at it, the massive noise generated by global PR campaigns against Israel is not widely matched by negative feelings on the ground, especially in North America. So many people either have no firm views or are easily swayed by the positive stuff that flows from Israel.

This is not the time to give up on our beliefs and sink into a funk. Israel is a gift to the world, and I know the doomsayers are lying.

Brian Thomas made aliyah from Britain in 2009 and owns a business in Israel.

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Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS) is a multi-service social service agency supporting the needs of the Jewish and broader communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and York Region. Our client-centred services focus on three outcome areas:

Increasing Safety and Security, Improving Mental Health and Wellness and Reducing the Effects of Poverty. We are mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services as a Children's Aid Society for all Jewish children and families in the GTA.

Jewish Family & Child seeks a Director of Programs commencing May 2014.
The Director will serve as a member of the Agency's senior management team in a decision-making and leadership role with reference to all programs and services. The incumbent will play an active role in Jewish Family & Child's management of strategic change, emphasizing client-centred service and community impact. Responsibilities include planning, directing and management of the delivery of the Agency's client services from intake through case management to client outcomes.

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If you are interested in applying, please submit your resume no later than Wednesday April 2, 2014 to resumes@jfandcs.com. No phone calls please.
——> Emails should reference Director of Programs in the subject line.

To learn more about JF&CS, please visit www.jfandcs.com

Jewish Family & Child is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in employment. We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only those considered for an interview will be contacted.

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Unsubtle prescription for a complex problem

Views & Reviews
Martin Lockshin

How to Be Secular: A Call to Arms for Religious Freedom
by Jacques Berlinerblau

Recent events in our country, particularly the government of Quebec's promotion of its so-called "charter of values," have caused many Canadians to think about the proper relationship between government and religion. I hoped *How to Be Secular: A Call to Arms for Religious Freedom*, by Jacques Berlinerblau, professor at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., might shed some theoretical light on the place of religion in the west. Unfortunately, it didn't help much.

I liked the way Berlinerblau lays out the historical background of the problem. He gives a cogent summary of the history of the separation of church and state in the United States. The American founders, with the possible exception of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, were not strongly committed to the idea of separation. They were in favour of religious freedom, but for most of them that meant founding a Christian country where all denominations of Protestant Christianity would feel at home.

They agreed that no one branch of Protestant Christianity should be the officially established religion of the country, but some of the founders and their followers, for a few decades, and perhaps beyond, saw no problem with the possibility that a smaller unit, like one of the individual states of the union, might have an established religious identity. When the United States (and for that matter, Canada) was born, no one would have wanted all levels of government to separate themselves from all manifestations of religion.

The heyday of separation of church and state in the United States was, Berlinerblau explains, from the 1940s to the 1970s. The Supreme Court at the time took on an activist role, broadly interpreting the idea that religion should not be established, and outlawing such things as school prayer, which the founders and almost all Americans for the first two centuries had considered part of the fabric of American society. Here in Canada, too, school prayer – generally *The Lord's Prayer*, (Matthew 6:9-13, a prayer introduced by Jesus' words, "Pray then like this") – was an integral part of our allegedly non-denominational public school system.

No doubt, Jews and members of other minority groups have benefitted from the mid-20th-century move toward more separation of church and state, and view this as an advance. Berlinerblau is concerned that right-wing Christian forces in the United States are trying to undo these advances and return religion to a prominent place in the public sphere. His book is an action plan to combat this by rallying forces that support a secular worldview.

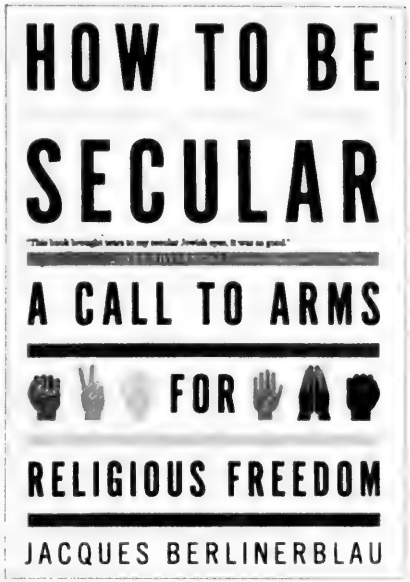
But Berlinerblau's conception of the ideal state is never made clear in this book. Just how much separation between church and state does he desire? Should Christmas (in the United States and Canada) and Good Friday (here in Canada) stop being civic holidays? Should we adopt the French *laicité* model, now being promoted in Quebec, and not allow anyone representing or paid by the government to display prominent religious symbols? Should we stop allowing tax breaks for people who contribute money to churches and synagogues, because such tax breaks are, without a doubt, a way that government supports religious institutions? I was hoping to find some subtle distinctions in this book, but all I found was the claim that more separation of church and state is better than less.

Since the back cover of the book lists Berlinerblau as director of Georgetown University's Program for Jewish Civilization, I had been hoping for some insight into Jews, Judaism, and the question of church and state, but I was disappointed. He does discuss Jews in the United States, expressing the hope that if other religions learned from Judaism, there would be less of a problem of religion in the public square. He notes that a large percentage of Jews define themselves as secular and wishes that members of other religious groups would follow that model. He argues that being religious, on the one hand, and being secular or supporting a secular worldview, on the other, are not mutually exclusive.

It is true that many Jews call themselves secular, even though they identify as Jewish, but that's because Jewish identity need not be religious – it can be national, cultural or ethnic. The latest survey of U.S. Jews by the Pew Religion and Public Life Research Project reports that almost one one-third of American Jews born after 1980 refer to themselves as "Jews of no religion." But this may be unique to Judaism. Just because being a "secular Jew" is possible does not mean that being a "secular Lutheran" or a "secular Sikh" is.

Berlinerblau's hope that more people in the United States start to identify as "secular" the way so many Jews do is ultimately just a code for the hope that more people in the United States exclude religion from their lives or, at least, make it peripheral to their core values. In the end, his hoped-for solution to the problem boils down to the obvious point: if fewer people in the United States take religion seriously, there will be fewer problems of religion and state. This is not a subtle solution to the complex problem.

Berlinerblau's fear of right-wing Christians trying to de-secularize the United States is well placed. But we will have to await a more carefully reasoned and creative book to really grapple with the appropriate place of religion in modern western countries.



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The Bible and/as History:
Archaeological and Textual Perspectives
Professor Avraham Faust, Bar-Ilan University, "Archaeology and Biblical History: Israel and the Philistines"
Professor Christoph Levin, University of Munich, "The Bible as History"
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YORK UNIVERSITY

Telling a different kind of Jewish story

Rita Poliakov
Special to The CJN

Steven Bergson was five years old when he picked up his first comic book. It didn't take long until he was hooked.

"Once I came across a comic, I wanted more. [I liked] the colourful superheroes, the super powered good guys beating up the bad guys," said Bergson, a former librarian who never lost his appreciation for comics and graphic novels. "I still read superhero comics sometimes."

As he got older, Bergson, a research administrator at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, began reading an array of comics, including Jewish-themed graphic novels.

"I found it was unusual for them to be out there," he said of Jewish comics like *Maus* by Art Spiegelman and *To the Heart of the Storm*, by Will Eisner. "There's a lot more out there than there used to be. I think people are more aware of the new stuff, not the old stuff."

Around seven years ago, Bergson first had the idea to create a Jewish comic anthology – a collection that would bring older Jewish comics together with new stories. But he quickly learned the idea was easier said than done.

"I started with an American Jewish publisher. I essentially got a rejection," he said.

After many years and different publishers, Bergson came across an article in *The CJN* last October about Andy Stanleigh of Alternate History Comics, which publishes comics and graphic novels. When approached, Stanleigh was more than just intrigued.

"I said, 'Hey, why would anybody pass this up?' (Bergson) has been working on it for the last five or six years. He had the titles and the artists that he wanted to include," said Stanleigh. "He basically handed it off to me."

To fund the project, called *The Jewish Comix Anthology: Volume 1*, Stanleigh turned to the crowdfunding site Kickstarter, where his fundraising goal of $50,000 was surpassed by more than $2,000.

While Bergman was surprised by the funds, Stanleigh wasn't.

"I knew it was going to be a really nice, wide-reaching thing," he said.

The project, which should be ready for print in May and released in June, is a mix of newly commissioned stories and older works that are being republished.

Comics from artists like Spiegelman, Eisner, Michael Netzer and Robert Crumb will be included in the anthology, along with a story written by Bergson about a Jew who finds a clever way of dealing with anti-Semitism.

One of the stories included is a little-known piece of Jewish folklore written several centuries ago. The tale is about a modest Jewish virgin who is kidnapped by her city's ruler. When asked why, the ruler explains that he's infatuated with her because of her beautiful eyes. In an effort to keep her virginity, the girl asks to get ready for the ruler in a private room, where she gouges out her eyes. After handing them off to the ruler, she's finally sent home.

While the story is dark, Bergson enjoyed its irony.

"I think the fact that it was ever told at all and the fact that it seems to no longer be discussed tells us something about Jewish storytelling," he said.

Two Brothers **by Haiwei-Hou is one of several comics by Jewish artists included in the upcoming Jewish Comix Anthology. For more information visit www.jewishcomicsanthology.com.**

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Actress enjoys racy role in *50 Shades!* musical

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

New York-based actress Alexis Field says she is called upon to do some pretty wild things in *50 Shades! The Musical – The Original Parody*, playing at Toronto's St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, Bluma Appel Theatre from April 1 to 13.

"One of the craziest things I do is racy and I do it right out in the audience," Field says. "One night my brother was two feet away from me. He was a little shocked but he was laughing."

Field – who wouldn't say what the particular "racy thing" is – says she has since embraced it and it is now her favourite part of the show because she says she fully commits to it and doesn't worry about looking silly or making people feel uncomfortable.

50 Shades! The Musical opens with a ladies book club deciding to read *Fifty Shades of Grey*, the popular erotic book by E L James. The show features 11 original songs including *They Get Nasty I Don't Make Love*, and *There's a Hole Inside of Me*.

"*50 Shades* is a musical parody where you experience the book through the eyes of three book club ladies," Field says. The book is about the transformation of Anastasia Steele, who is a young, recent graduate of college, as she finds her sexual identity through Christian Grey.

Field plays two characters, one of them is Bev, one of the book club ladies.

"I would say that Bev is in the middle of the spectrum. One lady, Pam, is a little more of a risk taker sexually and you have Carol who really hasn't figured anything out for herself yet. Bev's this loveable character who you just feel sorry for through a good portion of the show," she says.

"Bev is kind of a mixture of both of those women. She might have tried out a few things with her husband but she's a novice when it comes to her own sexual freedom and expression. You see all three of these women go through their own transformation as they read the book. They kind of act as a Greek chorus – or narrators – they're the link between the story and the audience members."

Field also plays Katherine Cavanaugh, who in the book is Anastasia's studious best friend. In this production, she's a drunken sorority girl gone completely wrong.

"One of the greatest things about this show is it is so funny. I have never heard laughter like this from an audience before," she says. "And, I think laughter is the best medicine for everything and you are sure to get a whole lot of that in this show. You will be shocked too, it is very racy but you are going to have a blast, even if you haven't read the book. You might even learn a thing or two that you might want to take into the bedroom."

Alexis Field

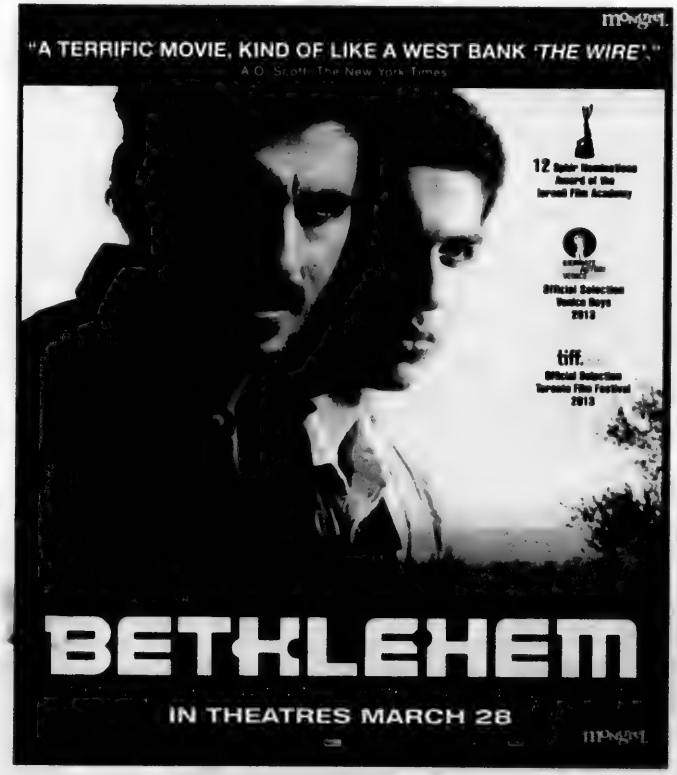
Field is joined on stage by Tiffany Dissette, BJ Gruber, Eileen Patterson, Nick Semar, Sheila O'Connor, Datus Puryear, Jack Boice and Caroline Reade, along with a live band.

Field, who was born in Los Angeles and raised in Boca Raton, Fla. grew up going to Jewish day school and attending her local JCC. She sang in the synagogue and led services at school. She even contemplated being a cantor.

"Singing has always been important to me because singing is my way of connecting to my Jewish identity and my way of connecting to something greater than myself. When I act and sing onstage, it is not going to mean anything unless there is something going on internally and I am connecting. One of the first ways I was able to do that was in synagogue. My theatrical training was actually through the Jewish Community Center and Jewish day school."

She enjoys yoga and loves to play the ukulele which she brought with her to Toronto. Her other theatre credits include *The Spitfire Grill* and *Speech & Debate*.

50 Shades comes to Toronto after enjoying sold out runs in Chicago, New York and the Edinburgh Film Festival. Tickets can be purchased at St. Lawrence Centre box office, online: ticketmaster.ca; or 1-855-899-STLC (7852). For more show information visit www.50shadesthemusical.com.



EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

YORKVILLE GALLERY PRESENTS EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY LATE SCULPTOR SOREL ETROG

Toronto sculptor **Sorel Etrog**, who passed away in February at the age of 80, is the focus of a new exhibition at the Mayberry Fine Art Gallery, 110 Yorkville Ave. "Having learned of Etrog's death while preparing for the exhibition, it is truly an honour to be mounting an exhibition of his work when so many people are reflecting on his career," said curator Merete Lewis.

Etrog was a member of the Order of Canada and France's Chevalier dans L'ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and his works are included in major galleries across Canada and internationally. *Sorel Etrog: Connection and Continuity* is on view from April 5 to 27. You'll easily spot the Mayberry Gallery: it's the one with the Sorel Etrog sculpture out front. www.mayberryfineart.com

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Honor Diaries: "Culture is no excuse for abuse." Spurred by the so-called "Arab Spring," *Honor Diaries* is a documentary film in which nine women's rights advocates with connections to Muslim-majority societies speak out on gender-inequality issues such as freedom of movement, the right to education, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The film receives a Toronto-area screening at Colossus Woodbridge, Famous Players Cineplex, 3555 Highway 7 W. at Highway 400, Vaughan, Sunday March 30, 10 a.m. www.honordiaries.com

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Names in the News: Some 70 young Jewish artists from around the world gathered in Garrison, N.Y for the Asylum Arts International Jewish Artist Retreat, a new endeavour launched with the support of the Schusterman Philanthropic Network. Participants include Tunisian-Israeli photographer **Rafram Chaddad**; European-American **Menachem Kaiser** who created "reVilna," an interactive map of the Vilna ghetto; Colombian musician **Joel Waldman**; Hungarian documentarian **Ildiko Hermann**; and American transgender musician **Itai Gal**.

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Arts in Brief

• Canadian Jewish female artists **Briga**, **Jessica Hana Deutsch** and **Tamar Ilana** and their bands perform a variety of traditional and original music including Roma, Flamenco, Celtic, Balkan, Ashkenazi and Sephardic. $15, $20. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. March 30, doors open 7 p.m., show 8 p.m. www.brownpapertickets.com/event/592540

• **David Levine** discusses *Back to the Drawing Board– Graphic Novels on Films* with clips from *Waltz with Bashir*, *American Splendor* and other films. $12 drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday March 31, 7 to 9 p.m.

• Opera educator **Iain Scott** presents the final lecture in his series "Opera Appreciation: Viva Puccini!," focusing on *Turandot*. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday April 1, 1:30 p.m. Drop-in $14.

• In his two-part lecture "From the Goldbergs to the Goldbergs: How Jews Helped Shape Television Comedy," actor **Jack Newman** looks at the many Jewish writers and comedians who influenced television comedy from the classic 1950s sitcom *The Goldbergs* to the current hit *The Goldbergs*. With television clips. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursdays April 3 and April 10, doors open 1 p.m. Drop-in $4. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• **Dr. Miriam Trinh** speaks on "Poetry from the Ghettos and Concentration Camps," a discussion of writings reflecting the experiences of ordinary Jews in harrowing times. Free lecture in English, co-presented by UJA Federation Committee for Yiddish and the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday April 7, 7 p.m.

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At the Galleries

• Art history teacher **Osnat Lippa** presents "Treasure of the Guggenheim," a lecture on the movements of expressionism, futurism and cubism in the wake of World War I, highlighting the works of **Franz Marc**, **Kandinsky**, **Chagall**, **Picasso**, **Mondrian** and more as featured in the recent AGO exhibit. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesdays April 8 and April 29, 1 p.m. Series $20, drop-in $12. Registration, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• *Duets, Portraits of Aging and the Art of Care* is an exhibit of photographs by **Debra Friedman** showing glimpses of humour and intimacy between caregivers and their clients. Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until April 22.

• "The Forbidden City: Inside the Court of China's Emperors" presents 250 treasures of Chinese imperial life. At the Royal Ontario Museum until Sept. 1.

• • •

Out of Town: The exhibit *Discovery and Rediscovery: Preserving Iraqi Jewish Heritage* details the dramatic recovery of historic materials related to the Jewish community of Iraq in a flooded basement in Saddam Hussein's intelligence headquarters. Organized by the US National Archives, the exhibit is on view at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place, Manhattan, through May 18. www.mjhnyc.org

***Solo* by Sorel Etrog. The Mayberry Fine Art Gallery is launching an exhibit of the late sculptor's work from April 5 to 27.**

Most consular services were suspended

Continued from page 1

Our consular services were also suspended, except for life-threatening situations or burials in Israel.

While the soft arts of networking, persuasion and letters have often taken a back seat in the Israeli imagination to the very genuine military heroics that have safeguarded our country, a full telling of our history would include countless examples of tenacious and deft diplomacy, advocacy and international alliance-building, without which Israel would not be the success story that it is today.

Through the decades, the unsung heroes of Israel's diplomatic corps have secured agreements, scuppered hostile initiatives, created diplomatic and economic opportunities, and built partnerships and alliances, each of which has made a concrete contribution to our country's standing and its ability to realize fundamental national interests on the international stage.

Indeed, the international support and understanding Israel enjoys today is in no small part the product of our diplomats' unwavering efforts in the public arena and in the corridors of power to present and advance Israel's case, to build empathy and familiarity with our circumstances and forge a crucial appreciation of the shared interests and common values that bind us to the international community and bind that community to us.

In Israel today, there are public voices questioning whether we even need a foreign ministry, yet Israel continues to face immense diplomatic challenges from Iran to the Palestinian issue, terror and more. Even in friendly environments such as Canada, but far more dangerously in Europe and elsewhere, we face an organized assault on Israel's legitimacy designed to turn influential publics into adversaries and enemies. We also face stiff competition for investment and trade opportunities, even as our economic well-being is ever-more irreversibly tied to the global economy.

Meeting all these challenges requires diplomatic deployment of the highest calibre. And this is what Israel's foreign service provides, day in day out.

To underscore the point, try to imagine what Israel's international standing, security and economy would look like today were it not for the work of our diplomats over the last 15 years in handling the international and public diplomacy surrounding the Camp David peace talks of 2000, the so-called second intifadah, the disengagement process, the second Lebanon War, operations Cast Lead and Pillar of Cloud, the Gilad Schalit saga, the Mavi Marmara incident, the Brand Israel campaign, the accession of Israel to the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) and to CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research), the renewal of Israel's membership in the European Union's multibillion-dollar research and development framework, the P5+1 process vis-à-vis the Iranian nuclear program, countless governmental trade delegations from across the world, the international designation of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, the international isolation of Hamas, the Palestinians' 2011 unilateral declaration of independence attempt at the United Nations, the parrying of hostile cases at the International Court of Justice, the constant nurturing and updating of our partnership with the Jewish communities of the world, the outreach to new partners in Asia, Central Asia and Africa, and more.

DJ Schneeweiss

Of course, there is no doubt that many of Israel's international achievements are not the Foreign Ministry's alone. National leaders, other ministries and agencies and local partners, often from amongst our Jewish brethren, all make their contributions. But it is no less true that *none* of these achievements (and so many more) could ever have been secured without the global and local leadership, access, influence and impact that only a dedicated and skilled professional foreign service can provide.

In short, the world would be a far less benign and indeed more dangerous place for Israel than any of us would like if it were not for the efforts of our diplomatic service.

Yet, this is exactly the kind of world that is potentially staring us in the face.

For over a decade now, the salaries of Israel's diplomats serving abroad have not been updated, even just to keep pace with increases in the cost of living. As a result, many diplomats find themselves unable to make ends meet (literally, unable to cover fundamental monthly outlays) and are forced to avoid certain postings or abandon the foreign service altogether in order to survive financially. The Foreign Ministry thus often finds itself unable to fill key middle-ranking positions. The spouses of Israel's diplomats more often than not have to sacrifice their careers as a result of foreign postings, often leaving these families with only one steady income and one pension – a further driver of financial difficulty and mid-career resignations. And then there are all the intangible costs and sacrifices of foreign service – the heightened security risks, the constant dislocation of children, the distance from family and friends, the very real loneliness, not to mention the professional frustrations of never having the budgets or resources to meet the demands and potential of our work (many of our embassies have smaller staffs today than they did a generation ago, despite the explosion in the pace and breadth of our international engagement).

The net effect of these conditions is that Israel's foreign service today is disillusioned, frustrated, bitter and disoriented. We all continue to do our best to fight the good fight, but deep down, there is a real malaise, only made worse by insensitive and hurtful public charges from parts of the government impugning our motives or blithely – and dangerously –presuming that Israel's diplomats play no role in our country's security and well-being.

But that's the half-full side of the equation, the one in which there still are capable, dedicated and experienced diplomats willing to go to bat anew for the country every day.

The real fear, if the current crisis is not resolved and work conditions restored to a fair and reasonable level, is that Israel's diplomatic corps will, in a very few short years, become a mere shell, void of talented or capable people, who – quite reasonably – will seek to fulfil their desire to serve through other avenues. While it will no doubt continue to exist in name and form, the substance of our foreign service, its ability to stymie and pre-empt negative international developments and its ability to identify and realize the potential of positive ones, will continue to erode, leaving a rump that might be able to go through the motions but won't be able to deliver the results the country needs.

Can Israel survive this? Of course. And it will. But whether over time it will continue to thrive as we want and need it to is another matter entirely.

The equation is simple: if Israel's diplomats can't make ends meet, then Israel won't be able to make its international ends meet.

The decision to suspend regular consulate services and efforts to protect and advance Israel's interests here in Canada and around the world was not one we took lightly, and we regret any inconvenience or disappointment that we may be causing. But it is our belief that the fate of Israel's foreign service – and, by extension, the fate of Israel's crucial ability to effectively have an impact on the world around us in the years to come – hangs today in the balance.

That's why we're using every tool at our disposal to save it.

DJ Schneeweiss is the consul general of Israel to Toronto and Western Canada.

Foreign Ministry workers on strike protest outside the Foreign Ministry offices in Jerusalem, on Monday, March 24. ***(Flash90 photo)***

Deadline reminder: Due to Passover, deadlines will change. The deadline for the issue of April 10 is March 31. The deadline for the issue of April 17 is April 1. The deadline for the issue of April 24 is April 7. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 27

KOL ISHA

An evening of song for breast cancer awareness, featuring **Amy Sky, Neshama Carlebach, Theresa Tovah** and more, 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. Call 416-783-6103, ext. 228.

PASSOVER COOKING

Agnes Imani puts a new twist on Passover cooking, Prosserman JCC, 7:30 p.m. $25. RSVP at pjparents.cook.eventbrite.ca.

PURIM AND PASSOVER

Bracha Feder discusses "Pesach Themes in the Torah, Haggadah and Contemporary Texts," 7:30 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Friday, March 28

ISRAELI INNOVATIONS

Rabbi Stephen Wise discusses "Israeli Scientific and Technological Innovations," 8 p.m. at Temple Har Zion.

Saturday, March 29

SHABBAT TIKKUN

Wafik Abadir of the Egyptian Christian Coptic community discusses the violence in his country, Temple Sinai, 10 a.m.

JAZZ HAVDALAH

Beth Torah presents jazz Havdalah with the **Steve Koven Duo,** 8 p.m. RSVP 416-782-4495, ext. 27.

Sunday, March 30

WOMEN'S DAY OF LEARNING

Kehillat Shaarei Torah Synagogue holds its Women's Day of Learning, with speakers **Ilana Rubinstein, Chana Leah Rappaport** and **Chana Goldstein.** $20. RSVP 416-229-2600, ext. 5 or wdol2014@gmail.com.

BOOK LAUNCH

Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich speaks with **Daniel Gordis** about his new book, *Menachem Begin: The Battle for Israel's Soul,* 6 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue.

PJ KIDS COOK

An afternoon of Passover activities, including cooking, story time and crafts, for children 3 and older is offered by PJ Library at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre, 3:30 p.m. RSVP 905-303-1821, ext. 3025.

AJAMI

Beth Tikvah shows the Israeli crime drama film *Ajami,* 7:30 p.m. $5/$10.

BEYOND RACE AND FAITH

Holy Blossom Temple presents a concert, Beyond Race, Beyond Faith, featuring Jewish-Israeli cellist **Udi Bar-David,** Egyptian violinist **Riad Abdel-Gawad** and Puerto Rican percussionist **Rolando Morales Matos,** 7:30 p.m. $18/$36. For tickets, call 416-789-3291, ext. 224.

A PEOPLE UNCOUNTED

Lodzer Synagogue shows the film *A People Uncounted,* about the Roma people. Guest speaker is film director **Aaron Yeger.** 7:30 p.m. $10. 416-636-6665.

PASSOVER WORKSHOP

Rabbi Howard Morrison and **Cantor David Edwards** present a Passover workshop, including how to prepare the home, seder tips and melodies, 9:30 a.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

FOOD, FASHION AND FLAIR

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO presents an afternoon of "Food, Fashion and Flair," 2 p.m., Beth Torah Synagogue. $36. For tickets, call 416-630-8373.

A MORNING OF STUDY

Join **Alex Green, Anna Urowitz-Freudenstein** and **Rabbis Zvi Grumet, Nathaniel Helfgot, Alex Israel** and **Menachem Liebtag** for a morning of Torah study, with an emphasis on Pesach, 9:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-633-5770, email info@torahinmotion.org.

ROSH CHODESH CLUB

Chai Centre's Rosh Chodesh Women's Club discusses "How to Create Eternal Joy in Life," 8 p.m., 1089 Spadina Rd. RSVP 416-271-0659.

Monday, March 31

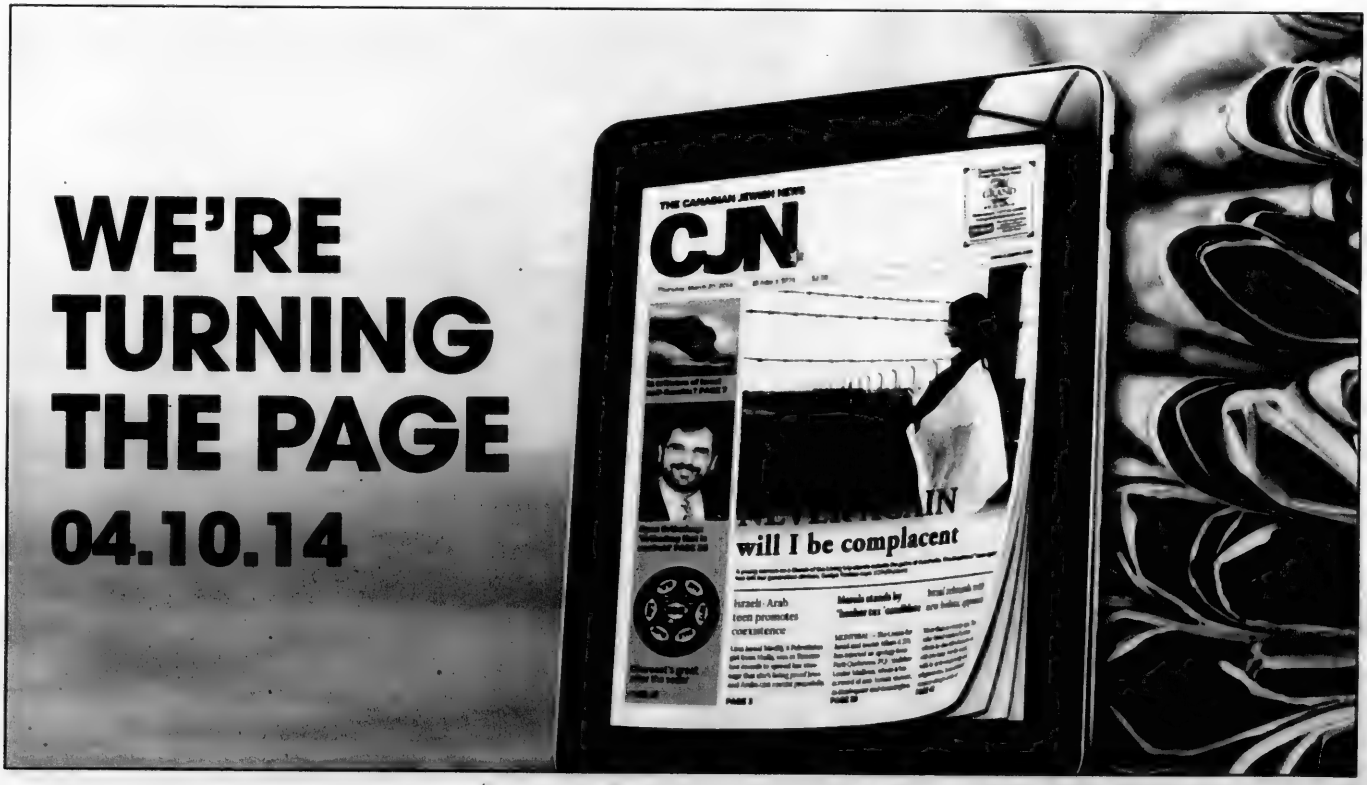
SPRING LECTURES

Rick Phillips discusses "Leonard Bernstein," Temple Emanu-El, 2 p.m. $45 for the series, $12 per lecture.

BOOK CLUB

Harriet Morris reviews **Shani Boianjiu**'s novel *The People of Forever are not Afraid.* Lunch at 1 p.m., review at 1:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. $20. 416-781-3511.

Continued on page 61



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GENEALOGY

Genealogist **Tomasz Cebulski** speaks at Beth Emeth Synagogue, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, April 1

TRIBUTE TO CANTOR KOVARI

Beth Tikvah Synagogue celebrates **Cantor Tibor Kovari** with featured performer **Avi Hoffman,** 7:30 p.m.

TELLING STORIES ON STAGE

Playwright **Emil Sher** discusses "Telling Real Stories on Stage," Temple Har Zion. Bring your lunch at noon, program starts at 12:30.

CHUG HATANACH

Joel Kurt leads the Chug HaTanach discussing "Psalms in the Liturgy," Beth David Synagogue, 8 p.m.

BOOK REVIEW

Marilyn Herbert reviews *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry,* 8 p.m. Adath Israel Synagogue. For more information, call **Eveline** 416-493-3626.

Wednesday, April 2

EVANGELICALS AND ISRAEL

Rabbi Michael Skobac of Jews for Judaism discusses "Evangelicals and Israel," 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue.

PRE-PESACH PREP

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky discusses "Matzah: A Journey from Moshe to Modernity," 8:10 p.m., B'nai Torah Congregation.

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Dr. David Conn, vice-president of Baycrest, discusses factors connecting age and mood, and strategies to help you stay mentally fit as you age, 7:30 p.m., Adath Israel Congregation.

Thursday, April 3

NASH AND DRASH

Cantor David Edwards and **Cantor Alex Stein** perform a pre-Pesach Nash and Drash, Beth Emeth Synagogue, noon. $12/$15. Advance payment only. Call 416-633-3838.

GAME NIGHT

Camp Young Judaea alumni and camper parents are invited to a gaming night, Uptown Loft, 2464 Yonge St., 8 p.m.

Upcoming Events

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Circle of Care needs Russian, Hebrew and English-speaking volunteers to provide support to clients and family members with life-threatening conditions.

Volunteers are needed to spend time with seniors in the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa** 416-635-2860 or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

PASSOVER SEDERS

Chabad of Markham hosts a seder, April 14. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

Temple Har Zion holds a seder, April 15. Register by March 28. Call 905-889-2252, ext. 232.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a seder, April 14. Call 416-221-3433.

The Association of Jewish Seniors and the Bernard Betel Centre hold a seder, April 15. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 458

The Winchevsky Centre hosts a Third Seder, April 19, 4:30 p.m. at Villa Colombo. Buy tickets by March 28. 416-789-5502.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community; fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session group for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children and adults participate in separate groups. Starts April 24, 6:30 p.m.

Mind-Body Connection for Women: A 7-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 29, Lebovic JCC, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play duplicate bridge, Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mahjong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Opera Appreciation: Viva Puccini with **Iain Scott**, 1:30 p.m. April 1, *Turandot.*

Osnat Lippa discusses "Treasures of the Guggenheim," April 8 and April 29, 1 p.m.

Jack Newman discusses "How Jews Helped Shape Television Comedy," April 3 and April 10, 1:30 p.m. For all programs, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Circle of Care offers a stress-management support group, starting April 1, 2 p.m. Call **Revital** 416-635-2900, ext. 463.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. April 1, **Rosalin Krieger** discusses "Fanny Brice," 10 a.m.; April 3, Laughter Yoga, 12:15 p.m., April 3, **Stanley Chung** discusses "Diabetes Prevention and Management," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine April 30 (register in advance); Dance with live music, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise starts April 22; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

The Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp present Passover Break Camp, April 14, 17, 18, 23. Call 416-636-CAMP (2267).

The Prosserman JCC is part of the studio audience of the *Steven and Chris* show, April 2. Call ext. 4235 for a ticket.

Norene Gilletz presents tips and recipes for a "Panic-free Passover," April 1, 6:30 p.m. Ext. 4235.

Musician/educator **Jordan Klapman** hosts a 2-part musical journey through Jewish popular songs, April 24 and May 1, 1 p.m.

The Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp present flagpole family night, a family dance party, March 31, 5:30-7 p.m.

Private piano lessons are available Sundays starting April 6.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Courses in the spring Hebrew Institute begin March 31. Call for placement test or interview, ext. 154.

David Levine discusses "Graphic Novels on Film," March 31, 7 p.m.

Register for the Joke Lab with actor **Jack Newman** and learn how to tell hilarious jokes and humorous anecdotes, April 24-May 15, 7 p.m.

Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22., ext. 250.

Duets, Portraits of Aging and the Art of Care, photos by **Debra Friedman,** is at the gallery, March 27-April 22.

Miriam Trinh discusses "Poetry from the Ghettos and Camps," April 7, 7 p.m.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays, until May 6, 7 p.m. MELT Method-hand and foot, Mondays April 7-May 12, 2:30 p.m.

Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays April 2-June 18, 12:15 p.m. Introduction to healthy breast yoga, April 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

Tickets on sale now for a bus trip to see *Hay Fever,* May 28, at the Stratford Festival.

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מזל טוב

Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Mazel tov to Avery Hoffer who donated an iPad Air and with iTunes gift cards to the Hospital for Sick Children in honour of his recent bar mitzvah.

Yvette, grandaughter of Dr. Marc Shell & Dr. Susan Meld Shell, and great-grandaughter of Mrs. Sophie Shell. Mazel tov to all!

Harry Katz, husband of the late Czarna Katz, father of Sheldon & Myra, Prosper & Sheila, grandfather of four, and great-grandfather of 11, celebrates his 100th Birthday.

Mazel tov Michelle & Adam on your engagement! Summer 2015 is wedding planned! Love, from all your family and friends.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to **cblackman@thecjn.ca**

Kosher food can unite us

Kosher Living
Richard Rabkin

Around a month ago, my wife and I gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. OK it was mostly my wife, but you know what I mean.

The excitement began in the wee hours of Friday morning, and as the day progressed in the hospital, I started thinking about kosher food and Shabbat. What would we eat? How would I recite *Kiddush*, make *Hamotzi* and light candles? I remembered hearing about an organization called Bikkur Cholim, a volunteer-driven charity that looks after the needs of Jewish people in hospital, so I contacted them. Within a few hours, someone came to our hospital room with literally bags of kosher food, grape juice for Kiddush, electric Shabbat candles, even spices for Havdalah. The food is free and the person delivering it is a volunteer. In the few moments I had to speak with him, I learned that he was just a regular guy – an accountant – who takes off Fridays from work to volunteer.

After a quiet Shabbat with our new baby, the doctors told us they had detected some abnormalities on X-rays they had taken. They were concerned and wanted to transfer her to the intensive care unit at the Hospital for Sick Children. So the day after giving birth to our baby girl, we were in an ambulance being transferred to a high-risk intensive care unit for some unspecified condition.

Friends in our community heard and told us not to worry about our two kids at home. They would take care of them. They arranged sleepovers and carpools and meals. Bikkur Cholim received a notification that we had been moved to another hospital and contacted us and asked if we needed continued meal service. Grateful, we accepted.

We also received a phone call from another organization called Chai Lifeline, a charity dedicated to helping sick children and their families. They offered to take care of our older kids for all of Sunday so that we could stay with the baby at the hospital. They said they would take the kids out for the day and have them bathed and ready for bed when we returned in the evening. When I heard this, I actually laughed out loud. The idea that my kids would let a bunch of strange girls give them a bath was, well, laughable.

Sunday night after a long day at the hospital, I returned home to find my kids playing with a Chai Lifeline volunteer. They were in their pyjamas.

"Why is your hair wet?" I asked my daughter.

"They gave me a bath," she said nonchalantly.

Stunned, I sat down at the table and ate while I listened to my kids tell me about the fun places they went and the kosher restaurants they ate at. Then I heard the water in the sink running and turned around and saw Miriam, the Chai Lifeline volunteer, washing our dishes!

"You don't need to worry about washing dishes right now," she said.

I cannot count the amount of people who approached me in shul and asked what they could do to help. And help they did. For three weeks, we didn't cook a meal, because people in our community rotated, cooking meals – kosher of course – on our behalf.

After two weeks in the hospital, the doctors told us we could go home. In the end, they said they would monitor the baby's condition, which with time would likely go away on its own.

I've had a few days to reflect on our ordeal, and I realize that it was my commitment to keeping kosher that actually forced us to reach out to the Jewish community – whether it was Bikkur Cholim, Chai Lifeline or our friends. The Talmud says that when we visit someone who is sick, we take away one-sixtieth of their illness. Obviously, that doesn't mean that if 60 people visit you, your illness will disappear. Rather, by visiting, they take on a small portion of our burden. When you see that others are with you in your time of need, it helps. I know it did for us.

The Jewish poet Achad Ha'am famously said, "More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jewish people." Over the past month, I've developed my own variation: more than the Jewish People have kept kosher, keeping kosher has kept the Jewish People.

Brisket a special meal all year round

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

Brisket is one of those festive Passover and year-round dishes that appeals to carnivores of all ages.

Food writer and author Bonnie Stern says that she often serves brisket at Friday night dinners. "My kids love it and so do my friends. I make it for Passover and everybody really looks forward to it.

"If I want to try something new, I also have to make brisket."

She says that while she tries a variety of brisket recipes during the year, her barbecued-style brisket is the family favourite. "The recipe has evolved over the years, but this one is adapted to use kosher for Passover ingredients."

She says the secret to making brisket is to buy a good one and then cook it until it's fork tender. "I always buy a whole brisket. That way you get a single side that is leaner and a double side that is juicer."

In my own family, the most anticipated dish at our seder is my sister's sweet brisket. It is the benchmark for rating all other briskets. And mine never tastes as good as my sister's, according to my middle son. "Why can't you get Auntie Sherri's recipe?" he asks every time I serve brisket.

The truth is I'm lazy. I prefer to use a very simple recipe that is practically patchke-free.

A few years ago, I told my friend Arlene Charezenko that I had never made a brisket, because I thought cooking a roast was beyond my culinary abilities. She laughed. "Brisket is the easiest thing in the world to make."

She gave me a classic brisket recipe with three ingredients – onion soup, cranberry sauce and water.

I have since made variations of this recipe by substituting duck sauce or apricot jam for cranberry sauce, especially at Passover. I often use orange juice or leftover wine instead of water.

And even though Son No. 2 complains about my brisket, he usually has a second helping.

BONNIE STERN'S BARBECUE-STYLE BRISKET

Rub
2 tbsp. paprika
1 tbsp. kosher salt
1/4 cup sugar
1 tbsp. ground cumin (available kosher for Passover)
1 tbsp. granulated garlic
1 tsp. black pepper
1 whole brisket (about 8 pounds)

Barbecue Sauce
1 1/2 cups barbecue sauce
1 cup red wine or water
1/3 cup honey
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. cayenne pepper
3 large onions, sliced
1 head of garlic broken into cloves and peeled

For the rub, combine paprika with salt, sugar, cumin, granulated garlic and pepper. Pat rub into both sides of the brisket. Marinate overnight if possible or cook right away.,

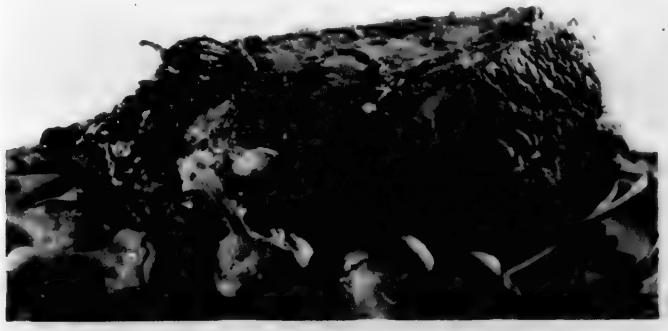
Prepare barbecue sauce by combining commercial barbecue sauce with wine or water, honey, lemon juice and cayenne.

Place onions and garlic cloves in a Dutch or deep roasting dish. Place brisket fat side up on the onion and garlic layer. Pour barbecue sauce over the brisket. Cover brisket with parchment paper and if possible bring sauce to a boil on the stove. Cover tightly and braise in a 325-degree oven for 4 to 5 hours.

If you can't cook your brisket on the stove top, put it directly into the oven. Check every 45 minutes to make sure there is enough liquid in the pan and add more if necessary. Depending on the size of the brisket, cook until it is completely tender and can be pierced with a fork. If the top has not browned cook uncovered another 15 to 20 minutes.

Remove brisket from the juice and refrigerate meat and sauce in separate containers. Brisket is easier to carve if it's cold, so it's best to make it a day or two ahead. Skim fat from the sauce before using.

To reheat, cover sliced brisket with sauce in a pan covered tightly with tin foil. Cook at 350 for 45-60 minutes.



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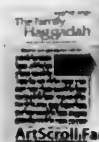

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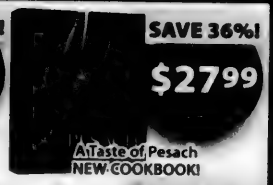

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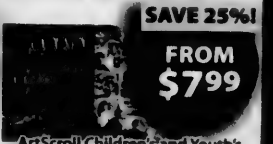

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Opinion

The dark secret of Quebec nationalism

Gil Troy
In Montreal

As Quebec suffers through another dishonest, demagogic provincial election campaign, wherein the Parti Québécois plays its "wink, wink, nudge, nudge" flirtation with separatism and referendums, Quebec's Jews are panicking, justifiably.

Quebec separatists are playing to the "yahoo vote," the least enlightened, sophisticated, intolerant voters. Their leaders enjoy riling up the masses, unleashing a xenophobic us-versus-them nationalism. Much of the prejudice is directed at Muslims – Jews are often collateral damage in this truly provincial assault on "the others," those who dare to differ.

Still, while assessing this want-our-cake-and-eat-it-too movement that is all too often simplistic, spoiled and snivelling, refusing to take responsibility for its words and actions, it's worth contemplating a mystery whose answer is itself revealing: why don't Quebec Separatists love Zionists?

Let me be clear. I'm not talking about all separatists. In both Montreal and Jerusalem, I've had rich, exciting, inspiring exchanges with Quebec nationalists about the challenges of building a constructive national identity in a modern world. In intense, meaningful, off-the-record conversations, we've shared concerns about the me, me, me, my, my, my, hyper-individualist world of the iPad and iPod, which obliterates values, subverts collective solidarity and addicts our young to materialism and immediate gratification. We agree that we all need to have a deeper sense of history than the latest YouTube sensations of singing babies or playful cats. And we rejoice in the anchors, frameworks and ties we gain from being part of a community.

Human beings need to be positioned in three dimensions, both vertically and horizontally: vertically meaning with a proud past, a satisfying present and an appealing future, with a spiritual dimension as an added bonus; and horizontally, meaning connected to one another communally and existentially.

Given that resonance, Quebec separatists and Zionists should be friends. Quebec separatists should turn to Jewish nationalists for reassurance that a distinct language, a particular narrative, a defined sense of community, can be the basis for an enduring national identity, even if you've never had your own state. Quebecers should learn from the extraordinary success of the Zionist project – a.k.a. the State of Israel – about the joys and challenges of nation-building and about the process of transitioning from a people without a state to a fully functioning nation-state.

Moreover, for those proud Quebecers who nevertheless pragmatically prefer to live in Canada, they can learn from non-Israeli Jewish Zionists about different skills. Jews are experts at being loyal citizens of many different countries while preserving a distinct identity. For centuries, Jews have created a win-win, benefiting from belonging to a particular community while also functioning in great, thriving liberal democracies such as the United States and Canada.

Yet, despite all these overlapping interests and all these resonances, many Quebec separatists are often intensely anti-Zionist. Why?

Let's acknowledge Canadian Jews' own double discomfort with this conversation. Canadian Jews don't like emphasizing their distinct *national* identity too much, nor do Canadian Jews, most of whom are federalists, wish to offer Quebec separatists tutorials on nation-building.

But that, of course, isn't the whole story. For decades, most Quebec separatists have bashed Zionists and Zionism for three main reasons. First, they've swallowed the Palestinian propaganda line that universalizes the fight against Israel by demonizing Zionism inaccurately as imperialist, colonialist and racist. Anti-Zionism, the world's trendiest hatred, has become a central tenet of far-left ideology. Many separatists are happy to join the pile-on. It makes them feel worldly.

Moreover, many separatists' reading of Zionism has been distorted by their disdain for most Canadian Jews' federalism. Rather than seeing the complexity of different identities in today's world – especially modern Jews' identity – simplistic separatists prefer to place "the Jews" in a box.

And therein lies the third reason. Unfortunately, for too many separatists, the us-versus-them box that they and their leaders construct as a foundation for their movement builds their own sense of "us" by demonizing the Jews and others as "them."

Nationalism is beautiful when it cultivates solidarity from within, but it turns ugly when it becomes more about demonizing "them" rather than nurturing an "us." That is Palestinian nationalism's great weakness and sin, with too many Palestinians dedicated to destroying the Jewish state rather than building their own. And, I regret to conclude, that perhaps in that xenophobic, nihilistic ugliness, we learn the deep dark secret of Quebec separatism, too.

Quebecers, Gil Troy writes, should learn from the extraordinary success of the State of Israel about the joys and challenges of nation building. Pictured is the clock tower of Quebec's Parliament building.

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Walk set to help kids like Liam
Please see page 12

Israel abstains in UN Ukraine vote – see page 30

World

Putin Slammed

NEW YORK — Leading Ukrainian Jews took out a full-page ad in the *New York Times* slamming Russian President Vladimir Putin for maligning the treatment of Jews in Ukraine. The ad, which also appeared in the *National Post*, Israel's *Ha'aretz* and the international *New York Times*, accuses Putin of spreading lies about how minorities, including Jews, are treated in Ukraine.

Stones To Play Israel

TEL AVIV — It's official: the Rolling Stones will play Tel Aviv. "Today, the longest negotiation of my career is coming to an end," concert promoter Shuki Weiss said March 25 in announcing the June 4 performance. The hype surrounding the official confirmation was mixed with anger over high ticket prices. Calls to boycott the concert started surfacing on social media, as tickets run from 695 shekels ($199) for a space on the lawn to 2,850 shekels ($818) for a VIP ticket. The concert, which falls at the end of Shavuot in Israel, will begin at 8:30 pm, with the holiday ending at 8:24 p.m. The concert is one of only 14 planned in Europe this summer.

Students Back BDS

LONDON — The King's College London Student Union voted to endorse the boycott, sanctions and divestment movement against Israel. The 15-point motion passed March 25 at the students' general meeting by a vote of 348-252. Following the vote, the college's administration distanced itself from the measure, Israel's *Ha'aretz* reported. The motion calls for researching the college's "investments, partnerships, and contracted companies, including subcontractors, that may be implicated in violating Palestinian human rights as stated by the BDS movement," and to pressure the college to divest from companies found to be "directly or indirectly supporting the Israeli occupation and apartheid policies."

Cotler Proud Of Russia Ban

MONTREAL — Former Justice Minister Irwin Cotler says he considers his being banned from Russia "a badge of honour."

Irwin Cotler

The Montreal Liberal MP is among 13 Canadian legislators and officials whom Russia announced March 24 aren't allowed into the country. It was a response to sanctions Canada imposed on Russia for its annexation of Crimea.

"I wear my exclusion from Russia as a badge of honour and am proud to be in such distinguished company," Cotler said. "I have no intention of visiting Siberia… have no desire to visit Moscow and be poisoned as happened on my last trip".

Cotler said he was referring to 2006 when he was in Russia as part of a parliamentary delegation. He dined in Moscow with NDP MP Joe Comartin, and they ordered exactly the same meal. Comartin was fine, but Cotler became "violently ill" soon after.

"I started to throw up blood. I called the people in the hotel and told them I needed a doctor. Instead of sending a doctor, they sent people to clean up all the blood – in other words, all the evidence that a doctor would need."

With the help of the Canadian Embassy, Cotler was admitted to hospital in Moscow, where he stayed several days, but never learned what was wrong with him. His symptoms were like those of KGB defector Alexander Litvinenko, who was fatally poisoned in 2006. "Except that they, in my case, probably just wanted to intimidate me and temporarily disable me, but not to kill me."

Cotler said he spoke with a Russian Embassy official in Ottawa on another matter in 2010 and was invited to visit Russia. Cotler replied, "'You know, the last time when I was there, I was poisoned.' And then, just like that, the answer was, 'We're sorry. That was a mistake. It won't happen again.'"

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Cancer survivor celebrates 10-year milestone

Rita Poliakov
Special to The CJN

Ten years ago, Melissa Lieberman and her husband were about to buy a double stroller for their twins, who were due in a month. And then she felt a lump in her breast.

"It was right during the Christmas holidays," said Cantor Eric Moses, Lieberman's husband. "[The twins] were due to be born somewhere toward the end of January. People are sensitive to their body more when pregnant. She felt something that didn't feel quite right."

Although Lieberman's doctor decided to do a biopsy, the couple didn't think much of it until they came in for a routine appointment.

"[The doctor] calls us in. He shut down the office and told us the news," she said. This is when Lieberman, already the mother of an 18-month-old boy, learned she had breast cancer.

"We were shocked and overwhelmed. It's hard to explain the reaction. When you're pregnant and expecting twins, that's the last thing on your mind. From that moment on, we were just go, go, go. We had to do as much research as we could, get as many doctors involved."

Before Lieberman's treatment could begin, doctors had to induce labour. She then underwent a double mastectomy, aggressive chemotherapy and several other surgeries.

Soon after her diagnosis became known, the community support began. Friends, doctors, members of the family's synagogue and complete strangers reached out to help.

"The support from the community was incredible," Moses said. "Challah would show up every Friday, and I still don't know who to thank.

"When you know people care about you, worry about you, are praying for you... you're just overwhelmed by incredible acts of kindness. It gives you strength and hope to keep going."

Now, Lieberman is ready to celebrate a huge milestone. The mother of three has been cancer-free for 10 years.

"Typically, after people have been cancer-free for 10 years, their chances of recurrence lessens," Moses said.

Continued on page 22

Melissa Lieberman, her husband Cantor Eric Moses and their three children, Talia, Aviva and Sammy

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TribeFest 2014 brought the chevrah together

Kortney L. Shapiro
Special to The CJN

What's better than taking a vacation with approximately 1,300 of your closest friends from across North America to learn about community, leadership and tikun olam while simultaneously celebrating the festive holiday of Purim in one of the most culturally stimulating and vibrant cities state-side?

Last month, I had the opportunity to attend TribeFest in New Orleans. Together with other young professionals and community leaders, many of whom came from the 156 Jewish federations who make up the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) family. Dubbed "the" young adult Jewish youth gathering of the year, TribeFest boasted a lineup of prominent speakers, interactive sessions, and memorable events.

During TribeFest, I was afforded the opportunity to participate in the Leadership Development Institute program (LDI), a companion program to TribeFest for young leaders ages 22 to 45 seeking to advance both their outreach skills and networking opportunities. In a room of more than 100 young professionals, we learned the power of storytelling and relationship-building. It was enlightening to hear from other federations who provided us with guidance as to how they confront challenges when trying to get other young professionals involved and passionate about giving back and becoming a part of community.

One of my favourite parts of TribeFest's programming each year is the Main Stage plenary session. Main Stage brings the entire contingency together in a main hall, where they are treated to various speakers and performers. Upon hearing the opening words of the Canadian national anthem, our group of 35 loud Canucks stood on our chairs and sang with passion as the entire room turned to see us draped in our best Canadiana. I felt proud to be a part of this experience with my fellow Canadians, many of whom were attending for the first time.

TribeFest 2014 co-chairs David Kline and Emma Samuels told the crowd what drove them to become involved in community.

Samuels, speaking with *The CJN* following the conference about her time planning and organizing TribeFest said, "there was never a dull moment while collaborating [the] countless speakers, programs, organizations and local communities."

"The enthusiasm of almost 1,300 young adult Jews at TribeFest in New Orleans was infectious," she said.

"Tribefest created a platform to connect participants to their Jewish values and importantly, [to] one another, which will help reinvigorate our communities and strengthen our ties to our culture and heritage."

Other notable speakers included *Scandal* and *West Wing* star Joshua Malina, who relayed to the crowd, with a biting sense of humour, his personal experiences connecting his family to Judaism and how playing an active role his community has positively impacted his life.

I approached Malina during the boat cruise to chat and take a photo. Regardless of his high-profile position, in that moment we were both just two young Jewish leaders enjoying an evening of shmoozing and celebration.

Also addressing the conference was Avital Zeisler, who trained at the National Ballet School of Canada and has since overcome a traumatic assault. She is now the founder of the Soteria Method, an a self-defence and fitness system geared to women. She captivated the audience as she spoke openly about her experiences, and her rise to becoming an acclaimed self-defence instructor in New York.

She finished her speech with five simple, yet powerful words, "Go and create your life."

We had the opportunity to really see New Orleans throughout the conference. From walking the famous Bourbon Street, winding our way through the French Quarter, to enjoying powdered beignets at the celebrated Café Du Monde after a night out on Frenchmen Street in the Faubourg Marigny neighbourhood, seeing the city's acclaimed live jazz and contemporary performers. We spent Sunday evening with the entire TribeFest contingency on the Natchez Riverboat, organized by JNOLA. As we danced atop the Mississippi, it was an incredible feeling to have the opportunity to celebrate together under a star-splattered southern sky.

From my own experience having attended TribeFest before, I can honestly say that I have never felt so at home among such a large group of passionate people who wear their hearts, communities and *ruach* on their sleeves.

I am already looking forward to the next conference, the JFNA's annual General Assembly, which will be taking place in Washington, D.C. this year. As for the next TribeFest, I can't wait to once again meet with my international chevrah, who at this point have become more than that – they have become family. One day I hope to organize such an incredible event.

In the meantime, I will continue learning and meeting other passionate leaders who make this community who we are today: proud, diverse and not afraid to get up and inspire one another to make a change, one tribe at a time.

Kortney L. Shapiro is pursuing her J.D. at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto.

From left, Samantha Banks, actor Joshua Malina, Kortney Shapiro, and Ariel Fainer celebrate TribeFest at the "Rollin' on the River" event hosted by JNOLA on the Steamboat Natchez.

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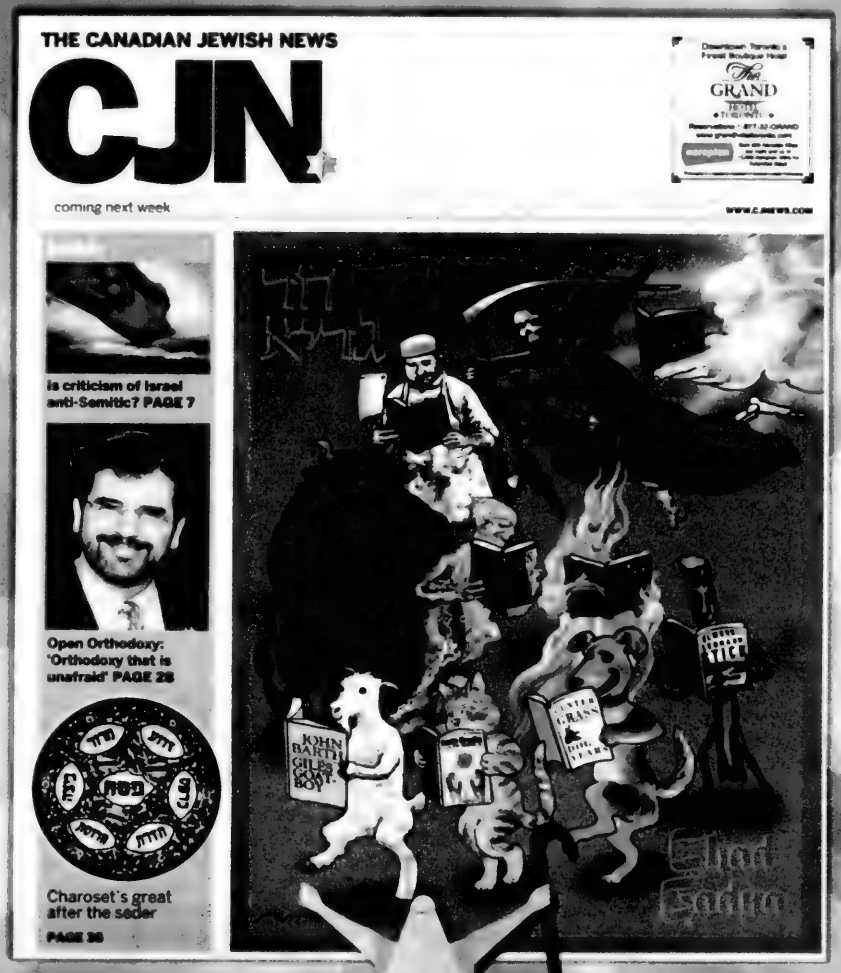

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Lashon hara and *The CJN*

In his essay on last week's Torah reading, Parsha Tazria, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks presented a history of lashon hara – evil speech – and a handy reminder of the consequences of this wicked sin. It particularly caught my attention because I've been thinking a lot lately about lashon hara. More specifically, I've been thinking about this new job I have and how the prohibition against evil speech impacts it. I'd like to tell you now what I've come up with, because it informs where *The Canadian Jewish News* is going.

I suppose I could start by defining what I mean by lashon hara, but I think you all know: the stories we tell each other *about* each other. Sometimes we do it to hurt those of whom we speak, but mostly I don't think it's really insidious at all. We're just passing the time, looking for something – anything – to talk about, to keep us occupied. Even so, deep down, I'd like to think we all know it's wrong.

I've been hearing a lot more lashon hara in the three months since I became editor of this newspaper – I guess that's not a surprise, but it disturbs me nonetheless, and I'd like to do my part to stop it. Now, I won't tell you how to live your lives, but what I can tell you is how I intend to operate *The CJN*: there will be no gossip here. So if that's what you thought our new, "edgier" direction was all about (notwithstanding my Purim column), I'm afraid you've been mistaken.

At the same time, you deserve to know what's going on when it comes to issues that affect you and your community, and we believe it's our duty to tell you about them. You can expect that we will, and in a more vigorous way than you may be used to from *The CJN* (there's the "edgier"). But it will always be with the mindset to serve and improve the Jewish community, and mindful not to reduce the conversation to lashon hara.

It's an auspicious time of year on the Jewish calendar (though when *isn't* it an auspicious time?). This month we celebrate the birth of the Jewish People on Passover – it's a time for beginnings, and in that spirit we are preparing to present to you a brand new *CJN*. Next week, we reveal our redesigned paper and a new era in the history of *The Canadian Jewish News*.

In many ways, the April 10 edition of *The CJN* will appear to be a radical departure from what you've been accustomed to for so many years. There will be new voices, new opinions and a new energy. But we've left some traditional things in place. I'd like to think that first and foremost among them is a recognition that the purpose of *The CJN* is to serve as an independent voice for the Jewish community. That hasn't changed at all.

Nor has the understanding that we must tread the fine line between lashon hara and essential information carefully. I guess we all, in our own ways, have to deal with that.

yoni

Dry Bones UNDERSTANDING CRIMEA

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Close the consulates

I find it in poor taste for *The Canadian Jewish News* to be used as the venue for an Israeli diplomat, who is the head of mission in the Israeli Consulate in Toronto, to publicly, while posted in a foreign country, vent his personal salary dispute ("Desperate times, desperate measures," *The CJN*, March 27).

We welcome the consul general attending dinners and other fundraising events. However, my sympathy cannot be with the gentleman while hospitals in Israel are suffering from high deficits and mounting healthcare costs.

Israel is not an overly rich country and must place its funding priorities where most needed.

Perhaps instead of taking "the decision to suspend regular consulate services," the Toronto consulate offices should be permanently closed. If need be, requisite necessary services could be obtained from the Embassy of Israel in Ottawa.

Sheila Friedman
Toronto

Withdraw support from universities

University of Windsor is another Canadian university where students voted to boycott Israel because of its treatment of Palestinians ("Flag vandalized during BDS vote campaign," *The CJN*, March 6). When the Jewish state, of all countries, is singled out for denunciation, it is called, plain and simple, anti-Semitism. I have yet to hear of a boycott of China for its brutal oppression of Tibetans. Moreover, why aren't the students concerned with the human rights violations of women, workers and poor people, respectively, in these countries?

South Africa is notorious for the rapes of women and children. More than 400 Nepalese migrant workers have been, shockingly, killed on building sites in Qatar since 2010. And there is still an abominable caste system in India.

In Toronto, Jewish philanthropists have disproportionately donated to universities. My Jewish brethren should not donate to universities where it is open season on Israel. Hurt them in their pocketbooks.

Jacob Mendlovic
Toronto

Personal attacks unwarranted

Leon Kushner's denigration of former Canadian Jewish Congress CEO Bernie Farber was as unwarranted as it was unfair ("Harper's trip to Israel," *The CJN*, March 20).

As a lawyer I have come to respect Mr. Farber's views and assessments of the human rights scene in Canada. As a Canadian Jew there were few professionals with the commitment and smarts who gave of their time and expertise to our community, as did Mr. Farber.

Whether it was the fight against neo-Nazism in Canada or holding politicians to account on matters of racism and bigotry Bernie Farber exemplified all that is good about the Canadian Jewish community.

While I appreciate Mr. Kushner's right to challenge anyone's ideas, I believe it behooves us always to stay away from unfair personal attacks. It's not the Jewish way.

James Morton
Thornhill, Ont.

Cultural Jews are vital to Judaism

Jimmy Bitton's article ("History matters," *The CJN*, March 20) states that "currently, secular and purely cultural manifestations of Jewish identity are halfway houses to assimilation," citing the Pew study as proof. What the Pew study indicates is that there are many more cultural Jews than previously thought.

Bitton and others who wish to preserve Jewish identity as simply a religious, and not a cultural, phenomenon, are not only doing a disservice to the many cultural Jews who make up a vibrant part of Jewish life, but are also undercutting their own aims.

There is a paradox in Jewish life: Jews tell one another they are not Jewish or observant enough, and then they wonder why those very Jews walk away. As a rabbi in the Humanistic Jewish movement I can attest that it is only by validating and creating meaningful Jewish experiences for cultural Jews that we can avoid assimilation.

Rabbi Denise Handlarski
Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism
Toronto

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The quiet rise of the Israeli centre

Yossi Klein Halevi
Times of Israel

The burden of our generation of Jews is the fear of squandering the gift of our return to Zion. That fear helps explain the vehemence of our political and cultural debates. All our rival camps are essentially asking the same question: what is the fatal misstep that would cause us to lose this land again, this time perhaps forever?

Insufficient love of the land, responds the right. And a recurring Jewish naivete about our enemies' intentions.

Ignoring the rights of those whom we are occupying, counters the left. Denying another people the sense of home we claim for ourselves.

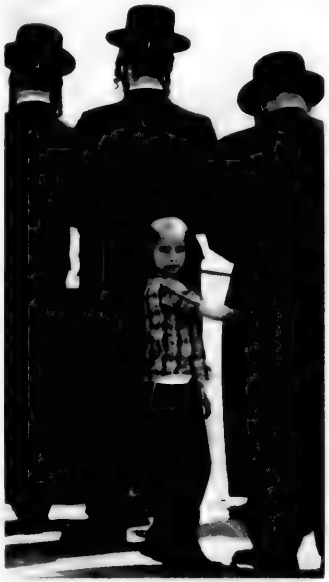
Nonsense, insist the ultra-Orthodox. The greatest threat to our continued existence in this land has nothing to do with the territories but with the level of observance of the laws of the Torah.

Each camp sees in the other not merely an ideological rival, but a potential existential threat. Perhaps the wonder isn't that our debates are so shrill but that, given what the protagonists fear is at stake and what they believe about each other, those debates aren't even more extreme.

A crucial moderating force in Israeli society has been the emergence in recent years of a political and cultural centre. Centrists view the ideological certainties of the rival camps and the existential fears directed at fellow Jews as the real danger to the long-term viability of Israeli society.

Centrists are the least understood ideological group in Israel, in part because they lack a strong political home. And yet, on the key issues of the future of the territories and of the relationship between religion and state, the centre represents a majority of Israelis.

In the four-decade-long debate between left and right over the future of the territories, the victor is – the centre. A centrist embraces insights from left and right. There is nothing ambiguous, wishy-washy, about an Israeli centrist.



A young Jewish ultra-Orthodox boy stands behind men praying after burning leavened items in a final preparation before the Passover holiday in the Beitar Illit settlement in 2010. The divide between ultra-Orthodox and the rest of Israel has replaced the religious-secular divide, Klein Halevi writes. *(Flash 90 photo)*

The opposite: a centrist vigorously affirms his certainties. Those just happen to be in opposition to each other.

A centrist regards a Palestinian state as an existential necessity for Israel – saving us from the impossible choice between Israel as a Jewish and a democratic state, and the moral burden of occupying another people, and from growing pariah status.

But a centrist also regards a Palestinian state as an existential threat to Israel – risking rocket attacks from the Samarian highlands on the coastal plain, where most Israelis live, transforming greater Tel Aviv into Sderot, the besieged Israeli town bordering Gaza that has been on the receiving end of thousands of rockets over the last decade.

A centrist has two nightmares about Israel's future. The first is that there won't be a Palestinian state. The second is that there will be.

This ambivalence is revealed in the polls. Some 70 per cent of Israelis consistently support a two-state solution – in principle. But that same majority doubts that, in practice, a two-state solution will grant Israel peace, because the Palestinian national movement won't accept the legitimacy of Israel even after a West Bank withdrawal.

A centrist regards with deep wariness the ideologues of left and right who dismiss the unbearable complexity of Israel's dilemmas over territory and security threats, and whose solution to any problem is always the same – either accommodation or force.

A centrist recognizes that the debate over the future of Israel's borders is so wrenching precisely because each side represents essential Jewish values and concerns.

A centrist shares with left-wingers the agonizing question: how could the Jewish People find itself as occupiers of another people? As rock musician Tomer Yosef sings in a powerful new album, *Hahatzer Ha'ahorit* (*Backyard*), produced together with veteran composer Yankeleh Rothblit, who lost a leg in the 1967 battle for Jerusalem:

The great story that begins with the Bible/ And continues to this time/ With an exiled people that returned/ Two thousand years later/ To its home between the river and the sea/ The great story of Shoah and rebirth/ Hungry pioneers redeeming the land.../ The great story has lost its way.

Yet a centrist rejects the notion that Jews are occupiers in the land of Israel. We are certainly occupiers of another people – and attempts by right-wingers to deny that reality only undermine their credibility among centrists – but we are not strangers in any part of this land. Yes, we will need to compromise with a competing national claim. But any territorial withdrawal, however necessary, will be a wound to our being, a sacrifice of cherished parts of our homeland.

A centrist believes that our ability to remain an intact people depends in large measure on recognizing the Jewish legitimacy of our competing voices. For a centrist, the debate isn't occurring so much in Israeli society as it is within himself, with left and right each compellingly arguing its case.

A similar sensibility has emerged in Israel's culture war over religion and state.

Centrists want less Judaism in official Israel, especially in legislation. And centrists want more Judaism in Israeli education and culture and in their personal lives.

This emerging cultural centre – which parallels the political centre that has formed over the future of the territories – embraces secularists, post-secularists, traditionalists and moderate religious Zionists.

For all practical purposes, there is no longer a religious-secular divide in Israel. There is, instead, a divide between the ultra-Orthodox and everyone else. The current Israeli government reflects this new reality. For the first time since 1977, ultra-Orthodox parties have been excluded from the government. And those parties were kept out by a coalition of secular and religious politicians.

Centrists are tired of Israel's internal wars. They crave a middle way between extremes – a way for Jews to honour each other's vital insights and legitimate fears, transforming the ingathering of the exiles from rival communities back into a people.

Yossi Klein Halevi is an Israeli author and journalist and a senior fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute.

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Let's be the best Jewish women we can be

I would like to express my sympathy to Norma Joseph on the passing of her mother. May she be spared any further sorrow.

Joannie Tansky in Montreal

I read with melancholy Norma Joseph's March 20 column on women and *Kaddish*. Before launching into my response, there are a few caveats that must be stated. Until there will be peace in the world and illness will be eradicated, as humans living by a divine Torah, there will be issues we don't like or understand. The issue of agunot is one, as is, for some, the fact *Kaddish* was not mandated by the sages for women.

Kaddish is bound up with praying three times daily, which puts it into the realm of "time-bound" mitzvot, which are traditionally male oriented. Given this, if a woman wants to say *Kaddish* there is no one stopping her. Would she be counted in a minyan in an Orthodox synagogue? No. Yet where I go to shul, there are women who do say *Kaddish*, quietly, along with a minyan of men. Who can say what is soothing to someone who is grieving?

As an Orthodox Jewish woman, I live my life trying to see what is right with Judaism. The title of my book, *Girl Meets God: The Gift of Being a Jewish Woman*, is the essence of my being. It is a privilege to be born a Jewish woman.

Given these parameters, Joseph's words didn't resonate with me. I don't dress "to the nines to combat invisibility." I'm not invisible at all. I dress in a modest, fashionable manner. Dressing modestly doesn't deny who I am as a woman, nor does it force me into hiding. Modesty extends beyond clothing into how we interact with the rest of the world. Conducting oneself with dignity is what best describes what being a modest Jewish woman is.

I have a voice, an opinion, am educated, out there and do all of these things with the constant knowledge that there is a God in the world and in His kindness, He saw fit to put me here as a Jewish woman. Therefore, I have a responsibility to make His world a better place than before I came into it.

Regarding the recitation of *Kaddish*, God created me as a woman and, therefore, I have a feminine role to play in His plan. The fact that I don't believe that I have to do the mitzvot that were allotted to men, either in the Torah or by the sages, is a non-issue in my life. What is an issue is to try to do the mitzvot that God and the sages did give me, as a Jewish woman, to the best of my ability.

If I choose to become a professional and work outside my home or stay home and take care of my children, I still maintain one responsibility that men were not given: to be the foundation of my home, and to teach my children, in a myriad of ways, what it means to be a Jew.

We must teach them to make this world a better place, to make a home where God's presence is felt positively, and to pass the torch to the next generation of Jews in the world.

When my own father passed away a few years ago, it was my brother who had the responsibility to say *Kaddish* three times a day for 11 months. The fact that I did not have to say *Kaddish* did not lessen my role at the time. So what did I do to honour my father's memory during the year of mourning? I did more mitzvot. I learned more. I taught other Jewish woman about their Judaism. I gave more tzedakah.

I lived my life with a renewed sense of responsibility and vigour, learning, in depth about the beauty of Judaism: morning blessings, Shabbat candles, family purity, the special mitzvah of making challah, our matriarchs, and patriarchs, and about the parshiot. There is no end to what we, as women, can learn.

Focusing on what men were given to do in terms of their Yiddishkeit is not what sustained the Jewish People for more than 5,000 years. From the women in Egypt who kept having children despite being in slavery to those who survived the Holocaust and went on to make new lives despite the horrors they endured, we have been the backbone of our people. If we had focused on the negative, on what we cannot do, we would not have survived.

Our world is not perfect yet. There is still much suffering and pain. As Jewish women, we should endeavour to be the most intelligent, learned and compassionate women we can be. It was always the Jewish woman who kept us Jewish. It was always the Jewish woman who planted the roots for the next generation.

Men, generally, are meant to deal with the present. The future – and those who will live within it – is in the hands of the women.

Joannie Tansky is the author of Girl Meets God: The Gift of Being a Jewish Woman *and writes a bi-weekly news blog called the* Blanche Report.

Where is Canadian Jewry?

Urban Writer Avrum Rosensweig

I have been writing extensively about Josef, Timea and Lulu Pusuma, a Roma Jewish family taking refuge in a Toronto church. I have done so because I feel it is our responsibility to help save them from being deported to Budapest, where they were brutally attacked by neo-Nazis, a place described by the François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University as full of "hate crimes, racist propaganda, discrimination and exclusionary ideologies." The centre's report calls Hungary "pre-genocidal."

The report adds there is a need for "vigorous early assessment of the risk of violence and for measures to ensure the physical and psychological safety of the Roma and other minority groups."

What is happening in Hungary is not something that can be ignored, yet much of the Toronto mainstream Jewish community is doing exactly that. Where are the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, the Jewish federations and B'nai Brith on this issue? Why are March of the Living and Birthright participants not forming committees for change with members of Holocaust-related organizations and every shul, synagogue and temple in Canada as Hungary disintegrates into hate and our country deports hundreds of Roma to villages targeted by neo-Nazi styled paramilitary groups?

I challenge you to establish those committees immediately, and if you do not, explain to your donors and members why you feel so safe.

Not a single Jew should be unaware that a statue was recently erected in the centre of Budapest honouring Miklós Horthy, Hitler's boy in Hungary responsible for the murder of hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews and Roma. Every Jew needs to know that in 2013, a Hungarian political party encouraged its paramilitary wing to take control of the village Gyöngyöspata, and has called for "public order protection camps" from which the Roma will need permission to leave.

Attend an Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada hearing of a Roma family about to be deported. Hear their stories and decide how democratic and safe Hungary is for its minorities and whether it is acceptable that the Harper government is sending Roma back, en masse. Where are you?

I asked Josef and Timea Pusuma to address you. Here is what they said:

Josef: "My father was a Jew. He played in a Roma and klezmer band. We lived in a Jewish area. I am worried about the Roma and Jewish people in Hungary. They are both alien people.

"Hungarian people say, 'This country is our country. It is a white country.' I have seen many examples of anti-Semitism. It is everywhere. Hungary is not a real democracy.

"If I had the opportunity to speak to the Jewish community of Canada, I would say, 'Do not forget the Hungarian Jewish group or Hungarian Roma. If you lived in Budapest today, even one month, and you go into a store, you'll hear such things as f…ing Jews. I kill you. Go back on the trains. Adolph Hitler started one program… but not enough.'"

Timea: "I was connected with the work of noted defenders of human rights. I met older people who had returned from the barracks of Birkenau. Their stories changed my life, and I wanted to help them. I took part in organizing Holocaust memorial days. I dreamt I could help establish a more just society in my own country with decent employment and wages and free education.

"It is so important Canadian Jewish group helps the Hungarian group. It is so important that Canada makes 'open door,' not just for Roma, but for Jews, too. I want to have Canadian life. Canadian people are so beautiful. I want my daughter, Lulu, to play here and play with children of so many cultures. In Hungary, my teachers said I was stupid. I was not in a normal class. Canada is my home. It is my country.

"It is very hard. We have not gone outside in 27 months. I told my daughter when we are free, we will give to you everything. It is so important that we are free already."

Please go to freelulu.ca and consider signing the petition to gain the Pusumas temporary residency and have them receive a fair hearing. We said we would!

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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Iranian assets ordered seized to aid terror victims

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

This Iranian-owned property at 290 Sheppard Ave. W. in Toronto will be sold to compensate victims of terrorism. [*Paul Lungen photo*]

An Ontario court has ordered that properties in Toronto and Ottawa owned indirectly by the government of Iran be sold to compensate several American victims of terrorism along with a Vancouver dentist.

The Superior Court of Justice also ordered two Canadian banks to transfer to the sheriff more than $2 million in cash held by agents of the Iranian government.

The estimated value of the assets comes to more than $7 million.

The court order by Judge D.M. Brown made in mid-March enforces earlier decisions by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, which had been adopted and recognized by the Nova Scotia Supreme Court.

Under the federal Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA), passed in September 2012, Canadian courts "must recognize a judgment of a foreign court" in terrorism matters if certain conditions are met. The JVTA strips countries of state immunity in cases of terrorist acts.

The American plaintiffs in the case are Edward Tracy and the family of Joseph Cicippio. Both men were captured and held hostage in Beirut by Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed terrorist organization, from 1986-91.

Tracy sued Iran and won an $18.5-million U.S. judgment in 2003. Cicippio's family won a $91-million U.S. judgment for emotional distress in 2005.

When they couldn't collect on their court awards in the United States, they looked to Canada for relief. The JVTA permitted them to do so.

The JVTA was enacted "to deter terrorism by establishing a cause of action that allows victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators of terrorism and their supporters."

Judge Brown noted that in addition to the Tracy case, the estate of Marla Bennett had approached the court to prevent the government of Iran and its Ministry of Information and Security (MIS) from selling the two Canadian properties. Bennett, from California, was killed by terrorists while visiting Jerusalem in 2002.

In addition, the court granted Sherri Wise permission to intervene in the case. Wise is a Vancouver dentist who was in Jerusalem volunteering at a dental clinic when she was injured by bombs planted by Hamas, a terrorist organization supported by Iran.

Neither Wise nor her Toronto lawyer, Mark Freiman, would comment on the case.

One of the properties ordered sold is located at 2 Robinson Ave. in Ottawa. It is valued at $3.9 million.

The other is at 290 Sheppard Ave. W., near Yonge Street. It is valued at $1.1 million.

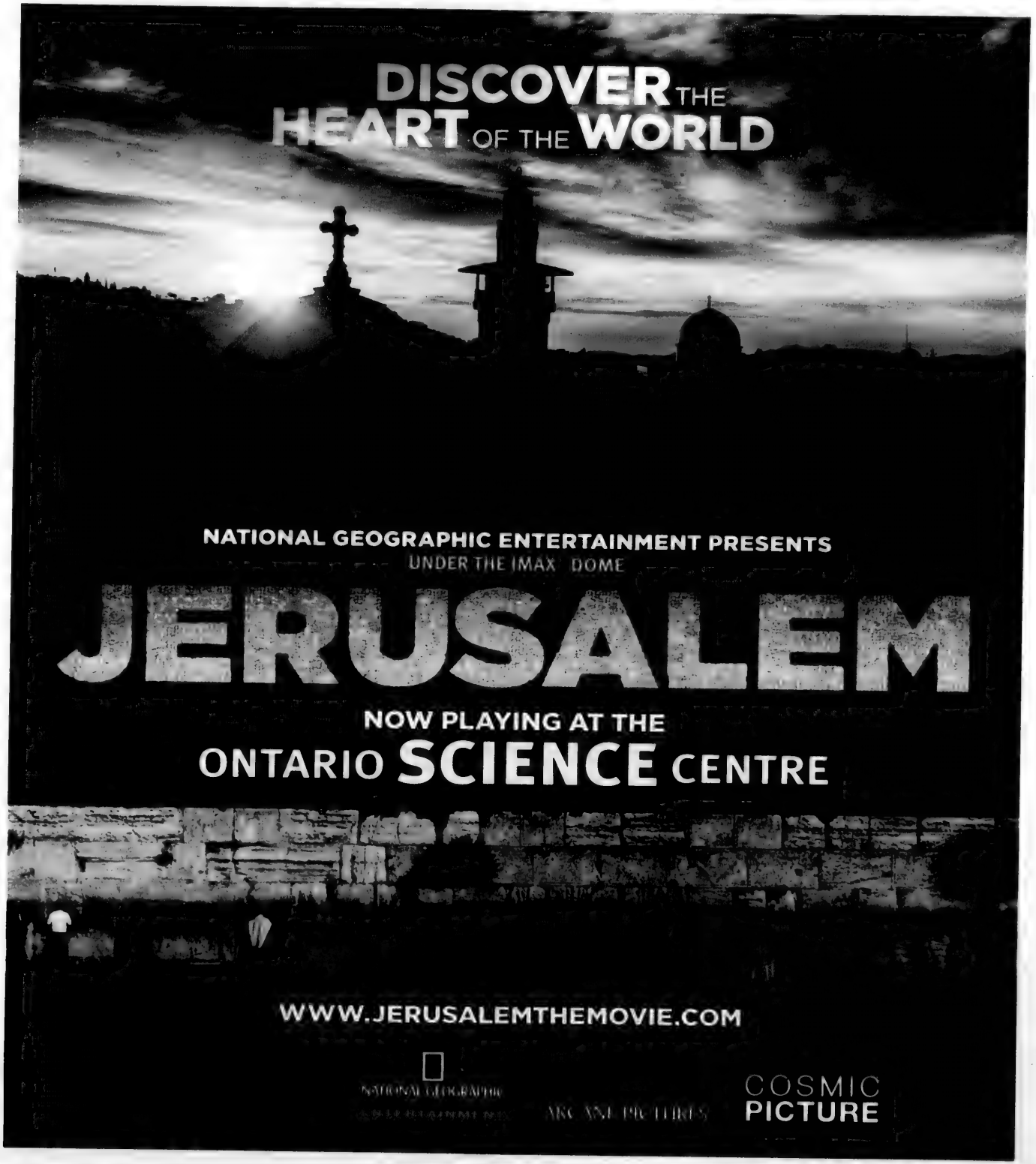
The court found that the owner of the Ottawa property is the Mobin Foundation, whose sole director is Syed Adeli, a former Iranian ambassador to Canada.

The Toronto property is held by Farhangeiran Inc.

Judge Brown found that "the evidence overwhelmingly permits me to conclude that both properties are beneficially owned by Iran."

Although neither the Mobin Foundation nor Farhangeiran Inc. contested the case, Iran's state-run media called the decisions "politically motivated" and possessing "no legal value."

NCSY WEEKEND: NCSY (National Conference of Synagogue Youth) volunteer advisers and mentors from across North America came to the GTA March 21 to 23 for a weekend of professional development and sharing ideas. Participants spent Shabbat in Thornhill with the Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto congregation and continued with a day of professional development at the Village Shul in Toronto.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GTA boy born with cystic fibrosis

Walk aims to help kids like Liam

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Whether you call it intuition or instinct, the "feeling" that mothers get when they know something is not right was what Natalie Doyle experienced throughout her second pregnancy.

"I experienced a gut feeling, a sixth sense or simply knew something without knowing how," Doyle said.

Liam Doyle, now almost two years old, was born with cystic fibrosis (CF). Both Natalie and her husband, Jamey, are carriers but didn't know it.

A child has CF when he or she inherits two defective copies of the gene responsible for the disease, one from each parent. One in 25 Canadians is a CF carrier. It's the most common fatal genetic disease in the country, affecting approximately 3,300 Canadian children and young adults. There is no cure.

Every year, thousands of Canadians from coast-to-coast lace up and join the Great Strides Walk, a family-oriented, community-supported fundraising event. This year, there will be more than 60 walk locations across Canada.

Doyle was approached to lead York Region's inaugural walk on May 25.

"We expect a minimum of 100 people coming out for the York Region walk with a target fundraising goal of $15,000. Across the country, we are looking to raise $3.3 million. Since the walk's inception in 2005, we have raised over $18.5 million," said Karen Baldwin, regional fundraising co-ordinator at Cystic Fibrosis Canada.

Liam Doyle

"It has been my therapy. I have created a Facebook page for Liam called Great Strides Walk for Liam Bear. I'm working on securing members of the York Region community to join our family, Team Bears. Our mission is to make CF stand for Cure Found," Doyle said.

CF is a multi-system disease that affects mainly the lungs and the digestive system. In the lungs, where the effects are most devastating, a build-up of thick mucus causes severe respiratory problems. Mucus and protein also build up in the digestive tract, making it difficult to digest and absorb nutrients from food.

Symptoms can include difficulty breathing, life-altering respiratory tract problems, severe, chronic lung infections, impaired growth or weight gain and extreme difficulty absorbing nutrients.

Newborn screening for CF leads to earlier treatment and thus gives children a better start in life. The median survival age for Canadians with CF is 48.5 years.

Liam's three-year-old sister, Madelynn, does not have CF, but could be a carrier.

"Statistics say there was a one in four chance for us to pass CF on to our children. A one in four chance the child will have CF. A one in four chance that they will not have any gene whatsoever and a 50 per cent chance they can be a carrier," Doyle said.

Liam's condition is explained to Madelynn through storytelling.

"*Icky Sticky Booger Bugs* by Sherry Frith is a book that teaches kids that you have to cough out the mucus to get it out. Madelynn helps out at home by spoon-feeding Liam his applesauce, which contains his required enzymes. Enzymes enable his body to preserve the nutrients, fats and proteins. Otherwise his pancreas doesn't function," stated Doyle.

Physiotherapy is a regular part of Liam's home care. "We tap his chest area where his lungs are for three minutes on each side, and we do this twice a day. This helps loosen some of the thick mucus where bacteria lives and breathes," Doyle said.

"Every three months we take Liam to SickKids Hospital to do a throat swab to make sure there are no bad bacteria.

"All in all, Liam is such a happy and energetic little boy – a sweet and gentle little man. My hero. I will not stop raising awareness and money until a cure or treatment is found," Doyle said.

Great Strides Walk in York Region will start at the Turtle Jacks restaurant, 11740 Yonge St. in Richmond Hill, and participants will have two 4-km walking route options from which to choose. Live music, donated coffee, muffins and bottled water will be distributed and the event will conclude with a barbecue lunch at Turtle Jacks after the walk.

For more information, visit www.cysticfibrosis.ca.

TRAILBLAZING WOMEN

New Israel Fund of Canada undertook the Trailblazing Women Campaign to recognize the impact that women have on society when they lead.

With a groundswell of support and enthusiasm across Canada, people honoured the women in their lives who demonstrate strength and compassion.

They appear on our Wall of Trailblazing Women. The power of our message is reflected in the sheer size of this wall. Women's rights matter.

You lay the foundations of what we hope to achieve for women in Israel. We make it possible for women to meet their full potential.

Thank you to all who participated in this campaign.

New Israel Fund of Canada
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Award-winning guitarist to perform at gala

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Music lovers are in for a treat. Grammy Award-winning guitar virtuoso Jose Feliciano will perform at the fifth annual Canadian Friends of The Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind (IGDCFB) Evening of Miracles Gala May 22 at the George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts.

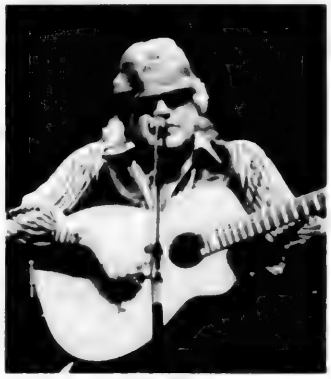
Music is a shared common language that knows no borders.

"I love Israel. I think music brings peace and goodwill," Feliciano said in a telephone interview from his Connecticut home.

Born blind and from humble beginnings in Puerto Rico, Feliciano taught himself to play guitar by listening to records and practising all day.

"At the age of three, I played percussion for my uncle on a tin cracker can, and at the age of four, I had learned the harmonica. I got a lot of enjoyment out of playing music, and as I got older, I learned to play the accordion. I was about nine years old when I became interested in the guitar. Since then, the guitar has been my life."

For more than two generations, Feliciano has bridged musical styles and influenced countless musicians. He has



Jose Feliciano

recorded over 45 gold and platinum records and has received 19 Grammy nominations and nine awards.

Feliciano recalled some memorable moments of his career. "In 1964, RCA Records signed a very young Feliciano, and in 1968, I won two Grammys for *Light My Fire*. I was on the American charts and I thought, 'Wow, I have come a long way from those hills in Puerto Rico.' And then I met my wife, Susan."

A philanthropist who has visited the guide dog centre in Israel, Feliciano strongly supports the work being done to train guide dogs for the blind and visually impaired.

"I discovered IGDCFB through a friend, Noach Braun, who is the co-founder and director. They have a very special school," he said.

The centre includes everything from spacious dog runs, whelping kennels and a veterinary clinic, to a fragrance garden and a student centre that has six bedrooms, a lounge, staff rooms, a dining room and a lecture hall. It also hosts events that allow the sighted and the sightless to interact. Privately funded through donations from around the world, the centre has helped hundreds of blind people in Israel lead independent, productive lives by giving them guide dogs free of charge.

"I have had two guide dogs in my life. The first one was a smooth-hair collie and the other was a female Doberman. As I travelled, it got complicated with quarantine laws, but that doesn't stop me from realizing how valuable they are," Feliciano said.

The IGDCFB was founded in 1991 with the goal of helping blind and visually impaired Israelis achieve independence and mobility through the use of guide dogs.

While the objective is simple, the near-miraculous work it does and the challenges it faces are complex. Compared to other countries, Israel has a disproportionately high number of blind people – more than 27,000 registered. Many have lost their sight in terrorist attacks, military action or from disease. Only about 500 of these people have a guide dog to assist them. A guide dog requires intensive professional training from birth until it leaves the centre with its partner, after a year and a half. The service life of the dog is approximately 10 years and its total cost is over $25,000.

"As part of the 2014 campaign, included in our mission is the Children's Integration Program to help blind and visually impaired children and their families. This project is implemented by Eliya, an Israeli organization that provides full-week rehabilitation programs... [for] children up to the age of six," said Canadian Friends executive director Sara Gabriel.

Feliciano celebrates Passover with family friends. "I enjoy the Jewish culture. I love Jewish food – corned beef and pastrami. My wife makes the best matzah ball soup – and she is not even Jewish."

Visit www.ca.israelguidedog.org to learn more and purchase tickets for the gala.

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Retired major praises Canadian Forces

Still work to do to help veterans, says Schmidt

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Retired Maj. William Hans Schmidt has nothing but praise for the Canadian Forces, in which he served for nearly 20 years. However, Schmidt says that when it comes to helping wounded or traumatized war veterans back home, Veterans Affairs Canada has a lot of work still to do.

"One hundred and fifty [Canadians] lost their lives in Afghanistan. But for every one who loses their life, 10 are wounded," Schmidt told *The Canadian Jewish News*. "These people served the country. The country should serve them thereafter."

Schmidt, 57, spoke to a small crowd at Branch 66 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Toronto last week at an event co-sponsored by the Temple Sinai Brotherhood, the first of several events and talks with Canadian veterans being planned, Temple Sinai program chair Joel Cadesky said.

Schmidt served in the Canadian Armed Forces from 1976 to 1995 and spent most of the early 1990s in Iraq and Kuwait. As a commander of the UN logistics force for UNIKOM (United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission), Schmidt led officers from 33 nations.

From left are Brotherhood president Frank Berns and Maj. William Hans Schmidt. *[Jordan Adler photo]*

His years in the Middle East had their highs and lows. On the sunny side, Schmidt led one of Canada's major contributions to Kuwait: the re-establishment of Kuwait's hockey team. Much to the major's surprise, many Kuwaitis were passionate for the sport and even had a beautiful indoor hockey rink to play on, not far from the war zone.

On the other hand, Schmidt recalled the difficulty of getting support and money from the UN. The job became tougher when the Iraqi and Kuwaiti regimes denied killings and attacks mentioned in the major's reports.

"The United Nations is handicapped. Their hands are tied. Money is wasted," Schmidt told the Legion crowd. "The only way to assist – and I think Canada's doing it the right way – is by providing troops. It is more feasible for Canada to send in troops than it is to just throw the money out to pasture."

Although Schmidt said he wanted to be a pilot, he ended up learning about logistics when there were no pilot jobs available. Logistics is not just transporting supplies from one point to another, he explained, but preparing and planning how to get materials from their source to the soldiers who need them.

Working in logistics, he helped to build camps for British and American forces in Afghanistan. During this job, he said, he noticed how the U.S. camp was tiny and ill equipped, almost entirely unprepared to take in 12,000 marines.

Schmidt said he ended up getting the American base built by taking initiative where the U.S. contractors had not.

"Canadians, and I'm proud to say this, are the best in logistics in the whole globe," Schmidt says. "That is why the UN always asks for Canada's help. We are proven logisticians. We know how to give what is needed for the boots on the ground."

He said, however, that the efforts of Canadian soldiers are worth less without adequate funding and staffing for Veterans Affairs. His son, Jonathan, fought in Afghanistan and almost lost his life when a Taliban member shot at him with an rocket-propelled grenade – and missed by inches.

"He's doing exceptionally. He has got his mental faculties. He's the first Canadian soldier to top the U.S. army ranger course," Schmidt said of his son, who also earned a medal for his duty. "But that means nothing when all I hear is that nothing's being done for the soldiers back here suffering, physically and psychologically."

Schmidt retired in 1995, before he was even 40. Although he said he thought he would stay in the Forces for 35 years, he said he got scared that serving for that long would ruin him. He decided to try doing logistics in the civilian world.

Today, Schmidt works in logistics for automotive tech company Mevotech in Toronto. He says he can't see himself retiring.

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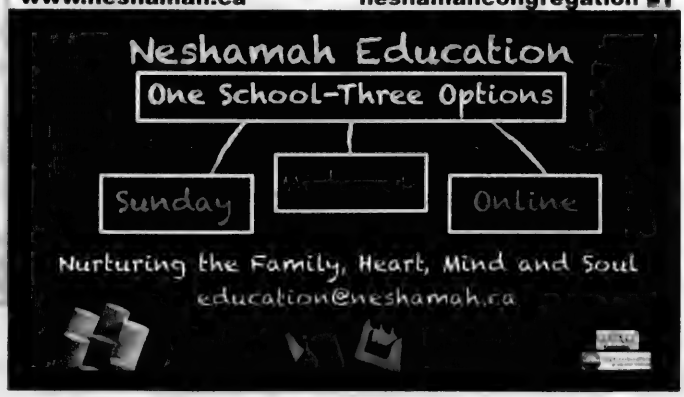

500 students vote to endorse boycott against Israel

Hillel urges McMaster to reject BDS vote

Abigail Cukier
Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — McMaster University Hillel representatives are expecting the university to reject a resolution calling for boycotts, divestments and sanctions against Israel.

At a McMaster Students Union general assembly meeting March 26, about 500 students voted to endorse the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel, which calls for action against businesses with ties to Israel, due the country's policies regarding the Palestinian territories.

The motion came just as the undergraduate student group had to vacate the gym where the meeting was being held, leaving little time for debate. The vote happened after the meeting was scheduled to end, and the assembly did not have quorum, which would have been 633 students. This makes it a non-binding resolution. It will now go before the Student Representative Assembly, the MSU's governing council.

"This resolution has neither democratic legitimacy nor popular support at McMaster. If anything, it makes a mockery of the processes and mandate of the MSU, which exists to unite all students and advocate for student causes, rather than import divisive foreign conflicts onto campus," said Raphael Szajnfarber, director of Jewish Student Life, McMaster University Hillel. "We fully expect the SRA to reject this vote."

On its Facebook page, the Say Yes to BDS-McMaster campaign says it will take action to make the motion binding.

"A boycott of Israelis does nothing to promote a peace that benefits both Israelis and Palestinians, Szajnfarber said. "In contrast, it's simply a modern-day blacklist and discrimination on the basis of national origin. To implement this resolution would almost certainly violate the university's anti-discrimination policy."

Avi Benlolo

Szajnfarber called the general assembly meeting a "toxic and tense environment." In fact, some BDS opponents left as a group and one student at the microphone asked security to stand between him and another student.

"The tension was palpable. It was the build-up of a week of escalating rhetoric and the culmination of a divisive campaign" Szajnfarber said.

"We support free speech and debate and people thinking critically about an important foreign policy issue. People should be talking about these issues in university," he added. "But a unilateral campaign designed to shut down debate is not the way to go about it."

Salah Khalaf, a chemical engineering student, had asked that BDS be debated at the meeting. He told the *CBC* the campaign "does not target any ethnicity race or religion, rather any corporation that helps sustain the illegal occupation."

He sees universities as the place to have these conversations.

"In every academic institution since civilized man has existed, we have had discussion and debate," he said.

York University students voted in favour of BDS last year. Last month, University of Windsor students voted for it, but those results are under investigation.

Following the McMaster vote, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) called on McMaster president Patrick Deane to safeguard Jewish students on campus.

"The Jewish community is fed up with this discriminatory targeting of Israel, which is nothing more than the latest trend in anti-Semitism," said FSWC president and CEO Avi Benlolo.

"Until these students wake up to the slaughter that is happening in Syria, or notice the naked Russian aggression against the Ukraine, or take a stand on attacks against Jews in France, their concern for human rights is revealed for what it is: outright hatred and hostility against Jews. It is time for president Deane to take his own stand and protect the rights of all of his students, and not just those who shout the loudest.

In an email to *The CJN*, Deane stressed that the student union is a separate entity from the university and that because there was no quorum, the motion isn't binding on the MSU anyway.

"The university is guided by foundational principles of freedom of speech and expression in an inclusive and respectful environment," Deane said. "We work to ensure students and other members of the community feel safe to express their opinions in an environment of tolerance and respect. There are a number of ways we work together to achieve this."

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forward and address this ancient hate.

Guest Voice

Hosting an Israeli hero

Terri Sugar Keyfitz
Special to The CJN

When my husband and I hosted an injured Israeli hero in our home, we had no idea what to expect. It turned out that we had an immensely rewarding experience and a fabulous time!

Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel is an amazing organization that was founded in 1978 and is devoted to helping rehabilitate the more than 50,000 disabled Israeli veterans and victims of terror.

After the injured leave the hospital, they go to state-of-the-art Beit Halochem centres in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Nahariya or Be'er Sheva. These centres boast an array of rehabilitative services including physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, therapeutic devices, specialized sports equipment and training, family-oriented programming, and creative and cultural activities.

Beit Halochem is committed to increasing community awareness and ties to Israel through group visits of disabled Israeli veterans to the Toronto, Ottawa, Calgary, Vancouver and Montreal Jewish communities. Every June, Beit Halochem Canada hosts a group of 10 veterans for two weeks. Ten families open their homes as hosts, and another 10 are co-hosts to the visitors. The

From left, Art Keyfitz, Nitzan Yosef and Terri Keyfitz

heroes come from all over Israel, are of various ages, had different roles in the Defence Forces and have varying injuries. They are all mobile enough to walk up stairs, get on and off a bus, and their injuries are not readily apparent.

At our very first encounter with our Beit Halochem guests, I was really surprised to see how moved with emotion and appreciation they were.

What I came to understand was that they had not expected strangers in the Diaspora – in a world that seems to them to be entirely against Israel – to really care about Israeli people.

Also, they come from a country where being an injured war veteran is, sadly, not unique, and they were touched to know that we were extremely sympathetic to each and every one of them.

I really enjoyed becoming acquainted with these 10 interesting individuals during the many fun-filled activities and events that are part of the Beit Halochem group visit.

At the parties, we danced and ate and laughed, and then one of the vets would get up and tell his personal story – and we shed many tears.

Some of them had never before been able to speak about their war experiences, but gradually opened up during their stay with us. In this relaxed, pressure-free atmosphere, they blossomed like flowers. It was heartening to see.

They became like family to us. It was quite funny to hear vets of all ages call their hosts and co-hosts "Mom" and "Dad," whether they were younger or older than us!

What was most special was getting to know our own new "family member" during intimate talks in our kitchen. Our new "son" entered our home, our lives and our hearts.

These Israel Defence Forces men are true heroes. They literally put their lives on the line to protect our beloved Israel. Hosting them is our small way of giving back.

When these heroes spoke of their appreciation to us, we responded that *we* are the ones to be grateful.

Hosting a disabled Israeli veteran for Beit Halochem was truly an enriching experience.

If a family in the community would like to be a host or a co-host, please contact the Beit Halochem office at 905-695-0611 or beithalochem.ca.

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Probe validates group's concerns

Ron Stang
Special to The CJN

WINDSOR — A University of Windsor investigation has found serious irregularities with the way a recent boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) referendum was carried out, validating complaints by Jewish students on campus.

The March 2 referendum, sponsored by the Palestinian Solidarity Group, the first such vote among undergraduate students at a Canadian university, passed 798 to 585 amid widespread complaints of abuse of process. University president Alan Wildeman ordered the investigation by Toronto lawyer and former human rights commissioner Raj Anand.

Of five major complaints, "all have been substantiated," Wildeman said in a letter to students.

One was that there were not enough signatures on the petition to hold the referendum – "at most 404" when 500 were required. Changes in the structure of the student council executive were also in violation of its constitution, resulting in participation by individuals "not entitled" to take part in meetings and votes.

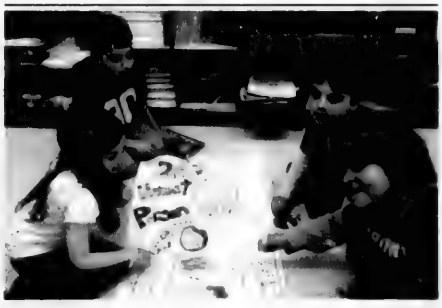
The motion to hold the referendum "occurred without legitimate quorum and involved votes cast by non-members." And the referendum question itself was "unclear and ambiguous" containing several questions rather than one, therefore in non-compliance with bylaws.

Wildeman said he would discuss "possible next steps" to help "achieve effective student governance."

The Jewish Students Association applauded the findings calling them a "validation" of the group's concerns.

In addition, Hillel Ontario executive director Donald Sylvan said "this is not the first time we have seen undemocratic tactics by BDS activists on campus."

Palestinian Solidarity Group spokesman Mohammed Almoayad said he wasn't surprised by the letter. "This has been the goal of the administration all alone," he told the *Windsor Star*.



HONESTLY!
Bialik Hebrew Day School Grade 2 students, from left, Naomi S., Guy C., Justin C. and Brady B. work on an activity highlighting honesty, the school's character trait for March. As part of the activity, students were asked to draw an outline of a student, fill it in with the class's ideas of the characteristics of an honest person.

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Off-campus group holds IAW at U of M

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Last year, first-year University of Manitoba law student Josh Morry successfully petitioned the University of Manitoba Students' Union (UMSU) to strip funding and official club status from Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA), the group that organized Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) at the school, on the grounds that it was making Jewish students on campus feel uncomfortable.

That seemed to be the end of IAW at U of M. It turned out, however, that it was merely a setback for anti-Israel forces on campus.

Undeterred, an off-campus group, Winnipeg Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid (WCAIA), went over the head of UMSU this year and appealed directly to U of M president David Barnard for permission to rent space at the university for the tenth annual IAW.

To the consternation of Morry and others on campus, Barnard gave his approval.

Morry and some 40 other students sent a letter to Barnard in mid-March protesting the decision. "As Jewish and non-Jewish members of the Jewish Students Association at the U of M and [University of Winnipeg], we are very concerned and disappointed with the university's decision," they wrote.

"It is simply not safe to be labelled a racist and apartheid supporter on campus, as students at Concordia [University] and York University have found out the hard way. Following UMSU's decision to ban SAIA and IAW, members of the anti-Israel community proceeded to post Holocaust jokes on the UMSU Facebook page. Some of these people are members of CAIA," the letter added.

They noted that U of M's "Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy" states that "the university does not condone any behaviour that is 'likely' to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of students" and the university "has an obligation to uphold its policies," they said.

"We are students paying to attend university, and we have the right to a safe learning environment free from groups that undermine our dignity and self-esteem. It is shocking to us that the University of Manitoba is prepared to disregard its own policies and jump through hoops to allow an off-campus advocacy group to poison the atmosphere of the university at the expense of its students. We can't help but ask ourselves why our university is colluding with those who hurt us."

Josh Morry

The letter concluded: "Our goal is simply to learn in a safe environment, please respect us by enforcing your policies."

Morry said the UMSU executive also met with Barnard about the issue. "Dr. Barnard assured them that the decision does not put students at risk nor undermine UMSU's decision," he said.

"Dr. Barnard has decided that the rights of an off-campus group overshadows the rights of paying students."

Leah Janzen, the university's associate vice-president of outreach and engagement, said U of M routinely licenses space to off-campus individuals and organizations, as long they respect the law and university policies.

In his written response to the students' letter, Barnard said much the same thing. He also noted that "the Human Rights Code obligates [the university] not to discriminate against groups based upon their political beliefs. We simply attempt to ensure that those beliefs are expressed in a respectful way that furthers our mission to facilitate informed debate."

Morry said that while the WCAIA was initially given space on the fifth floor of the UMSU building, the group was eventually allowed to have a booth on the main floor, where it had much greater visibility.

The group held its anti-Israel programs during the week of March 17 to 21 and featured an attack on SodaStream and an appearance by John Greyson, an anti-Israel filmmaker from Toronto who was arrested last year at the Egypt-Gaza border while trying to enter Gaza and was imprisoned in Egypt for a period of time.

Morry said the IAW programs seemed to have been poorly attended, but he expressed concern that ill-informed students may have been swayed by the propaganda.

CIJA calls fraud 'revolting'

Scam letter preys on Holocaust survivors

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is alerting Holocaust survivors and their families not to be taken in by an "odious" scam that promises to unlock Swiss bank accounts in exchange for personal information.

CIJA became aware of a letter campaign that appears to be targeting the Jewish community and which in one case advised a Calgary resident that one of their relatives killed during the Holocaust had left $75 million in a Swiss bank account. The letter bears the name of a consulting firm and a New York address and phone number.

Sara Saber-Freedman

Sara Saber-Freedman, executive vice-president of CIJA, said she contacted the letter writer by phone, but when she refused to turn over her cellphone number, he immediately hung up on her.

In the letter, copies of which were sent to others in Canada, the writer claims he is able to access the funds if the recipient of the letter provides extensive personal information.

Saber-Freedman said, "It's exactly like every other one of those [411] scams that you read about and you get by email all the time. I understand that Nigeria is the source of a lot of this type of fraud."

While frauds of this nature prey on people's trusting nature, this particular fraud "is revolting," she said. "To use the Holocaust in this context is just vile."

Survivors are elderly and can be vulnerable to this sort of pitch, she added.

Sidney Zoltak, co-president of the Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants, said similar "sick kinds of operations" have come up before, promising survivors they could recover funds on insurance policies and properties in Poland.

He advised survivors and their families to pursue claims through reputable organizations.

Zoltak said that while the current letter campaign did not ask for money up front, "this is the beginning. Once you get to speak to someone who is really smooth, they can talk you into a lot of things."

They prey on the vulnerable and they're ready "to take away their last savings and leave them penniless.

"They don't care as long as they score," he said.

Saber-Freedman said she had informed U.S. law enforcement authorities and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, a government agency, about the letters.

MARATHON RUNNER: Toronto resident Rob Murdoff stands with his family at the finish line of the Jerusalem Marathon on March 21. They joined 2,500 runners from 54 countries along the 42-kilometre route that passes through the Old City, Mount Zion and other hilly areas with breathtaking views. Rob raised over $12,000 in support of the Ayalon-Canada Park, a tree-lined recreation area between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. [Michael Doyle photo]

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Quebec students weigh in on elections

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — One will be casting her ballot for the first time.

Another is determined to stay in Quebec even if it separates from Canada.

But for four Jewish student voters 11 days before a pivotal provincial election, there was still a lot more consensus than conflict during a *CJN* interview at the venerable Hillel House on Stanley Street.

Not surprisingly, Denise Felsztein, 18, Zack Goldig, 24, Meagan Reinish, 22, and Jeremy Elbaz, 22 were all pro-federalist and intend to vote that way on April 7.

But they also sensed that there's a lot more at stake than usual in this election.

All live with their families in safe Liberal ridings.

The students cringed at the idea of a referendum on sovereignty and, like many Quebec voters, complained that the election campaign hasn't focused on the issues that really count: jobs, the economy, health care and tuition fees.

The students were also in agreement in characterizing the proposed secular values charter as chilling – even scary – in its potential ramifications for religious minorities.

It's racist and illegal, they said, and panders to intolerance by exploiting anti-Muslim and anti-religious minority sentiment among the Franco-Québécois population, with the worst-case scenario being a Parti-Québécois majority eventually passing the charter – Bill 60 – into law.

If that were to happen, all but Elbaz said they would have to consider making their lives and careers elsewhere.

"I would definitely go," said Goldig, a law student at the Université de Montréal, while Reinish, a social work student at McGill University, said she would also consider leaving since there's "so much racism" in the charter.

From left, students Zack Goldig, Meagan Reinish, Denise Felsztyn, and Jeremy Elbaz pose at Hillel House.

While Felsztein, a commerce student at Dawson College and a first-time voter, expressed the wish to stay in Quebec, she was undecided about what she would do.

But not Elbaz, a Concordia University political science student who said he would stay no matter what and "fight for my rights here."

Elbaz said the reaction is "split" when people learn he would stay if Quebec separated, "but I don't want to be perceived as running away from it," he said.

"Why would I want to? I'm an integrated Quebecer."

Tellingly, on the day of the interview – March 26 – there were more reasons for the students to feel encouraged than at the start of the election campaign – at least according to the polls released that day.

They were also grateful to Quebecor head Pierre Karl Péladeau for entering the race and turning what looked like a possible Parti Québécois majority into a possible Liberal majority, all because he had focused on holding another sovereignty referendum in his acceptance speech.

According to the polls, that's something a large majority of Quebecers don't want.

News of the PQ's troubles came as heartening not only to the students, but also to the larger Jewish community, even though Quebec voters are known to be fickle and the tide could swing again by election day.

Elbaz and Reinish noted that the charter appeared to be in line with the policy in France to establish a strict secular approach to state-society relations, but they said it was untenable nonetheless.

Reinish said it would have been much more acceptable for the government to establish "religious accommodation" principles using the guidelines recommended by the Bouchard-Taylor commission, whose report was largely ignored.

If the values charter eventually passes, she said, it might only be a matter of time before it's also adopted by the private sector and affect not only public workers in regard to banning the wearing of religious articles, but everyone.

Like other voters, the students wished that they had a pro-federalist mainstream party to vote for.

This being the first election Felsztyn is voting in, she's paying closer attention than previously, but said she has always been aware of Quebec politics.

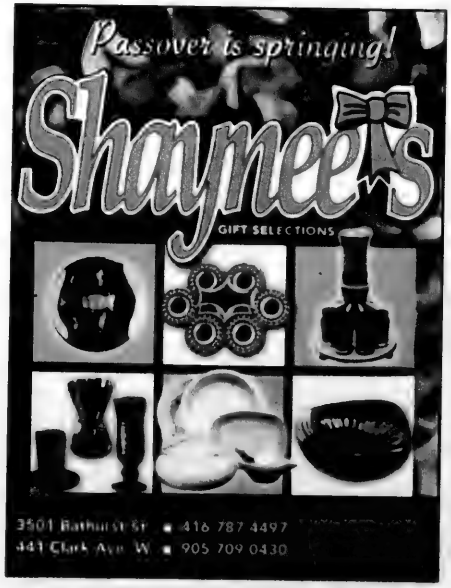
Elbaz, who is voting for the second time in 18 months, said he been following politics more over the last few years.

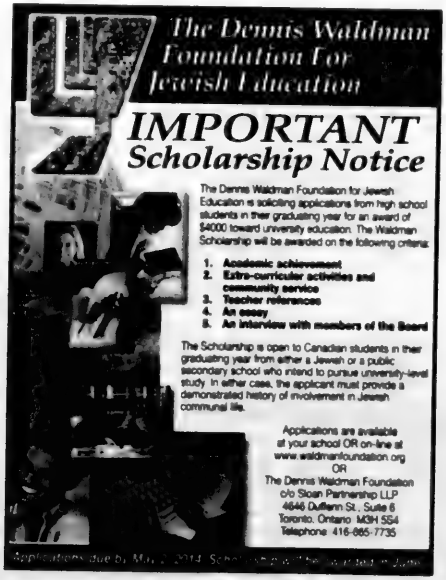
Politics always seemed to interest Reinish, who has volunteered for the campaign of Liberal Leader Philippe Couillard as well as politically within the Jewish community.

Goldig, for his part, said he didn't realize until recently how political he was.

All but Goldig had the opportunity to watch the first election debate, and all seemed most impressed by the forthrightness and articulateness of Québec solidaire leader Françoise David.

"I wish she was a federalist," Elbaz said.

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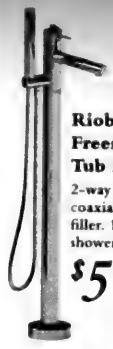

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Couple hopes to raise awareness of breast cancer

Continued from page 3

As a way to celebrate and give back to the community, the couple organized Kol Isha: The Female Voice, a concert to raise money and awareness for cancer research and the BRCA gene mutation, which is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer. BRCA-1 and 2 are more common in Ashkenazi Jews than in other groups. Though she wasn't aware of it before her diagnosis, Lieberman had the BRCA-1 gene.

At the concert, guests were given free genetic testing kits for the gene. Money raised went to the Women's College Research Institute, directed by Dr. Steven Narod. The event, which took place at Beth Sholom Synagogue on March 27, was hosted by Dr. Marla Shapiro, of *Dr. Marla and Friends*, and included performers Amy Sky, Neshama Carlebach and Magda Fishman.

Moses hopes the event leads to a push for women to get genetic testing for the BRCA gene.

"The good thing about testing now, if you have information in advance, you can truly save your life. You can stop yourself from getting cancer," he said.

He also hopes it gives others battling cancer hope.

"Not everybody has the same outcome we do, and we recognize that. Having said that, there are many that do come out to a positive end and we have to celebrate every moment we have," he said. "It certainly gives you a new perspective on life when you get challenged like this. You learn to really live every day as if it's your last."

Melissa Lieberman with her husband Cantor Eric Moses and their children

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In the heart of Bloor-Yorkville

Joe Lebovic reflects on a life of philanthropy

There's no slowing down Toronto developer

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Joe and Wolf Lebovic are builders and land developers who are as well known for their philanthropic endeavours as their business projects. The Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in York Region, for one, has become a hub for the Jewish community in the northern GTA. The brothers have given millions to a variety of charities. Joe Lebovic is recipient of numerous honours, including the Canada Medal, though the Order of Canada has till now eluded him. Last weekend, Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University awarded the brothers honorary doctorates. *The CJN* recently interviewed Joe Lebovic in his Stouffville office.

You were born in Czechoslovakia before the war. Were you a yeshiva bocher back then?

Before the war, no I didn't go to the yeshiva until such time as I went to England. So when we left Czechoslovakia, I went to Hungary and from Hungary I went to England. In England I went to the yeshiva for one year in Sunderland and for over two years I went to Etz Chaim yeshiva.

How did your family survive the Holocaust?

We survived in Budapest by using false papers. The underground gave us papers saying we were Christian, that my grandmother was Christian. And that worked to a certain extent, but if the police or anybody got suspicious that your papers were not truthful, they made you drop your pants and if they found you were circumcised, you got hung up on the closest tree on the street. So when you walked in Budapest, you could see Jews hanging from trees, all those Jews who got caught with false papers.

I read you hope to live until you're 120. Is there more in your life you want to accomplish before then?

We're still working, we have more projects going than ever. We're making money and 75 per cent of what we make goes to charity.

We're adding value to people who are buying homes. We are creating more housing. And whatever the profits we're making goes to charity.

My brother's kids are already looked after. I don't have kids, so whatever is left over, all goes to charity.

Many people your age retire. Is that something you've ever considered?

No. I would retire tomorrow if I could find something more exciting to do than what I'm doing. Or more productive.

Your involvement in charitable causes is well known. Was there something in the way you were raised that leads you to give so much of what you earn to charity?

For us to give is very easy. It's in our genes. My great-grandfather was a big giver, relative to what he had. My grandfather was a big giver. My father was a big giver to charity. So to us it comes automatically. It's very easy.

Tell us why you were honoured by Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University.

Yeshiva University came to me saying we want to honour you and your brother. But the yeshiva does not offer us this honour because we gave them money. I think we've given to the yeshiva maybe $100,000 altogether. But when the president [of the yeshiva] came to talk to me, he said 'we're honouring you for what you have done in Toronto and for other charities, not for what you've done for the yeshiva.'

Is Jewish education as a charitable recipient important to you?

The whole Jewish religion is based on Jewish sustainability. To have sustainability the children have to understand what their religion, what Judaism, is all about. Whether it's religious education or education about Jewish history, what Jews have accomplished. That will make them proud of what they are, who they are. Also, the people who have a Jewish education enjoy a more comfortable family life and have a more fulfilling life by practicing the Jewish tradition.

Years ago, your family got into the land development business. How did you get into that line of work?

It was an evolutionary thing. Originally, my grandfather and my father were in the lumber and timber business. Through evolution we went from manufacturing lumber into the lumber wholesale business. From wholesale we went into the retail business. We were selling lumber to builders. Then we decided we might as well start building ourselves.

Joseph, left, and Wolf Lebovic

When you build houses, you have to buy building lots. You buy building lots from the developers. Developers are making more money than builders, so we started buying land and we became land developers. Now we are doing everything, building and land development.

Was it easier to get into the business in the 1950s than it is today?

If you consider that we had to borrow money at 24 per cent, plus two per cent legal fees, plus two per cent finance fees, I wouldn't say it was easy, because we didn't have much money. We had to hypothecate (pledge as security) the trucks to buy land. We gambled and we bought land and we survived. We had a few recessions and we managed to protect what we bought. We had 13 foreclosures and special endorsements from the banks but we somehow managed to struggle through and we survived.

What are the biggest differences today from the early days in completing a project?

The biggest problem is bureaucracy. To develop a piece of land, we have to go in excess of 160 procedures and if you manage to get a piece of land developed within 10 years, you're doing good.

You have to get approvals at every level of government. It's very easy for government people to say 'no,' because once they say 'no,' they haven't made a mistake. So there's no incentive for any level of government to give approval. And [the cost of] lots are so high because there are a shortage of building lots, because it takes that long to produce something.

You've given millions in charity. Are you satisfied with the way the money has been spent?

We have given unrestricted money. In a way, it's a mistake. But certain institutions will only accept, like the Federation itself will not accept restricted money. Once it's not restricted money, there is no way you can supervise as to where your money goes. It's controlled by the board and the board is controlled by staff, and not the other way around.

The same thing occurred when we gave $50 million to the Mount Sinai Hospital. We specified as to what should happen, but there was no written agreement. We told them what we wanted, but since it was unrestricted money, they did whatever they wanted and they did not do what we expected them to do.

I'm not saying they did the wrong thing. The work they're doing is exemplary. But it wasn't exactly what I wanted.

Are you planning to give away most of what you've made?

We give away most. Right now I have more problems deciding where it should go than how to make it. Today, we got to a point where people have more money to give than people who need it come up with a proper project with how to get it. Especially Jewish institutions.

The problem in Canada is not as bad as in the United States, where of the billions of dollars Jews are giving to charity, only 14 per cent goes to Jewish causes.

And it's going to get worse and worse, because my generation is more giving than the next generation. So I recommend that people making up their wills should make up foundations and designate now where their money should go.

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Daniel Gordis
Author explores life of Menachem Begin

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Award-winning author and lecturer Daniel Gordis was in Toronto last week to promote his new book, a biography about Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin, one of Israel's most controversial figures.

As a regular columnist for the *Jerusalem Post*, contributor to the *New York Times*, among other publications, Gordis, who made aliyah from New York to Israel in 1998, is regarded as an authority on Israeli current events.

In an interview with *The CJN* about his first biography and his latest release, *Menachem Begin: The Battle for Israel's Soul*, Gordis talked about the contradictions that made Begin so compelling and why there hasn't been an Israeli leader like him since.

Was there anything you learned about him through your research that surprised you?

I didn't really know a lot getting started... but I would say the main take away was the way in which – what for some people would seem to be contradictions – were commitments that Begin comfortably lived with side by side.

Before the state, when Begin lived underground, he was obviously committed to using violence to getting the British to leave. On the other hand, as soon as he saw that there was a chance to make peace with [Egyptian president Anwar Sadat], he became a peacemaker. He was deeply committed to the Jewish People and his whole life was about Jewish peoplehood and the Jewish People's right to the land and so on and so forth, and yet he was also deeply committed to a universalistic look at humankind.

He was committed to the Vietnamese boat people, and the Evangelicals loved him because of how he treated Christians in Israel. He was the one who actually advocated ending military rule over Israel's Arab population and it was ended because of his endorsement of that.

He was a person of violence when he needed to be, but he was also a person that made great strides towards peace. He was a person who was very, very public. He was one of Israel's greatest orators, if not the greatest orator that Israel ever had and yet at the same time, he ended his life really in hiding.

There were a lot of contradictions... Too many of us think about the world in black and white terms. We imagine ourselves being on the right or being on the left. We imagine ourselves being a person for Jewish peoplehood or caring about the world. Either this or that. And I don't think Begin was not an either/or guy. He was a both/and guy. He was a person who cared about all of these things at the same time. I think it's an important wake up call for all of us regardless of where we are on the political spectrum.

Was there anything about Begin's philosophy or political approach that you think Israeli leaders today should adopt?

I would say that one of the things that distinguishes Begin almost from everybody else that Israel has had as prime minister is that Begin saw the world through a biblical set of lenses. He didn't really see Israel as a new phenomenon. He saw Israel as a rebirth of a biblical model of Jewish life. He was returning us to a place where we had been.

He was a person of great passion but also a pragmatist. I think Israel has politicians who are great pragmatists and [Israel] has some very passionate people. But it has very few people who combine great passions with real pragmatism. You would not have guessed that Begin, in hiding from the British and being complicit in the blowing up of the King David hotel, would be the guy who would give Sinai back to Anwar Sadat. And you wouldn't imagine that the guy who got the Nobel Peace Prize would be the guy who would successfully attack the Osirak nuclear reactor [in Iraq] and you wouldn't suspect that the guy who successfully attacked the Osirak nuclear reactor would launch a completely failed war in Lebanon.

Life is messy. Life is not conducted in the pristine conditions of a laboratory and Begin understood that in a way that too many Israeli politicians simply are not willing to accept.

Are there any political leaders today that remind you of Begin?

I don't think Begin really has any great heirs, which is actually very sad, because he was perhaps one of the greatest leaders that Israel ever had.

Writing this book, I've interviewed dozens and dozens of people. I would say that a good number of them looked me right in the eye and said, unquestionably, Begin was the greatest Jewish leader since King David. Whether they were right or wrong is completely irrelevant. The point is that such intelligent people say that in all seriousness.... I think the reason he has no heirs, ironically, is because if you think about it, to the left, he was an anathema because of his history of violence with the British and because he invaded Lebanon and all those things. To the right, he's an anathema because he gave back the Sinai, he gave back land.

I think he did both of those things because, like great pragmatists, different periods of time call for different strategies and different tactics and a willingness to be either very hardnosed or compromising. It's kind of sad that no one has adopted his combination of ideology and passion.

Our generations are inheritors of a Zionist narrative that was basically fashioned by [former prime minister David] Ben-Gurion and his disciples. It was the Labor party, the Mapai party, the Israeli political left that was in charge for so many years, that really shaped the conception of how Israeli history unfolded and I think an examination of Begin's life is an opportunity to look into that history and ask ourselves some questions about it.

Daniel Gordis

Even though Ben-Gurion and Begin were kind of archenemies, arch rivals and nemeses for all those years, the truth is, we wouldn't have a Jewish state if it wasn't for David Ben-Gurion, and we would not have a state if it were not for Menachem Begin. I think that is a reminder for all of us that even if we have a certain space on the spectrum that we occupy, whether it's left, right, or whatever the case may be... the reality is we wouldn't have a state to be having a conversation about if it wasn't for both Begin and Ben-Gurion. There is something very humbling about that reminder that these two people who were archenemies were actually both absolutely necessary. If we could see each other today, even when we disagree as competitors, that both are desperately needed for the future of the Jewish state, I think we'd be in much better shape.

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"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.
The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.
Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."
The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Syria's an archeological treasure trove

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

Syria has been in the news because of its violent civil war. Recently, it has been reported that some of its wonderful archeological sites have been damaged in the ferocious fighting that has torn the country apart.

Syria is the jewel in the crown of biblical archeology. Ancient Israel features prominently in this column, but it's a poor relation compared to the lavish and grandiose treasure trove of sites that have been found in Syria.

The highpoint of archeological discoveries in Syria occurred in the interwar years, when Syria was part of the Mandate countries created from the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. As most of us know, Britain took Palestine while the French obtained Syria. Archeologically, the French got a much better deal. A number of spectacular discoveries were made during this time.

One of the first sites to be discovered was ancient Ugarit, the modern Ras Shamra, found accidentally on the Syrian coast opposite Cyprus by a peasant plowing his field in 1928. Within a short time, the site produced a new alphabetic script and a large palace. It turned out to be a bonanza for biblical scholars, who would use it for insights into obscure passages of biblical Hebrew, especially in such works as Psalms and the Book of Job.

Ugarit was dated to the Late Bronze Age, in the latter half of the second millennium BCE. It proved to be the link that tied the major maritime civilizations of the eastern Mediterranean together, including Egypt, the Mycenaeans and the Hittites. The great American Egyptologist, James Henry Breasted, referred to this period as the "first international age."

Further inland, the French discovered the site of Mari on the bend of the Euphrates River as it turned south toward Iraq. It turned out that Mari had been destroyed by the legendary Babylonian king Hammurabi around 1750 BCE. Archeologists found a palace with thousands of cuneiform tablets, some of which mentioned sites such as Hazor that were located in Canaan before it became ancient Israel.

Also on the Upper Euphrates, but dating some 2,000 years later, to the third century CE, is the site of Dura Europus. Its discovery reads like the plot in an old Hollywood movie. Right after World War I, a British expedition fighting an Arab revolt in upper Mesopotamia discovered magnificent wall paintings in a building that had just been uncovered by a desert sandstorm. They belonged to a Roman outpost that had been abandoned and covered up by desert sands. Subsequent excavations turned up a synagogue dating from the third century CE that was exceptionally well preserved. An Aramaic inscription gave an exact date for the building of 244 CE. It has been a major contributor to our knowledge of the evolution of synagogues. It was later moved to Yale University, where it can still be seen in all of its magnificence. Sadly, one cannot say the same for the rest of this amazing site.

NCSY marks 60th anniversary

CJN Staff

One Shabbat, eight shuls, six dynamic speakers. NCSY Toronto celebrates 60 years with a citywide pre-Pesach Shabbat April 4 and 5.

After so many years of bringing the community and alumni together, NCSY, the youth movement of the Orthodox Union, welcomes these dynamic OU speakers to the Greater Toronto Area: Steven Savitsky, chairman of the board; Rabbi Steven Weil, executive vice-president; Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, executive vice-president emeritus; NextGen director Rabbi David Felsenthal; director of education of NCSY international, Rabbi Dovid Bashevkin; and Rabbi Israel Lashak, director of NCSY Southwest region.

The speakers will speak about the unity and collective responsibility of the Jewish People as we approach the festival of Pesach, when we celebrate our liberation and freedom.

On Saturday night, April 5, at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation at 9:30 p.m., speakers will address the challenges facing the Jewish People in the next generation, followed by a traditional NCSY kumzitz with special musical guests. The entire community and NCSY alumni in particular are invited to attend.

"We haven't done anything like this before," said Rabbi Glenn Black, chief executive officer of NCSY Canada. "We are excited to bring such a talented group of speakers to the city, to say thank you to our many supporters and to recognize the thousands of NCSY alumni throughout the city. We can all use some inspiration."

Rabbi Black pointed out that recent surveys showed NCSY's work is more relevant than ever.

"The Pew report released last fall that painted a bleak picture of Jewish Identity was an eye opener for some, but we have known for a long time that the struggle to maintain Jewish identity and connection to Israel in the next generation is only getting tougher. We at NCSY have never been more prepared for the challenge."

NCSY Canada is dedicated to ensuring the future of the Jewish People by building relationships with Jewish teens, increasing Jewish literacy by teaching them about their heritage and traditions, establishing lifelong connections to Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael and enhancing their growth in Judaism.

Rabbi Glenn Black

"We're looking forward to meeting old friends we haven't seen for a long time," said NCSY alumna and committee member Amy Stopnicki. "Most alumni, from the 1960s to now, will tell you that their best NCSY memories were post-Shabbat havdalahs and kumzitzes."

For more information, please call Laurie Conn Zuckerman, laurie@ncsy.ca, 905-761-6279, ext. 236.

What does freedom really mean?

Rabbi Aaron Levy

Rabbinic Reflections

Many of us are quite busy preparing our kitchens for Passover, which is only a week and a half away! But how do we prepare *ourselves* intellectually, emotionally and spiritually for this most central Jewish holiday, the foundation of our religious history, ethics and peoplehood?

Reflecting on the themes of Passover is crucial for making our seder experience meaningful, the locus of lively and participatory discussion probing the Exodus story. I'd like to suggest that we contemplate the most basic motif of Passover, encapsulated in the rabbinic name for the holiday, *zman cheiruteinu*, the season of our freedom.

What is freedom? Let's explore four of its meanings through Jewish sources.

The prophet Isaiah speaks of physical freedom: "The Eternal has sent me… to proclaim liberty to the captives, freedom to the imprisoned" (61:1). And while the Torah doesn't use the word freedom in reference to the liberation from Egyptian slavery, this is, of course, the prime example of bodily freedom in Judaism.

After six years of indentured servitude working off a debt, a servant's master must set her or him free (Deuteronomy 15:12-15). As well, the Torah commands: "Do not let him go empty-handed: Furnish him out of the flock, threshing floor, and vat." Economic independence is a freedom that isn't complete until a person is enabled to be financially stable and self-sufficient. Similarly, the communal jubilee (50th) year marked the re-distribution of land to its original Israelite owners, ensuring that the principal form of wealth in an agrarian society wouldn't be absolutely lost or overly accumulated. As Leviticus (25:8-10) states, "You shall proclaim liberty throughout the land for all its inhabitants."

Although on the surface, Adam and Eve's eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is a sin, we can also see this act as the turning point in Genesis' presentation of humanity's maturation to free will, including the ability to think for ourselves, question, and disobey God.

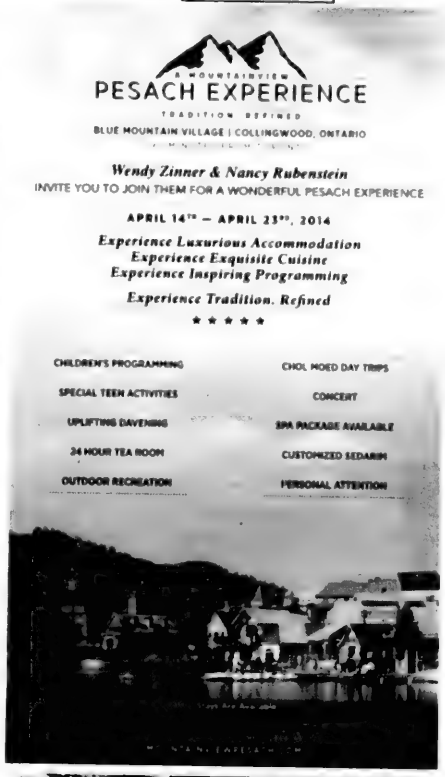
The Mishnah (Avot 6:2) asserts: "No one is free except one who is occupied in Torah study." Commenting on the Haggadah, the contemporary French-Jewish philosopher Marc-Alain Ouaknin furthers this theme: "It is a paradox of liberty that it can only be attained within the framework of order, of rules, of words and symbols of extraordinary precision." Spiritual freedom is achieved through learning structure and choosing restraint.

These texts suggest concepts of physical, financial, intellectual and spiritual freedoms. Celebrating Passover involves re-enacting and internalizing our history through eating and drinking, questioning and learning, singing and searching. So it's vital that we also ask ourselves and each other more personal questions: What does freedom mean to me? How am I free? In what ways am I enslaved? How can I move toward greater freedom?

Let's also remember that so many people around the world and here in Canada lack the freedoms that Judaism and we hold dear. I invite you to consider: what concrete deeds can I do to help others become free, able to proclaim more fully their liberty? Taking action on these ideas is holy work that embodies the meaning of Passover.

May we each deepen our understandings and expand our applications of this season of our freedom. Have a happy and liberating Pesach!

Rabbi Aaron Levy is founder and executive director of Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism in Toronto.



Judaism's timelessness anchors us

From the Bimah
Rabbi Philip Scheim

I am intrigued by commercials for medications that list all of the potential side effects, which can range from minor hiccups (literally) to rather consequential results, such as stroke, heart failure or death. It would not encourage me to purchase the latest decongestant knowing that I could pass away while taking advantage of my newly cleared nasal passages.

How we sell a product has relevance in the Jewish realm as well. When a non-Jew approaches us to convert to Judaism, we are enjoined by the Talmud to tell him or her that the Jewish people are "persecuted, oppressed, despised and harassed, and suffering afflictions" – not exactly an enticing invitation to become Jewish. We understand the reluctance of our sages to be proactive in seeking converts – we want people to join us for the right reasons, and we don't feel that everybody has to be Jewish in order to live a good and noble life and to inherit eternal reward. But are we doing enough internally and externally to convey the positive message of Jewish life and Jewish practice?

I would love to see full-page ads in our print and digital media featuring lines such as, "It's great to be a Jew!" "Kosher is cool" "Have you kissed your mezuzah today?" "It's eight o'clock: do you know where your tfillin are?" With the noteworthy exception of Chabad, few of us are sufficiently outspoken about the joys of Judaism.

Yes, Judaism is a great religion, but if one looks at our typical Jewish family, one could say, "Could have fooled me." For if Judaism is so great, why are so many Jews so unenthusiastic about it? Why have so many of us failed to be excited by Judaism's treasures? Most Jewish families still gather for some form of Passover seder, but we know how many of us enter the seder with an attitude of "been there – done that," paying little or no attention to the rituals or the text of the Haggadah. We sense that the so-called wicked child, who asks "What is all this service to you," is in certain ways better than most, because at least he cares enough to ask a question and shows some signs of interest. We take heart in that he seeks an answer, an answer that can have the potential of turning him around and bringing him back to the active community.

Walk into a bookstore (while some still exist) and look at the discount table. Look at the computer books that are now selling for $3.99, marked down from their original $39.99. Open the front of the books and look at the publication date. You will see 2011, maybe even 2012 or 2013, now steeply discounted because they are out-dated.

Look at the same remainder table. Look for copies of the Babylonian Talmud, which was not completed three years ago, but some 1,500 years ago. You won't find one, because our sacred texts, from the invention of printing in 1450, to this very day, sell substantially the same number of copies each year.

Unlike the books and tools of modern technology, they have no limits to their shelf life. Rather, the texts and the rituals of tradition last forever. They remind us, in a world where few things last very long at all, where this morning's innovation is this afternoon's relic, that there is a place for timelessness, that there is a place for those cherished traditions that anchor us into an eternal continuum.

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Prisoner release must benefit Israel: Netanyahu

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel won't release more Palestinian prisoners without getting something in return, and such a deal will be brought to the cabinet for approval, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu made the statements Sunday morning at a meeting of his Likud party government ministers ahead of the weekly cabinet meeting.

The remarks came a day after Israel missed a deadline for releasing a fourth group of Palestinians from Israeli prisons. Israel had agreed in August to release a total of 104 prisoners, including 14 Israeli-Arabs, in order to jump-start peace negotiations, which are scheduled to end at the close of next month.

"I suggest that all speculation be avoided until the full picture becomes clear, and this could happen in a matter of a few days," Netanyahu said.

"Either this is going to be settled or it's going to fall apart. At any rate, there won't be any deal until it's clear what the State of Israel is getting in return, and if there is a deal it will be brought to the government for approval."

The *Times of Israel* and *Ha'aretz* reported that Israel had offered to release another 400 Palestinian prisoners if the Palestinians agreed to extend the talks past their nine-month deadline and again agree not to turn to international bodies, including the United Nations, for statehood recognition.

Israeli Economy Minister Naftali Bennett, head of the Jewish Home party, said he would work to prevent the release of additional prisoners, saying in a Sunday morning Facebook post that he has received "hundreds of inquiries" about the rumoured deal.

"Let me be clear: this will not happen," he said in a Facebook post.

Also Sunday, chief Palestinian peace negotiator Saeb Erekat reportedly issued a statement disputing that the prisoner releases had anything to do with continuation or progress in the peace talks. Instead, the Palestinian *Maan* news agency reported, Erekat said that Israel's agreement to release the 104 prisoners held since before the 1993 Oslo Accords was in exchange for Palestinian agreement not to turn to international bodies to achieve statehood.

He said the Palestinians were still holding "sensitive talks" with the United States and Israel.

Benjamin Netanyahu at weekly cabinet meeting ***[Israel Sun photo]***

Israelis want Reform, Conservative Jews recognized

JTA

Nearly half of Israelis surveyed said Israel's Chief Rabbinate should officially recognize Reform and Conservative Judaism.

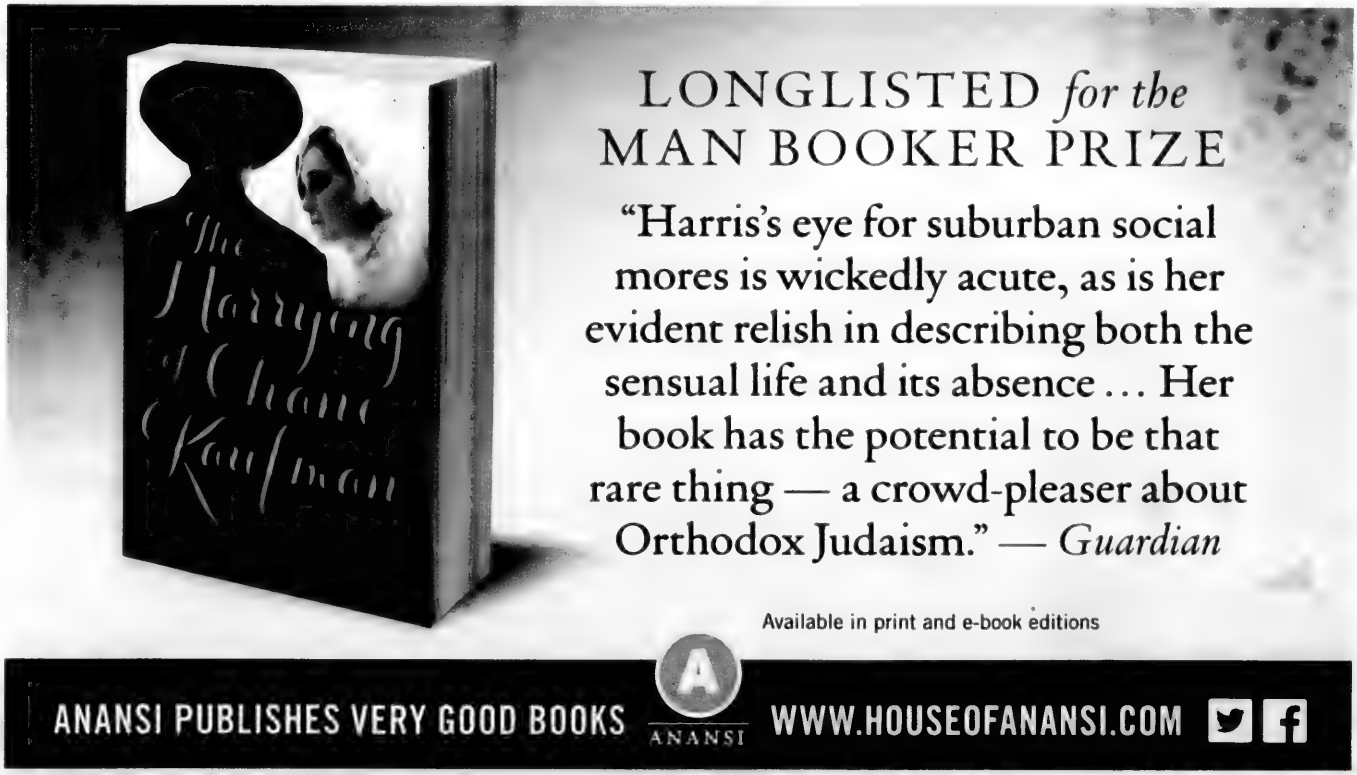
In the poll of 500 adults, 49 per cent "strongly feel that the Chief Rabbinate should officially recognize the Reform and Conservative streams of Judaism," *Walla.com* reported, because this "will in turn strengthen the connection with American Jews."

The poll, published March 27, was commissioned by the Ruderman Family Foundation and conducted by Teleseker polling. It focused on how Israelis perceive the relationship between their countrymen and state institutions and U.S. Jews.

Asked about whether the views of American Jews on the peace process should be taken into account, 30 per cent of respondents said "to some extent," 22 per cent said "to a great extent" and 18 per cent said "not at all."

Thirty-one per cent of respondents said that Diaspora Jews should not be represented in the Knesset while 29 per cent said Diaspora Jews should be represented "to some extent."

The survey was conducted ahead of a trip to New York and Boston that the Ruderman Family Foundation is organizing for six Knesset members to learn more about U.S. Jewry.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Guest Voice

Should Israel be defined as a 'Jewish state'?

David Berlin
Special to The CJN

The Arab League issued an official communiqué on March 26, declaring that "it would never recognize Israel as a Jewish state." The statement came near the end of a two-day Arab leaders' summit in Kuwait.

Addressing the plenary a day earlier, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas charged that during the past eight months of negotiations, Israel has refused to budge an inch on its settlement plan. Abbas reproached Israel for aggressively pursuing the "Judaization of Jerusalem" and for its relentless expansion of the settlement project.

The Arab weekly *Al-Ahram* noted that while the "Gaza Strip receives nearly 40 per cent of its food and clothes through the Karm Abu Salem crossing, this crossing is closed on Jewish holidays.

None of these charges, nor the Arab League's incorrigible position, surprised many Israelis. On the contrary, at least since U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry recommended that Israel back away from the Jewish state designation, the issue has thoroughly and often madly engaged Jews, not only in Israel, but also in North America and the European Union.

Indeed, the debate has become so intense that Ari Shavit, a senior columnist for *Ha'aretz* newspaper, found it fit to suggest that an overall offensive is being waged by American and Israeli peace seekers who are furiously attacking the Jewish People's right to self-definition.

Shavit insists that such a right should be upheld. He claims that just as Israel must recognize Palestine as a Palestinian homeland, so, too, must the Arab states in general, and Palestinian leaders in particular, acknowledge Israel as a Jewish homeland.

Like Naftali Bennett, the leader of the Jewish Home party, Shavit believes that if there is no recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, there will also not be a two-state solution.

Other Israelis dismiss both the logic and the morality of this position. To Israelis like Y., former deputy head of the Mossad, demanding that Abbas recognize Israel as a Jewish state is forcing him to betray the 1.3 million Arab-Israelis currently living on the Israeli side of the Green Line. Over coffee in downtown Tel Aviv recently, Y. told me that at the office *(misrad* – which is how Mossad members refer to their headquarters), they used to call Benjamin Netanyahu's demand for recognition of a Jewish state "the goat trick."

The goat trick, Y. explained, always comes at the end of a round of negotiations, when one of the negotiators says, "And oh, by the way, I also want that goat of yours. This last demand, as trivial as it may sometimes be, is the straw that breaks the camel's back… It has no other meaning than to kill negotiations."

To many older Israelis, the analogy "Palestine for Palestinians" = "Israel for Jews" is not only a good example of bad logic (it should read Palestine for Palestinians = Israel for Israelis), nor the end of John Kerry's initiative, but even more, it is also the death knell of the original Israeli spirit.

In an essay titled "Israelis used to be Hebrews. Now what are we?" the 90-year-old Israeli poet Haim Guri reminded his fellow countrymen that as Hebrews (Ivrim), we Israelis were once far less Jewish. "There was the General Federation of Hebrew Workers…, Tel Aviv, the first Hebrew city, the Hebrew University…" There was a demand: "*Ivri daber Ivrit*" – a Hebrew person speaks Hebrew.

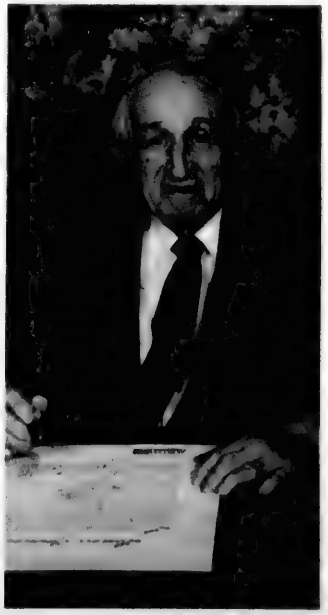
Hebrew identity, Guri wrote, was not the diametric opposite of Jewish identity, which is how the Canaanite movement saw it. Rather, it was an expression of a historical and revolutionary change of direction among those who came from the Diaspora and their offspring. Before the First Zionist Congress in 1897, author Micha Joseph Berdyczewski asked, "Are we the last Jews or the first Hebrews?"

Being Hebrew was an expression of renewal and change, Guri said. "When we filled the streets in 1939…, tens of thousands demonstrating against the British White Paper, we shouted, 'Free immigration,' 'a Hebrew state.' We did not call for a Jewish state."

How will this still civil, civil war come to an end? According to Hebrew University history professor Daniel Bateman, a lot depends on world Jewry, which must now decide whether it can live with Israel as a modern nation state that's inwardly Jewish but does not wear Judaism on its sleeve, whether it still needs Israel to remain explicitly Jewish. What is certain is that unless world Jewry feels confident enough in itself, unless, that is, the Diaspora is prepared to cut the umbilical chord strapping it to the State of Israel, and unless world Jewry grants Israelis the freedom to duke it out amongst themselves and promises to remain faithful no matter how things pan out, unless that happens there will probably be no peace agreement now or at any time in the future.

David Berlin was the first editor in chief of The Walrus *magazine. His latest essay,* Making Sense of the Sixties, *appears in this month's issue of the magazine.*

A bright light in the life of Jewish Toronto goes out with the passing of Morris Flicht



Morris Flicht

In 2011, Morris Flicht z"l included his story in The Jewish Foundation's Book of Life, an ever-growing archival collection of family stories from those who have left a legacy to ensure the future of the Jewish community. These narratives reveal the unique road to philanthropy travelled by each storyteller. Morris, who passed away on March 18, 2014, was a long-time supporter of United Jewish Appeal, a Chair of UJA's Societies Division for over 20 years, and a talented, passionate and tireless UJA canvasser for over 50 years. Morris's legacy lives on through his story, his endowment fund, which he established at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto to perpetuate his gift to the UJA Annual Campaign, and, more than anything, through the countless lives he touched with his warmth, compassion and wit.

Giving is far greater than receiving — that is one of the most valuable lessons my father taught me. He was a labourer, a Polish immigrant in Toronto, who arrived with my mother and me at the time of the Great Depression. He never made a lot of money, but what he lacked monetarily, he made up for spiritually. He always visited family and friends who were ill in the hospital, he always had a smile to offer anyone he passed on the street, and he remained active with his Beizetchiner Society his entire life. All the while, he maintained a committed Jewish life by davening every morning before his eight o'clock shift at the factory would begin, and performing cantorial services when he was called upon.

My mother was also an extremely devoted person, who looked after my father, me and two siblings, her parents, and two brothers. We were immigrants, so we remained very close — physically, because we all lived together in one home; and emotionally, because we spent so much quality time together, rooted deeply in Jewish tradition and practice.

For these reasons, it was inevitable that I would seek to help others throughout my life. My parents' giving nature was infectious.

I became a chartered accountant and grew my business over time. But what fulfilled me was my volunteerism. With my late wife, Ruth, to whom I was married for fifty-six years, we gave of our time to many charities including the State of Israel, B'nai Brith, UJA telethons, UJA Societies Division, and others.

We saw the community expand exponentially over two short generations, and today it astounds me how the Jewish community is thriving. I can only hope that this upswing will continue.

In order to contribute to the strength and fortitude of my community, I would like my gift to continue even after I am gone. That is why I set up an endowment fund with the Jewish Foundation of Toronto. Hopefully, some will remember that I did something, that I was not simply existing. And that, as my father showed me, I, too, can impress on others the value of tzedakah, in various forms.

Every Life has a Story... Lives and stories that build a community, inspire hope, honour family, value tzedakah and create a future of compassion and caring. May Morris Flicht's memory be for a blessing, and his legacy reflect his love of community. For more information on creating your Jewish legacy, call the Jewish Foundation at 416-631-5703.

Jewish Toronto is published as a community service by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. UJA Federation

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Olmert found guilty of accepting bribes

JTA

JERUSALEM — Former Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert was found guilty of accepting bribes in the Holyland corruption case.

Tel Aviv District Court Judge David Rosen announced the conviction on Monday morning in what has been called the country's largest corruption scandals. Olmert could face up to 10 years in prison.

Nine other former senior Olmert associates and businessmen also were found guilty on various charges including former Olmert bureau chief Shula Zaken, who on Sunday had agreed to testify against Olmert in exchange for a plea bargain; former Jerusalem mayor Uri Lupolianski; and former chairman of Israel's Bank Hapoalim, Danny Dankner.

Olmert, who was convicted of receiving about $150,000 in bribes through his brother, Yossi, becomes the first former Israeli prime minister to be convicted of taking a bribe.

Rosen said in his decision that Olmert lied in court. "Olmert's statement doesn't reflect reality – Olmert lied in court," the judge said.

Ehud Olmert [*Israel Sun photo*]

Olmert resigned as prime minister in September 2008 after police investigators recommended that he be indicted in multiple corruption scandals.

The Jerusalem District Court acquitted Olmert in 2012 on charges of fraud, breach of trust, tax evasion and falsifying corporate records in what became known as the Talansky and Rishon Tours affairs. He was found guilty on a charge of breach of trust in what is known as the Investment Center case. He appealed the verdict.

Israel abstains in UN Ukraine vote

JTA

WASHINGTON — Israel abstained from the U.S.-led bid to isolate Russia at the United Nations in the wake of its takeover of Crimea.

The non-binding resolution, which passed in the General Assembly on March 27 in a 100-11 vote with 58 abstentions, calls on member states "to desist and refrain from actions aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine, including any attempts to modify Ukraine's borders through the threat or use of force or other unlawful means."

It also declares a referendum held earlier this month to validate last month's Russian takeover to have "no validity."

Among those approving the resolution were leading U.S. allies including Canada and Poland.

It was not clear why Israel abstained. Israeli diplomats are on strike.

Israel has maintained a low profile throughout the crisis.

• • •

In Crimea, a Karaite community carries on, and welcomes Russia. Please see cjnews.com/news/international.

Aliyah fair draws thousands

The Times of Israel

PARIS — Thousands of French Jews attended an information fair in Paris about moving to Israel amid an unprecedented spike in immigration to the Jewish state and a wave of anti-Semitic attacks.

According to the Jewish Agency, aliyah to Israel from France saw a dramatic threefold increase in January and February 2014 compared to a year before. Some 3,280 immigrants from France arrived in Israel in 2013, compared to 1,917 in the previous year.

Sunday's fair, organized by the Jewish Agency for Israel in co-operation with the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption and the World Zionist Organization, offered information from representatives of many Israeli organizations and institutions, including government ministries.

More than 1,000 students participated in Jewish Agency-funded Israel experience programs over the past year, the organization said, twice as many as two years before. The immigration rate for French students who enrol in the Masa Israel program, for example, stands at 70 per cent.

The Drancy-based Bureau for National Vigilance Against Anti-Semitism, a watchdog group known as BNVCA, has recorded a spate of anti-Semitic incidents in France in recent weeks, including a violent attack on a Jewish teacher and a knife attack on a Paris rabbi and his son.

Timesofisrael.com

Passover desserts to delight

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

Even though everyone is full to brimming by the end of both seders, be it the first or the second, everybody I know serves dessert. And sweets in general, be they cakes, cookies or candies, seem to have a special place on our counter, our fridge or pantry during the holidays.

Perhaps it's the challenge of coming up with divine cakes and other delicacies during the eight days when no flour can be used. Perhaps we feel that since it's the holidays, we can indulge. I don't profess to know the answer since I too love to make desserts, basically anytime, but especially during holidays. And truly, the proscription against flour isn't much of a hurdle. We're lucky to have an abundance of fruit to roast, braise or poach, cookies can easily be adapted using potato starch and matzah meal, and flourless cakes have been popular for many a year.

That being said, I've opted to share a few favourites with you this year, one a fruit, one an everyday snack and one a cake so scrumptious that your family and guests will not only debate whether it's a cheesecake, a dense cake or a brownie, but will actually request seconds.

BANANA BREAD

A standard favourite that's great to have on hand for snacks or when you're tired of matzah with butter and jam!

4 large, very ripe bananas
1 cup packed light brown sugar
1/2 cup canola or vegetable oil
2 eggs
2 tsp. grated orange rind
1/4 cup orange juice
1 tsp.vanilla
1 cup potato starch
1 cup matzah meal
2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
pinch salt

Preheat the oven to 325. Lightly grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan. Set aside.

In a large bowl, mash together the bananas and sugar. Whisk in the oil, eggs, orange rind and juice and vanilla.

In a separate bowl, combine the potato starch, matzah meal, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Pour the wet mixture over the dry mixture, mixing with a wooden spoon just until combined. The mixture will look a bit runny. Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan.

Bake in the centre of the preheated oven for 60 to 70 minutes or until golden brown and the loaf springs back when lightly pressed. Cool in pan on rack. Makes 1 loaf.

HONEY ROASTED PEARS WITH MACAROONS AND CARAMEL SAUCE

Try to buy firm but ripe pears that will hold their shape. Basically, any type of macaroons or cookie crumbs will work in this recipe.

Continued on page 32

HAPPY PASSOVER
Chag Sameach
חג כשר ושמח

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Chocolate brown cake is unbelievably delicious

Continued from page 31

4 Bosc pears, ripe but still firm
2 tbsp. unsalted margarine or butter
1/4 cup honey
1/2 cup orange juice
Caramel Sauce:
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup oil-based liquid whip topping
2 tbsp. margarine
Garnish:
8 small honey or almond macaroons, crumbled

Preheat the oven to 375. Peel and halve pears, leaving stems intact. Using a melon baller or teaspoon, remove the centre core from the pears, leaving about an inch of cavity.

Grease a 13x9-in. glass baking dish with the butter. Place the pears, cut side up in the dish. Drizzle the honey over the pears. Pour the orange juice over. Turn pears over so that they are cut side down.

Bake in the centre of the preheated oven for 30 minutes. Turn pears over so that they are cut side up. Roast for another 30 minutes, basting with the sauce twice and adding up to 1/4 cup more juice if the liquid is being absorbed too quickly. The pears should be well glazed and very soft. (Pears can be covered with plastic wrap and kept at room temperature for up to 6 hours or refrigerated for up to 24 hours ahead. Bring to room temperature before serving).

Meanwhile, in saucepan, stir together the sugar with 1/4 cup warm water over medium heat just until sugar is dissolved. Bring sugar to a boil; boil gently, brushing down sides of pan with brush dipped in cold water, for about 7 minutes or until mixture turns a deep amber colour. Averting face, immediately pour in 1/3 cup of the whip topping. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes longer or until any solidified caramel has melted. Stir in margarine. Let cool. (Caramel can be covered with plastic wrap and refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Rewarm in microwave for 20 to 30 seconds if it hardens).

To serve, place one pear half on dessert plate. Crumble macaroon into cavity. Drizzle with caramel sauce. Makes 8 servings.

CHOCOLATE BROWNIE CAKE WITH VANILLA CHEESECAKE MARBLE

This cake is unbelievably delicious, but it requires planning ahead since it needs to cool for at least 6 hours before serving. I have made it with great success the day before. Be sure to allow at least 20 minutes for it to come to room temperature before slicing into thin wedges. In addition, be sure to use a 9-inch pan with sides that are at least 2-inches high since the cake does expand in the oven. It will collapse once it cools but this just adds to the visual appeal. Do not use a springform pan.

Vanilla Cheesecake Layer:
8 oz. cream cheese, softened
2/3 cup granulated sugar
1 egg
1 tbsp. vanilla
Chocolate Brownie Cake Layer:
10 oz. semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
1/3 cup unsalted margarine or butter, softened
3 eggs
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1 tsp. instant espresso granules
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tbsp. potato starch
pinch salt

Preheat the oven to 300. Lightly grease a 9x2-in. round cake pan. Line the bottom with parchment paper. Set aside.

In a bowl set over a pot of lightly simmering water, melt the chocolate with the margarine until completely melted and smooth. Set aside to cool slightly.

Meanwhile, make the vanilla cheesecake layer. Using a stand-up mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, or a hand held mixer, beat the cream cheese until fluffy. Scrape down the bowl with a spatula. With the machine running, gradually add the sugar. Beat for 3 minutes, scraping down the sides at least once. Add the egg and vanilla, beating until smooth.

Using a clean bowl and the whisk attachment, beat the eggs with the sugar until very pale and thick, about 5 minutes. Dissolve the espresso granules in the vanilla; beat into the egg mixture. Fold one-third of the egg mixture into the melted chocolate. Sprinkle the potato starch and salt over the chocolate mixture and fold in with the remaining egg mixture.

Spread just over half of the chocolate mixture into the prepared pan. Top with 2/3 of the vanilla batter. Then drop spoonfuls of the remaining chocolate and vanilla batter over top. Using the tip of a knife, gently swirl the mixtures together to create a marble pattern.

Bake in the centre of the preheated oven for 37 to 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted on the edges comes out with a few moist crumbs clinging to it. Do not overbake. Cool entirely in pan on rack. Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight.

Invert to remove from pan, remove parchment paper. Place on serving platter and serve at room temperature.Makes 12 to 16 servings.

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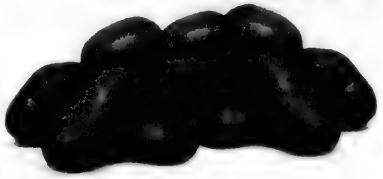

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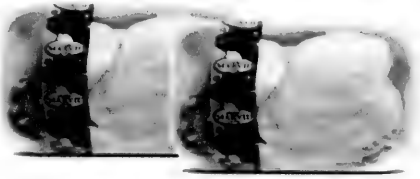

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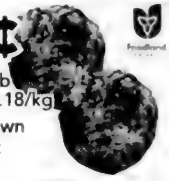

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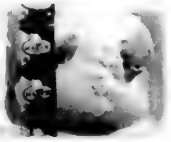

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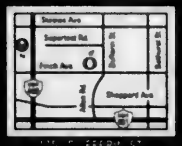

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Nuts over Passover

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

Don't get me wrong – I like matzah, I actually look forward to eating it one week a year, covered in charoset or slathered with butter and jam. What an ideal Passover treat! Matzah meal is great too in certain recipes, as it helps bind ingredients together and give dishes substance and body.

Many Passover dishes are laden with matzah meal. I understand this and recommend it for some savoury dishes. On the other hand, I don't love using it in most desserts. It's, well, blah. I have always relied on the input of my family when cooking and baking, especially when creating new recipes.

At Passover, I have learned not to bake with too much matzah meal or matzah cake meal. My kids will taste a Passover dessert that depends mostly on matzah meal in the recipe, whether it be chocolate, lemon or some other delicious sweet, and say, "Well, it's OK, but it tastes like Passover!"

I think it's important to prepare some desserts with little or no matzah meal or cake meal. Of course, sometimes it's necessary to add a little, just to hold a batter together, which is the case with my Passover Walnut "Mandelbrot." But walnut flour, which is easy to make yourself, masks the matzah flavour very well. Nuts are a great substitute for matzah meal in many recipes. Nuts taste wonderful in a dessert just on their own. Additionally, nuts pair well with fruit-themed desserts such as orange or lemon, and we all know that nuts and chocolate have always been a remarkable team.

Continued on page 35

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Mandlebroit
Seder Plate
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MENU #2
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls
Roast Chicken
Roast Brisket of Beef
Lockshen Pudding
Pan Roast Potatoes
Carrot Tzimmes
Cole Slaw
Lemon Roll
Macaroons
Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
Charoses
$349.00 for 10 people

MENU #3
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish
Cabbage Borscht
Roast Turkey Breast (precarved)
or Lemon Chicken Breast
Farfel & Mushrooms
Candied Yams
Green Beans Almondine
Cole Slaw
Fresh Fruit Salad
Passover Cookies
Seder Plate
Charoses
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Only 20% Fat per person
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MENU #4
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls
Roast Veal
Lockshen Pudding
Pan Roast Potatoes
Green Beans Almondine
Cole Slaw
Honey Cake
Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
Charoses
$205.00 for 5 people

MENU #5
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls
Roast Chicken
Roast Brisket of Beef
Chicken Fingers
Green Beans Almondine
Lockshen Pudding
Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
Charoses
$195.00 for 5 people

MENU #6
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls
Sweet & Sour Meatballs
Poached Salmon
Pan Roasted Potatoes
Green Beans Almondine
Lockshen Pudding
Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
Charoses
$179.00 for 5 people

ADDITIONAL MENU SELECTIONS

MEAT DISHES
Roast Turkeys
Turkey Breast
Cornish Hens
Chopped Liver
Cabbage Rolls
Veal Roast
Flanken In Borscht
Roast Duck
Lemon Chicken Breast
BBQ Chicken Wings
Honey Garlic Wings
Chicken Fingers
Knishes -Potato or Beef
Kishke
Meat Knepleck

VEGETABLE DISHES
Vegetarian Loaf
Matzo Lasagna
Stir Fry Vegetables
Grilled Vegetables
Apple Farfel Pudding
Farfel & Mushrooms
Potato Latkes
Green Beans Almondine
Broccoli & Mushrooms
Handmade Egg Noodles
Seder Plates
Charoses

SALADS
Cole Slaw
Pickled Beets
Tossed Salad
Cucumber Salad

FISH
Poached Salmon
Sweet Gefilte Fish
Salt & Pepper Gefilte Fish

DESSERTS
Apple Flan
Chocolate Cake
Chocolate Brownies
Chocolate Lemon Roll
Fresh Fruit Salad
Honey Cake
Macaroons
Mandlebroit
Mocca Cake
Passover Cookies

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PASSOVER 2014
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Liver & Onions $7.99 lb
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Egg Noodles (PACKAGE) $7.99

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SM LARGE
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Sweet Noodle $6.99 $10.99
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Kishka $8.63 lb

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Tuna Salad $5.99 lb
Egg Salad $7.99 lb
Beet Salad $6.99 lb

Fish
Gefilte Fish Sweet $11.36 lb
Salt and Pepper $11.36 lb
Poached Salmon $18.18 lb
Filet of Sol $15.90 lb
Herring $10.99 lb

Extras
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Main - CHICKEN
BBQ or Roasted Chicken 9.18 lb
Chicken Fingers $17.36 lb
Chicken Schnitzel $17.36 lb
Grilled Chicken Breast $17.99 lb
Grilled Chicken Thigh $16.99 lb
BBQ Chicken Wings $8.27 lb
Stuffed Chicken Breast $10.99 ea
Stuffed Chicken Leg $11.99 ea
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Main - BEEF & VEAL
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Meat Loaf $14.99 lb
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Roast Brisket $26.99 lb
Roast Veal $29.99 lb
Roast Veal Brisket $19.99 lb
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Main - TURKEY & DUCK
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Passover mandelbrot – or biscotti

Continued from page 34

ORANGE ALMOND CAKE

2-1/2 cups blanched almonds
3 tbsp. sugar
1 extra-large orange
6 large eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
1/4 tsp. salt
1 cup sugar
vegetable oil for greasing the pan
1 orange for garnish
Glaze:
1/4 cup orange juice
2 tbsp. sugar

In a heavy pot, cover the orange with water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 1-1/2 hours, checking that water continues to cover the orange. Cool.

Preheat oven to 375. In processor, grind the almonds with 3 tbsp. sugar until finely ground. Remove from processor. Cut orange open and remove any seeds. Process the entire orange until pureed, add eggs, vanilla, salt and sugar and combine. Add back the almonds and combine. Line a 10-in. springform pan with parchment paper and grease the bottom and sides well with vegetable oil. Pour in batter and bake for 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in centre of cake comes out clean. Cool before removing from pan.

To glaze cake, mix orange juice and sugar together until sugar is dissolved. Using a toothpick, poke holes in the top of the cake and spoon orange mixture over the cake allowing the mixture to soak into the cake. Refrigerate until serving. Garnish with orange slices.

ALMOND BROWNIES

1/2 cup margarine
1 cup sugar
7 eggs, separated
8 oz. bittersweet chocolate
8 oz. finely ground almonds
1/8 tsp. salt
1/2 cup chocolate chips or broken chocolate pieces

Line a 9x12-in. Pyrex baking dish with parchment paper and grease with some margarine. Break up bittersweet chocolate into small pieces and, in a Pyrex or microwave-safe bowl, melt the chocolate in the microwave for 50-60 seconds. Remove from microwave and stir with a fork until all the chocolate is melted. Cool.

Preheat oven to 350. In food processor or with a mixer, cream margarine and sugar. Add in egg yolks. Add chocolate to butter mixture then add in the ground almonds. Place egg whites in a clean bowl and with clean beaters whip until soft peaks form. Fold egg whites into chocolate batter until no streaks of white remain. Fold in the chocolate chips or pieces. Pour batter into baking dish and bake for 45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean.

Cool completely before cutting into squares.

Garnish with some additional melted bittersweet chocolate dropped from a spoon.

PASSOVER WALNUT MANDELBROT (BISCOTTI)

Since this mandelbrot is not made from almonds, and mandel means almonds, I give you permission to call them biscotti if you wish. And even though I did sneak in a small amount of matzah meal, these cookies taste nutty and delicious. You will never guess they were intended especially for Passover.

2 cups sugar
1 cup margarine
6 large eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
3 cups walnuts, finely ground
1-1/2 cups matzah meal
3/4 cup potato starch
1/2 tsp. salt
2 cups walnuts, chopped
1 cup raisins

Preheat oven to 350. Line 2-3 cookie sheets with parchment paper. Cream margarine and sugar in processor or with a mixer. Add eggs and vanilla, beat well. Add ground walnuts, matzah meal, potato starch and salt and combine. Add chopped walnuts and raisins. Spoon mixture onto the parchment paper in consecutive drops lengthwise across the cookie sheet, one length on each side of the sheet. Batter will spread. Take a knife and tidy up the sides.

Bake for about 35 minutes, or until golden and firm. Remove from oven and cool on baking racks. When cool, turn oven up to 400.

Carefully remove "logs" to a cutting board and with a serrated knife cut into cookies about three-quarters of an inch wide. Place the cookies on their sides and toast for about 12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool. Store in a covered container. Freezes well.

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Choose 1: Coleslaw or baby spinach salad with red onion, toasted almonds, Mandarin oranges and citrus vinaigrette.

Choose 2: Brisket au jus, BBQ chicken, baked salmon with orange miso glaze or grilled salmon teriyaki.

Choose 1: Garlic mashed potatoes with caramelized onions, vegetable farfel or herb roasted mini potatoes.

Choose 1: Green beans with caramelized onions and toasted almonds or candied roasted root vegetables topped with toasted pecans.

Desserts: Gourmet fresh fruit and Passover biscotti.

à la carte

Minimum order 10 people per selection.

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Maybe you can make the dish after all

Eileen Goltz
Special to The CJN

At some point during Pesach preparations, we've all tried to convert a mainstream recipe into a Pesach one, only to discover that we don't have a clue as to what to substitute for a chametz ingredient. This panic moment is why I started compiling my list of Passover substitutes. I've added some new substitutions this year. If anyone has any other substitutions that they would like to share please let me know at eztlog@gmail.com.

A reader asked for a conversion to metric chart so here are some equivalents:
1 teaspoon = 5 millilitres
1 pound = .45 kilograms
1 tablespoon = 15 millilitres
1 cup = .24 litres
1 ounce = 28 grams

- 1 oz. baking chocolate (unsweetened chocolate) = 3 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1 tbsp. oil or melted margarine
- 16 oz. semi-sweet chocolate = 6 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1/4 cup oil and 7 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 14 oz. sweet chocolate (German-type) = 3 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder plus 2-2/3 tbsp. oil and 4-1/2 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar minus 1 tbsp. sugar plus 1 tbsp. potato starch pulsed in a food processor or blender
- 1 cup sour milk or buttermilk for dairy baking = 1 tbsp. lemon juice in a 1 cup measure, then fill to 1 cup with Passover nondairy creamer. Stir and steep 5 minutes.
- For butter in baking or cooking, use pareve Passover margarine in equal amounts. Use a bit less salt.
- 1 cup honey = 1-1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/4 cup water
- 1 cup molasses = 1 cup honey (and vice-versa) now that the flavour will be different
- 1 cup corn syrup = 1-1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/3 cup water, boiled until syrupy
- 1 cup vanilla sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar with 1 split vanilla bean left for at least 24 hours in a tightly covered jar
- 1 cup marshmallow cream or 2.5 oz. = 8 large marshmallows or 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- 1 cup of flour, substitute 5/8 cup matzah cake meal or potato starch, or a combination sifted together
- 1 tbsp. flour = 1/2 tbsp. potato starch
- 1 cup corn starch = 7/8 cup potato starch
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar = 1-1/2 tsp. lemon juice or 1-1/2 tsp. vinegar
- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs = 1 cup ground cookies or soup nuts plus 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 cup bread crumbs = 1 cup matzah meal
- 1 cup matzah meal = 3 matzahs ground in a food processor
- 1 cup matzah cake meal = 1 cup plus 2 tbsp. matzah meal finely ground in a blender or food processor and sifted
- 3 crumbled matzahs = 2 cups matzah farfel
- 1 cup (8 oz.) cream cheese = 1 cup cottage cheese pureed with 1/2 stick butter or margarine
- chicken fat or gribenes = 2 caramelized onions. Sauté 2 sliced onions in 2 tbsp. oil and 2 tbsp. sugar. Cook until the onions are soft. Puree the onions once they are golden.
- 1 cup milk (for baking) = 1 cup water plus 2 tbsp. margarine, or 1/2 cup fruit juice plus 1/2 cup water
- 1-1/4 cup sweetened condensed milk = 1 cup instant nonfat dry milk, 2/3 cup sugar, 1/3 cup boiling water and 3 tablespoons margarine. Blend all the ingredients until smooth. To thicken, let set in the refrigerator for 24 hours.
- 1 cup wine = 13 tbsp. water, 3 tbsp. lemon juice and 1 tbsp. sugar. Mix together and let set for 10 minutes.
- For frying: instead of chicken fat, use combination of olive oil or vegetable oil and 1 to 2 tbsp. pareve Passover margarine.
- eggs: Passover egg substitutes don't work quite as well as the chametz egg substitutes. For kugels, matzah balls, fried matzah and some cakes, the recipes will probably be OK. However, if you want to avoid them (and I do) you can add one extra egg white and 1/2 teaspoon of vegetable oil for each yolk eliminated when baking. Use only egg whites as the dipping to coat and fry meats.
- Italian seasoning = 1/4 tsp. *each* dried oregano leaves, dried marjoram leaves and dried basil leaves plus 1/8 tsp. rubbed dried sage. This can be substituted for 1-1/2 teaspoons Italian seasoning.
- curry powder = 2 tbsp. ground coriander, 1 tbsp. black pepper, 2 tbsp. red pepper, 2 tbsp. turmeric, 2 tbsp. ground ginger. Makes 2/3 cup.
- pancake syrup = use fruit jelly, not jam and add a little water to thin. I always like to combine the jelly and water in a microwave-safe bowl and heat it gently before I serve it.
- seasoned rice wine vinegar = 3 tbsp. white vinegar, 1 tbsp. white wine, 1 tbsp. sugar, 1/2 tbsp. salt. Mix to combine. Makes 1/4 cup.
- rice vinegar = 3 tbsp. lime juice plus 2 tsp. sugar
- cider vinegar = 2 tbsp. lemon juice plus 1 tbsp. orange juice
- flavoured vinegar = lemon juice in cooking or salad, grapefruit juice in salads, wine in marinades
- water chestnuts = substitute raw jicama
- orange liqueur = substitute an equal amount of frozen orange juice concentrate

Continued on page 43

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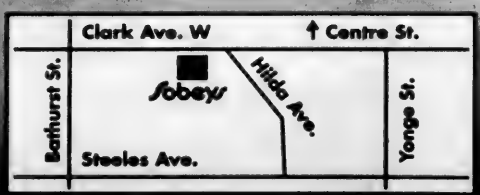

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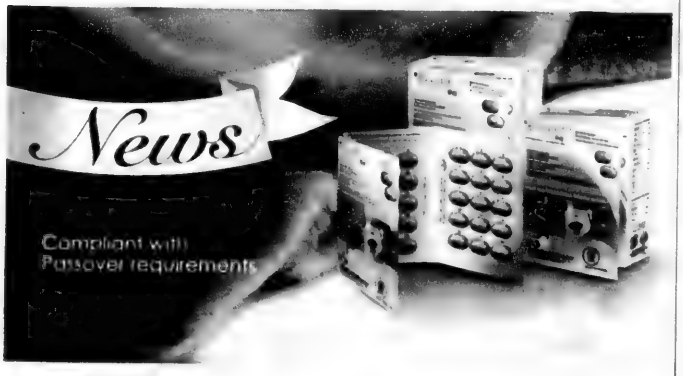

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Vegetarian and vegan dishes

Dorothy Lichtblau
Special to The CJN

During Passover, Jews around the globe remember our ancestors' liberation from slavery in ancient Egypt and the subsequent formation of the Israelite people at Mt. Sinai. It also is a festival of renewal, abundance and transformation celebrated around the family dining table. Here we pass down our foundational story, eat symbolic foods, sing, feast and drink throughout the night, with family and friends.

However, some feel this holiday is burdensome because of the many preparations, expenses and dietary limitations. Yet, despite the additional challenges, a growing number of Jews choose to be vegetarian or vegan to improve their health, for spiritual reasons or because this way of life aligns with their ethical views.

Debra Eklove, a Toronto-area Ayurveda nutritionf consultant, says a vegetarian lifestyle came gradually but naturally to her since it ultimately added to her well-being.

She interprets the few menu choices available to vegetarians at Passover as the freedom to explore the possibilities of spring crops.

Eklove likes this recipe she received from a teacher of Ayurveda cooking because it can be made as written or modified to suit the season and taste buds.

BOK CHOY IN CREAMY CASHEW BUTTER SAUCE

1 tbsp. cashew butter
2 tbsp. unrefined oil or clarified butter
1 tsp. daikon radish, minced (optional)
1 tsp. dried basil
1 small carrot, cut into matchsticks
4 stalks bok choy, or green of your choice, cut crosswise into 1-inch pieces
Sea salt and pepper to taste

Place the cashew butter in a small bowl. Using a fork mix in enough water to make it creamy. Set aside.

Warm a skillet or wok over medium heat. Add the oil. When it is warm, add the minced daikon and basil or herb or spice of your choice and sauté for 1 minute or until aromatic. Add the carrot and stir-fry over moderate heat for 2 minutes or until the carrot softens. Add the bok choy or green of your choice and stir-fry for an additional 2-3 minutes until crisp tender.

Season with salt and pepper. Stir cashew purée into the vegetables and cook for 1 minute or just until the sauce bubbles and thickens.

Serve with rice or quinoa depending on your Passover traditions. Makes 4 servings.

• • •

Though a long time vegetarian, a few years ago Lee Ann Gallant and her family decided to give up all animal-related foods and become vegan. The midtown Toronto pediatrician explains, "We choose to avoid foods that are procured through animal suffering and feel that our sacrifice is minimal compared to what animals go through."

Though now this perennial favourite floats in vegetable stock not chicken soup, her family looks forward to matzah balls "because it makes us feel warm and fuzzy thinking of holiday dinners with the grandparents of our kids." Gallant recommends this Passover recipe because "it feeds the body and soul" and comes from Colleen Patrick-Goudreau's "wonderful introduction to veganism," *The Vegan Table – 200 Unforgettable Recipes for Entertaining Every Guest at Every Occasion.*

Continued on page 39

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Matzah ball soup and asparagus appetizer

Continued from page 38

MATZAH BALL SOUP

3 tbsp. ground flaxseed
6 tbsp. water
1 tbsp. olive oil
1/2 yellow onion minced
1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1-1/2 tbsp. minced fresh parsley
6 cups homemade vegetable stock
1 carrot peeled and finely shredded
1 tbsp. chopped dill for garnish

Whip flaxseed and water in food processor for 2-3 minutes until a thick, creamy, almost yogurt-like consistency.

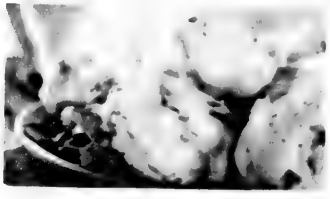
In a pan, warm oil and sauté onion until golden brown.

Combine sautéed onion, matzah meal, salt and parsley in a bowl. Cover and place in refrigerator for at least 2 hours or overnight.

When ready, fill a large soup pot with vegetable stock and bring to a boil. Remove matzah batter from refrigerator and form into walnut size balls, about 1-inch round. To help you form the balls dip your hands in water before scooping and rolling each one. You should be able to make 10-12 balls.

Once the broth has boiled, reduce the heat to a rapid simmer and carefully drop the balls into the liquid. Reduce the heat to a simmer. Cover and cook for 20-30 minutes.

When ready, ladle stock into soup bowls and place one or two matzah balls in each bowl. Sprinkle each bowl with shredded carrot and chopped dill.



. . .

A respected religious leader and adult educator in Toronto's liberal Jewish community, Elyse Goldstein is the rabbi of City Shul, a Reform congregation in central Toronto. She says, "I have been a vegetarian for over 30 years and raised three vegetarian children with my vegetarian husband. Kashrut was meant to combat cruelty to animals but the kosher factory-farming meat industry has lost sight of that goal. Vegetarianism is kashrut taken to its ethical consequence!"

The following recipe was created by the Goldstein-Sienna family. According to the rabbi, "it is an appetizer that has many of the traditional elements of the seder and easily takes the place of the usual gefilte fish. It's "spring" in all its glory!"

'KARPAS AND MAROR' APPETIZER: ASPARAGUS IN HORSERADISH SAUCE

1 lb. fresh asparagus, lightly steamed (or you can broil it with a bit of olive oil)
1/2 cup plain yogurt
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup red grated horseradish from the jar
1 tbsp. chopped fresh dill
1 tsp. lemon juice (fresh or from a bottle)
dash of salt and pepper
4 hard-boiled eggs
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

Trim the ends of the asparagus and lightly steam or broil.

Mix together the horseradish sauce ingredients.

Arrange cooked asparagus spears on a plate and drizzle with sauce, then garnish with hard-boiled egg slices and chopped fresh parsley. Serves 4 and can be easily doubled, tripled, or quadrupled.

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Charoset – part of the seder no matter how you make it

Sybil Kaplan
Special to The CJN

What Passover seder symbol is common to all communities but is not mentioned in the biblical passage that enjoins us to eat the paschal offering, matzah and bitter herbs? Charoset.

We define charoset loosely as a paste of fruit, spices, wine and matzah meal, symbolic of the mortar used by the Hebrews when they were slaves in Egypt.

The word is of unknown origin, but may be from the word *heres*, meaning clay, because of its colour. The custom of eating charoset is thought to have come from the time of the Babylonians who dipped food in relishes or sauces to add flavour.

Some years ago, I surprised all my seder guests by serving both the Ashkenazi version and a different Sephardi version, which everyone loved and wanted in future years.

The *New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster, wrote that the Iraqi version is one of the oldest and most time-consuming recipes, dating back to the Babylonian exile of 579 BCE. Made into a jam from dates, grapes, pomegranate and bee honey, it was a sweetener in the ancient world and is still used by Iraqi, Burmese, Syrian and Indian Jews.

The Talmud says charoset must be sharp in taste and similar to clay in substance and colour, and thus there are variations according to communities.

Most Ashkenazim do not follow the sharp and pungent idea, whereas Sephardim do. Ashkenazim tend to use apples, chopped almonds, cinnamon, red wine and perhaps matzah meal. Sometimes other nuts are used.

Sephardim and those from Middle Eastern countries tend to use fruits that grew in Eretz Yisrael in biblical times such as grapes, figs, dates, almonds and pomegranates. Israelis often turn charoset into a dessert by adding bananas, dates, orange juice and sugar.

Abraham Chill, author of *The Minhagim* (customs), writes that each ingredient symbolizes something different from the Egypt experience: the whole mixture stands for the mortar used by the Jews in making bricks. Wine is for the blood of the Jewish infants thrown into the Nile. Almonds are used because the Hebrew word for almond, *shaked*, is also a word that means to accelerate, so God accelerated the end of slavery. Apples are used because it

was said Jewish women gave birth to their babies under apple trees in order to avoid detection by the Egyptians. The cinnamon resembles the colour of the bricks they made.

In her book, *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen*, Joan Nathan states that charoset is "one of the most popular and discussed ritual foods served at the seder." She says the fruits and nuts refer to verses in *Song of Songs* mentioning an apple tree and the garden of nuts. The red wine recalls the Red Sea.

Because the maror or bitter herb is so strong, some say the real purpose of charoset is to allay the bitterness. As part of the ritual seder, the charoset and maror are placed between matzot to make a sandwich that is said to have been invented by the first century CE's Rabbi Hillel, hence, Hillel's sandwich.

Different Jewish communities have variations on the ingredients. Jews from the Island of Rhodes use dates, walnuts, ginger and sweet wine. Jews of Salonika, Greece, add raisins. Other Greek Jews use walnuts, almonds, pine nuts, raisins, cinnamon, cloves and red wine and spread it thickly on matzah. Turkish Jews include orange.

A Moroccan told me she used some of the seven species from the Bible in her charoset – dates, almonds, nuts, pomegranate seeds, figs, wine and cinnamon.

"The Food Maven," Matthew Goodman, once wrote in *The Forward* that Moroccan Jews sometimes make charoset paste and roll it into balls. He says this is a legacy from Jews of Medieval Spain who made the balls of apples, dried fruit, almonds, cooked chestnuts, sugar and cinnamon but no wine and then drizzled the balls with white vinegar before serving.

Jews of Venice use chestnut paste, dates, figs, poppy seeds, walnuts, pine nuts, orange peel, dried apricots, raisins, brandy and honey.

Jews of Bukharia use nuts, almonds, dates, raisins, apples and wine.

Egyptian charoset contains dates, nuts, banana, apples, wine, cinnamon and pomegranate seeds.

An Iraqi woman told me instead of charoset as we know it, they would buy a special date honey and sprinkle chopped nuts on top.

Goodman confirms this, explaining its foundation is date syrup called *halek*, made by boiling dates, straining the liquid and then reducing it over a low flame until thick. In fact, *halek* is one of the earliest of all sweeteners and may be the reference in "land flowing with milk and honey," because bees did not appear until later. Chopped walnuts or almonds are then added to the syrup. Jews of Calcutta also follow this custom.

A Dutch woman told me they make a chunky mixture with more apples and fewer nuts plus cinnamon, sugar, raisins and sweet wine.

Jews from Surinam in Dutch Guiana use seven fruits and coconut.

Following the injunction to have a sharp taste, Persian Jews use dates, pistachio nuts, almonds, raisins, apples, orange, bananas, pomegranate seeds, sweet wine, cloves, cardamom, cinnamon, vinegar and black pepper.

Likewise, Yemeni Jews use dates, raisins, almonds, nuts, figs, sesame seeds, apples, pomegranate seeds, grape juice, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves and black pepper.

Jews from Afghanistan pound charoset in a mortar with a pestle and use walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds, apples, sweet wine, pomegranate seeds, dates and black pepper.

Another Sephardi woman told me she combines almonds, dates, apples, orange juice, ginger and cinnamon then forms the mixture into tiny balls about the size of a large olive. The head of the family then mixes these balls with vinegar to resemble the mortar.

One exception I have found to Ashkenazim following the strictly sweet version was a friend whose father's family came from Galicia. He recalled their charoset was made from apples, nuts, wine, cinnamon and horseradish.

Whatever way you make charoset, be inventive and make several different kinds to serve.

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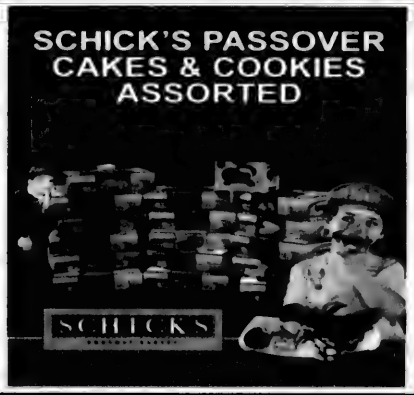

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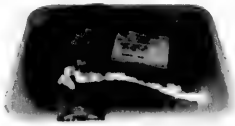

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Pesach recipes in the Yemeni tradition

Dorothy Lichtblau
Special to The CJN

Traditional Yemeni dishes are based on simple ingredients enhanced by a range of herbs and spices. The result is a flavourful cuisine.

In Toronto, the tiny Jewish Yemeni community, like many Jewish groups of the 21st century, celebrates festivals in more contemporary ways, but the stories and recipes of this tradition continue to be treasured.

Shaul Tsubari, a high school teacher and longtime Toronto resident, vividly recalls family Passover celebrations from his childhood in Israel.

"Cleaning and preparing for Passover was rigorous because customarily Yemenites were highly observant."

Tsubari recalls that every nook of his home was scoured to ensure there was no chametz, not even between the pages of books. Well in advance of the seders, his relatives would purchase a lamb or kid that would become a central part of the holiday feast attended by 40 to 50 family members and led by clan elders. Though every aspect of the seder was strictly followed, there was much joyful singing and plenty of delicious aromatic foods.

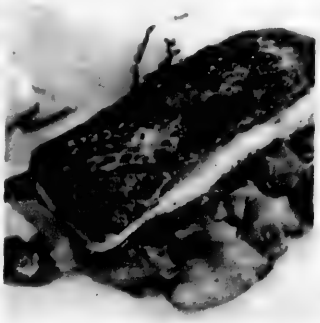
Tsubari explains that Yemeni Jews' long history in the Middle East means that rice and kitniyot are included with Passover meals, and that dishes are spicy. Zhug, a blend of crushed hot peppers, garlic, salt and oil, is a kitchen staple; honey is a popular sweetener, while lemon instead of vinegar is used to add a touch of sourness.

Tsubari's favourite childhood Passover dishes were matzah brei laced with zhug and Yemeni-style chicken soup.

Jennifer Badani's husband, Shlomo, has Yemeni roots, and she has many fond memories of seders at her sister-in-law's home.

"There was lots of singing, many guests and the food was tasty and interesting," she recalls.

Dishes that still make her mouth water are a spicy fish dish, Yemeni charoset, chicken soup and fruit salad spiked with orange liqueur. Regrettably, Jennifer's sister-in-law moved to Israel upon retirement. Now, the Badanis enjoy Yemeni Passover dishes with friends.



TSUBARI'S YEMENI CHAROSET

1/2 cup almonds
1/3 cup walnuts
8 oz. pitted dates
1/2 cup raisins
1-1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
pinch of ground cloves
1/4 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 tsp. ground cardamom
pinch of freshly ground pepper
2 to 4 tbsp. sweet red wine

Finely chop almonds and walnuts in a food processor almost to a powder. Remove nut powder from the processor then finely chop dates and raisins. Combine chopped nuts with chopped fruit in a bowl. Stir in spices. Gradually stir in enough wine to make a thick spread. Serve at room temperature or cold.

YEMENI FISH IN TOMATO SAUCE

From the Badani recipe collection

Sauce:
1 tbsp. each of olive oil, parsley, dill, garlic, chopped tomato and coriander
red, green, orange and yellow pepper, 1 of each, chopped
1 tbsp. hot paprika, or to taste
1 tbsp. hawaij (Yemeni ground spice mixture, recipe below)
salt and pepper to taste
1 scallion, with stalk, chopped
3 lb. firm fleshed fish fillets (whiting, flounder, cod, pickerel or salmon)

Mix oil, tomato, parsley, dill, coriander, hot paprika, garlic, red, green, orange and yellow pepper in a large skillet and simmer on a low flame for 15 minutes. Add scallion to pan.

Sprinkle hawaij onto fish. Slide fish pieces carefully into baking dish for oven, making sure not to break them up.

Bake in the oven at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Remove from flame and let cool.

Remove fish pieces to a serving dish and pour sauce on top. Serve slightly warm or at room temperature. Serves 4 as a main dish, 6 as an appetizer.

Hawaij: Spice Mixture
3 tbsp. black peppercorns
2 tbsp. garlic powder
2 tbsp. cumin
8 whole cloves
8 cardamom pods

In a spice or coffee grinder, or with a mortar and pestle, grind spices together finely and store in a tightly closed container.

YEMENI CHICKEN SOUP

From The Melting Pot website

2-1/4 lb. chicken quarters
3 carrots, peeled
2 small onions, roughly chopped
2 sticks celery, roughly chopped
6 potatoes cut in large pieces
1/2 bunch parsley
5 garlic cloves, lightly crushed
1 tbsp. hawaij spice

Wash the chicken well and place in large pot. Fill the pot with cold water until the chicken pieces are well submerged, then bring to boil. Once the water begins boiling, skim the surface of fat and other impurities.

Place vegetables and parsley into the pot, then sprinkle with hawaij spice, season with salt and pepper to taste, and return to a boil. Once water has reached boiling point, immediately reduce heat to simmer and cook for about 45 minutes.

Soup and chicken legs can be served separately, but are commonly eaten in the same bowl.

Provide plenty of matzah to dip into the broth.

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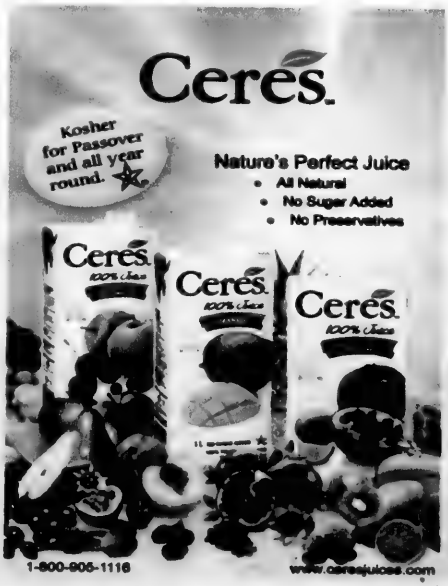

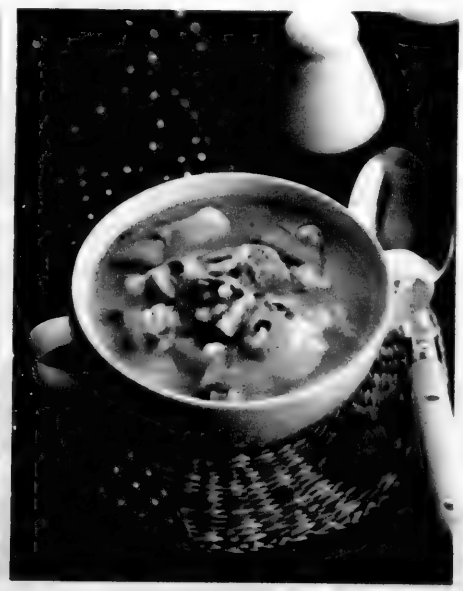

Soy and teriyaki substitutes

Continued from page 36

SOY SAUCE SUBSTITUTE

This soy sauce substitute doesn't taste exactly like the real thing, but it makes a flavourful alternative for Pesach stir-fry.

2 tbsp. beef broth
1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
1 tsp. balsamic vinegar
1 tbsp. brown sugar
1 tsp. oil
1/8 tsp. garlic powder
black pepper to taste
1/4 cup boiling water

Combine all the ingredients. At this point, you can either a) use the sauce as is, leaving for an hour to give the flavours a chance to blend, or b) for a thicker, richer sauce, boil the liquid until it is reduced by half, about 3 tablespoons. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator. Makes 2/3 cup. Use the sauce within 3-4 days.

PASSOVER TERIYAKI SUBSTITUE

1/4 cup soy sauce substitute
1 cup water
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 tsp. garlic powder
5 tbsp. packed brown sugar
2 tbsp. honey
2 tbsp. potato starch
1/4 cup cold water

In a small saucepan, combine all the ingredients *except* the potato starch and water. Whisk to combine. Gently start to heat the mixture. In a separate bowl, whisk together the potato starch and water until smooth. Immediately whisk the mixture into the warming liquid and continue stirring and cooking just until the mixture starts to thicken slightly. Immediately remove from heat and cool. Store, covered, in the refrigerator.

CASHEW SOUR CREAM

It's creamy and you can use it in any recipe that calls for sour cream. It refrigerates well.

1 cup raw cashews (must not be roasted or salted)
1/4 tsp. salt
1-2 tsp. apple cider vinegar
1 small lemon, juiced

Cover cashews with water and soak for a few hours, or overnight. Pour off all water, and place nuts in food processor. Add 1/4 cup cold water, salt, vinegar and lemon juice. Purée for 3-4 minutes or until completely smooth and creamy in consistency. Use in any recipe that calls for sour cream. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to a week. Makes 1 cup.

CORN SYRUP SUBSTITUTE

2 cups white sugar
3/4 cup water
1/4 tsp. cream of tartar
1 dash salt

Combine all ingredients in a heavy, large pan. Stir and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and put cover on it for 3 minutes to get sugar crystals off the sides of the pan. Uncover and cook until it reaches soft-ball stage. Stir often. Cool syrup and store in a covered container at room temperature.

OYSTER SAUCE SUBSTITUTE
Great with fish

1 mushroom/vegetable bouillon cube (or 1 tablespoon of the powdered stuff)
1/2 cup boiling water
1 tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. potato starch
1 tsp. cold water

In a saucepan combine the bouillon, sugar and boiling water. Boil for 2 to 3 minutes.

While it's boiling, in a cup combine the potato starch and cold water, mix to combine and add mixture to the boiling broth. Simmer, whisking constantly until the mixture thickens.

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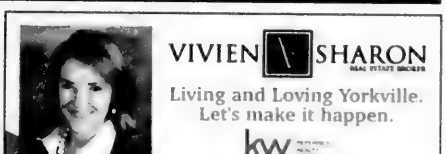

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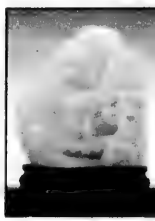

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Federation launches Jewish technology network

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

UJA Federation last week unveiled its program to bring together Jewish professionals by – what else? – bringing together Jewish professionals, as it unveiled its Jewish Technology Entrepreneurial Circle (JTEC).

"Our mantra," explained Elik Jaeger, the Israeli-born entrepreneur and brains behind the venture, is "connecting the community through technology."

The result can be "magic" as entrepreneurs, employees and others meet, network and mentor while creating new business ventures. JTEC will connect a new generation of community leaders and philanthropists to ensure a thriving Jewish community, he said.

About 150 people attended the sold-out event at 111 Richmond St., itself an innovative office building and collaborative work environment that serves as Google Canada's headquarters.

A panel of high-tech heavyweights, moderated by technology journalist Marc Saltzman, outlined their perspectives on the role technology and innovation can play for Jewish businesspeople.

The panel consisted of John Albright, co-founder and managing partner of Relay Ventures, an early stage investment fund focused on mobile connectivity;

Elik Jaeger

Daniel Debow, co-founder of Rypple and Workbrain, who now is senior vice-president at Salesforce.com; and Gary Lipovetsky, co-founder of Dealfind.com.

Saltzman kicked off the discussion by noting the importance of creating a strong technology and entrepreneurial community while encouraging mentorship and networking, "with a Jewish thread."

"We need a way to work together and solidify relationships," he said.

Saltzman said his visits to Israel highlighted the differences in the way high-tech business is done there compared to

Gary Lipovetsky

Canada. People in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem seemed to stick together more and "leverage their tool-set to work together." Canada's cultural diversity and geographic magnitude seems to breed a lack of togetherness, he suggested.

JTEC, he added, could be the birth of a technology-focused entrepreneurial community."

The speakers in turn described their entry into the world of business, each recounting in various degrees the importance of "commonality" and "collaboration" in producing successful ventures.

Sharing something you have in common, whether your school, a friend, a neighbourhood, or your Jewish heritage can open doors and at least warrant hearing their business pitch, Albright said.

Lipovetsky suggested that "Israel is like a big kibbutz," with plenty of collaboration. "I think that's what happens when you have a lot of Jews together.

"JTEC could be the kibbutz of technology in Canada," he added.

Debow noted that personal relationship in his life – including one with his babysitter – opened doors to him later in life.

"Investing is about trust," he said.

In his experience doing business with fellow Jews, failure is not an option. Falling short on a business deal or not coming through with something that was promised can kill a reputation, so "they only work their butts off," Debow said.

Daniel Debow

People pitching a product must show why their idea is worth an investor's cash. An idea alone is not good enough. You have to at least provide a prototype. "You have to come to a meeting with something done," he said.

Turning to the question of mentoring, Debow said it has to be a two-way street. The person being mentored should not just take, but also give something back to their mentor, perhaps even something as simple as a reference to an interesting article.

Lipovetsky said he sees "an entitlement mentality" among some young businesspeople, who expect investors to shower them with money for their projects.

Responding to a question from Saltzman on whether the focus of Canadian startups was too local, Albright said capital markets are global and they seek out products that are global. "Our biggest competition for local deals in Canada comes from outside Canada," he said.

Tech businesses should expand their scope, leave behind a local or regional perspective and think globally, Saltzman added.

Marc Saltzman

John Albright

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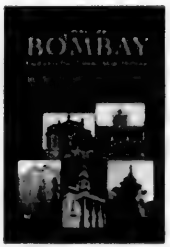
Dr. Shaul Sapir
Bene Israel Heritage Museum



There are four distinct historic Jewish communities in India – the Cochin or Malabar Jews, the Bene-Israel Jews, the Bene-Menashe Jews and the Baghdadi Jews – author Shaul Sapir explains at the start of this magnificently presented coffee-table book co-published with the Genealogical Research Centre of India.

While the first three arrived in antiquity, the Baghdadis were the most recent arrivals. Descended from Jews born in Iraq and other Muslim countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Yemen, Syria), they began arriving in India about 1730, clustering in and around the cities of Bombay (Mumbai) and Calcutta (Kolkata). While many escaped persecution in their former homelands, many were also attracted by the enormous mercantile opportunities that these flourishing cities offered under British rule.

India's Baghdadi Jews supposedly comprised only about 10 per cent of the country's Jews, and the Baghdadis of Bombay were only two per cent of the total. Sapir devoted nine years to researching this particular group, which had a disproportionately huge and beneficial influence upon the city.

Bombay's Baghdadi Jews excelled as traders and bankers, profiting by their advantageous situation between East and West. David Sassoon (1792-1864), whose family dynasty was referred to as "the Rothschilds of the East," plays a leading role in this history. A wealthy Jewish merchant, Sassoon fled from Baghdad in 1832 and established the house of David Sassoon & Co., gaining enormous wealth through the opium trade and building a trading operation that extended to China, Japan, Africa and eastern Europe.

In terms of population, Bombay's Jewish community reached its peak around 1947, just as both India and the State of Israel were about to declare their independence. The community was then about 30,000-strong, but afterward dwindled precipitously to only a few thousand or perhaps even fewer.

Sapir was born in Bombay to a locally born mother and a father born in Rangoon, Burma: one can imagine that growing up Jewish in such a place, with such an ancestry, must have been a rather exotic experience. He left while still a child and returned decades later to revisit all the sites of his middle-class childhood.

The book features sections on the historical background, synagogues, schools, hospitals, Jewish-run banks, industry, office buildings and residences of note, and much more. There are coloured photographs on practically every page and plenty of detailed maps.

The book may offer more information than many of us will require, except perhaps those who know the city or are planning a trip there. For many readers, the rich visuals and captions will be enough. Sapir has been a teacher of historical geography at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem since 1975.

• • •

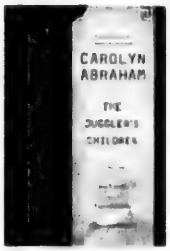
The Juggler's Children
Carolyn Abraham
Random House Canada

The late eminent American genealogist Rabbi Malcolm Stern once observed that there is nothing so fascinating to a person as his own genealogical research, and often nothing so boring as being stuck at a dinner table with a family-tree enthusiast who insists upon endlessly discussing their latest research.

With her recent book *The Juggler's Children: A Journey into Family, Legend and the Genes That Bind Us*, Toronto writer Carolyn Abraham gives us an account of her personal genealogical explorations, fuelled by scientific examination of her family's DNA, that never stops being fascinating. A former science writer for the *Globe and Mail*, Abraham also delivers a set of clear explanations of chromosomal markers, haploid groups, genetic mutations and other scientific terms intrinsic to understanding the huge emerging science surrounding human DNA.

Born in England of diverse and somewhat mysterious ancestry, Abraham focuses her investigations on two great-grandfathers: her father's paternal grandfather who came (from China) to the remote Nilgiri Hills region of southern India and was known as a juggler before he disappeared, and her mother's paternal grandfather, a sea-captain from Jamaica who also settled in India and died at a young age.

At school, her friends were curious "about a brown girl with a Jewish last name who went to the Catholic school," but Abraham couldn't answer their simple questions about her ethnicity and roots. As a young adult, she paid a rare visit to her grandfather in England and had an astounding revelation: "I saw something instantly familiar and yet utterly foreign in his face, in the gentle slant of his eyes. He looked Chinese. I was dumbstruck. My grandfather was Chinese? We were Chinese?"



An elderly great-aunt, discovered living in the Nilgiri Hills at age 103, is interviewed; potential relatives in a grandmother's old address book are telephoned; visits are paid to potential cousins in Jamaica and India; and old cemeteries and church records are combed through. In these and other ways, Abraham conducts a thorough, traditional genealogical investigation.

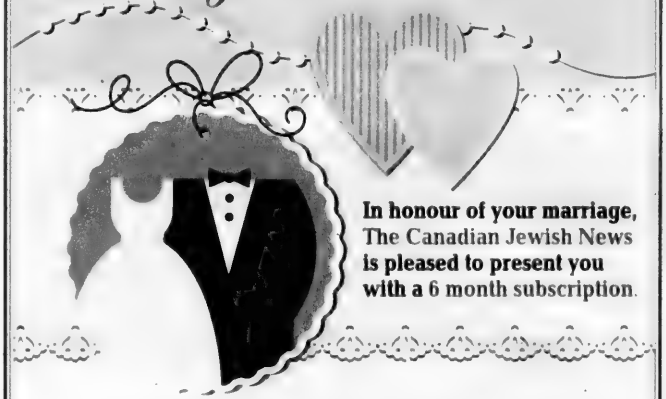
Yet she goes one giant step further by taking cheek swabs from various close family members and distant relatives in order to see what secrets their DNA – "biological mementos" from our ancestors – will reveal. Sometimes the results only confirm the obvious, but they also provide dramatic surprises such as the so-called "false paternity" or "pedigree error." (Incredibly, geneticists assert that roughly one in 10 people were "not fathered by the man they believed to be Dad.")

Amidst her colourful, non-technical scientific descriptions, Abraham describes the work of Toronto researcher Karl Svorecki who discovered that Jewish men from the priestly "Kohan" tribe, regardless of geographic origin, do indeed carry a specific set of mutations on their Y chromosomes (originally reported in the British medical journal *Nature* in 1997).

She also introduces us to many other leading figures in the modern DNA-related scientific community. These include Houston businessman Bennett Greenspan, who founded the pioneering firm Family Tree DNA, and American geneticist Michael Hammer, who helped determine that a Bantu-speaking tribe in southern Africa called the Lemba were descended from a small group of ancient Jews. (The Lemba still practise certain Jewish customs such as circumcision, keeping Shabbat, and not eating pig-like animals such as the hippopotamus.)

The Juggler's Children tells us as much about the author's particular and exotic family-tree saga as it does about ourselves and the unravelling modern science of DNA. It is well-written, informative, and an honest-to-goodness page-turner.

Congratulations!



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Toronto filmmakers document Romani Holocaust

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

The chilling stories ring familiar even to the casual student of the Holocaust: Deportations, beatings, cattle cars, torture, mass shootings, tattooed forearms.

Except these are not Jews speaking, but members of today's most persecuted ethnic group in Europe.

The Roma, commonly, though not always pejoratively, referred to as Gypsies, even have their own word for it. They may cite the "Holocaust," as many other non-Jewish survivors do, but their term for their war-era nightmare is "*Porrajmos*," meaning "devouring." It can also mean "rape."

Once stereotyped as hot-blooded musicians and fortune-tellers, and romanticized as Europe's noble savages, Europe's 12-15 million Roma and their subgroups today face brutal discrimination in housing, jobs and education. In many countries, they are ghettoized, denied services, face physical violence and pushed to the margins.

They are then vilified as thieves and vagrants.

During World War II, they were portrayed as less than human, lumped with Jews as parasites worthy of extermination. "Our ashes were mingled in the ovens," goes one Roma proverb.

How widely known is the Roma experience during the war and today in Europe? Generally, not too much, which is why *A People Uncounted* is so welcome.

The powerful 100-minute documentary, made by a Canadian – mostly Jewish – crew, premiered in 2012 and has already won a few awards (and has been nominated for a prestigious Producers Guild of America prize). It's entered in some 35 film festivals in over a dozen countries, including India and China.

It was screened at Toronto's Lodzer Synagogue on March 30.

Moody, thorough and hard-hitting, the film travels to eight eastern European countries to record the testimonies of Roma (or Romani) Holocaust survivors. It's hair-raising stuff, and the filmmakers do not pull their punch. We hear horrific tales of sadistic rape at Auschwitz, a baby and its mother trampled in a cattle car, even of cannibalism. It's a wonder that only a few subjects break down on camera.

The work is the effort of Toronto filmmakers Tom Rasky and Len Binder, both children of Jewish Holocaust survivors; director Aaron Yeger; and Robi Botos, a Roma musician who fled Hungary to Toronto years ago.

Music, in fact, was a great connector between Roma and Jews in the war era, the film notes. It shows a Roma violinist in Ukraine expertly playing the Yiddish song *Mein Shtetele Belz*.

Efforts to eradicate the Roma and related groups like the Sinti go back well before the Nazis, apparently to the time of Vlad the Impaler in the 15th century. The film traces the roots of the persecution through the centuries, and its echoes of the Jewish experience are striking.

"One of the biggest things I took away from the process is that there isn't a fundamental difference between people," Yeger, 31, said in an interview. As one expert told the filmmakers, though the remark was edited out, the Jews were the outsiders on the inside, while the Roma were the outsiders on the outside.

The two groups "suffered in similar ways, struggled against ethnic nationalism and particularly in some regions, were very close to one another," Yeger said.

He and a crew spent six weeks on a "road trip" shooting the privately-funded film. We also hear interviews with experts on genocide, including Prof. Frank Chalk, director of the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies at Concordia University.

A Roma woman displays her concentration camp tattoo in this still from *A People Uncounted*. As many as 500,000 to two million Roma died in the Holocaust.

It's difficult to say how many Roma and Sinti perished in the Holocaust. Though the film gives the number as 500,000, The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum says it's 220,000, while some experts put the figure as high as two million.

Yeger prefers to see the destruction visited on the Roma another way: In some places, 90 per cent of them were wiped out.

Today, the Roma are subject to "what is unfortunately socially acceptable and politically correct racism," Yeger said. "Politicians and journalists speak about Roma in a way that they would never speak about any other group that I can think of."

He feels the Roma's plight is self-fulfilling: "If you reduce people's access to education, jobs, [and] justice, they fall into poverty, they resort to lifestyles that then reinforce what pushed them to the margins in the first place, and on and on the cycle goes," said Yeger. "The Roma are still perceived as this permanently itinerant, anti-social group that's mysterious and chooses to exile themselves from mainstream society, which is absolutely not true."

One misconception is that they're nomadic. The vast majority are settled, we are told. And while some of the Roma traditional lifestyle and culture has been preserved, as in Transylvania, for the most part, that part of their identity is gone to history.

Unlike the Jews, the Romani have few resources to address the systemic racism they continue to face. In the city of Kosice, Slovakia, we see they are herded into a squalid ghetto called District 9, and receive water twice a day.

The film, said its director, is "the story of a group of people who are not different from any other people, but are eternally perceived to be radically different. The vast majority in every country just want to live normal productive lives, like anybody else."

See film trailer at www.cjnews.com/culture/arts.

Aaron Yeger

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

WORLD'S OLDEST HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR SUBJECT OF AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY

Alice Herz-Sommer

The Lady in Number 6 – Music Saved My Life, a 38-minute Canadian documentary film that won an Academy Award, will receive its Toronto premiere April 13 at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC.

Winner of the best documentary short subject category, the film tells the story of **Alice Herz-Sommer**, who was the world's oldest pianist and Holocaust survivor. She shares her views on how to live a long and happy life and discusses music, laughter and how to remain optimistic come what may.

The film was shot in her central London flat where she relentlessly played her grand piano well into her 110th year. Although she was reticent at first to play for the cameras, she overcame her shyness, and her immense talent is showcased with "a little bit of Bach." Sadly, Herz-Sommer died on Feb. 23, one week prior to the Oscars.

During World War II, Herz-Sommer and her son Raphael were taken to the Theresienstadt concentration camp, while her mother and husband were taken to Auschwitz and Dachau, where they perished. As a means to survive the terrors of the camp, Alice played more than 100 concerts for her fellow inmates. "Music saved my life and music saves me still," she used to say.

Tickets ($10, cash only) are available at the door before each of four screenings, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. Director **Malcolm Clarke** and executive producer **Frederic Bohbot** will participate in a Q&A following each screening.

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Artwork in Haggadot: Elaine Gold, a teacher of linguistics at the University of Toronto, will discuss artwork in the Passover Haggadah, looking at examples spanning eight centuries. She delivers her talk in English at a meeting of the Yiddish Vinkl, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St., Thursday, April 3, noon. $18 cash includes buffet lunch. www.yiddishvinkl.com. Reservations to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

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Names in the News: For the past four years, acclaimed Toronto author **David Bezmozgis** (*Natasha, The Free World*) has been writing a novel set in present-day Crimea. While *The Betrayers* is still slated for publication this September, Bezmozgis is faced with making dramatic changes because the story can no longer be set in the summer of 2014 as he had intended.

As he mused in a recent blog for *The New Yorker*, he did not expect recent political events to undermine his designs for the book; that was something one might expect about Israel, he wrote, but not about Crimea, which had not been so prominently in the news "since Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Yalta to divide up postwar Europe." He'd reasonably assumed Ukraine and Crimea "to be locked in a dismal kleptocratic stasis."

For Bezmozgis, the experience serves as a demonstration that the modern novelist can no longer pretend to keep pace with social and political changes around the world: information travels too fast, and "the clock continues to tick, threatening obsolescence." Can the modern novel engage with "the grander social and political phenomena of our times, especially now that it competes with a rushing stream of up-to-the-minute reporting?" he asks.

Publisher Little Brown and Co. has locked the book into a production schedule but has given the author until June to make changes to his manuscript. "Clearly, the only choice is to take it back to the summer of 2013," Bezmozgis commented in a post-blog interview, "which is something I resisted all along for other reasons that have to do with the novel." Come rain, shine, war or revolution, *The Betrayers* is due for release next Sept. 23.

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Arts in Brief

• **Dr. Miriam Trinh** discusses *Poetry from the Ghettos and Concentration Camps*, a free lecture in English. Co-presented by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's committee for Yiddish and the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, April 7, 7 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

• Art teacher **Osnat Lippa** presents "Treasures of the Guggenheim," a talk about the **Franz Marc**, **Kandinsky**, **Chagall**, **Picasso**, **Mondrian** and other pieces from the recent AGO exhibit, focusing on the movements of expressionism, futurism and cubism that emerged after World War I. The two-part Active 55+ series runs April 8 and 29, Tuesdays, at 1 p.m. $20 for both, $12 drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• **Jack Newman** looks at the many Jewish writers and comedians who influenced television comedy from the classic 1950s sitcom *The Goldbergs* to the current hit *The Goldbergs*. Miles Nadal JCC, April 3 and 10, Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. (doors open 1 p.m.) $4 per lecture. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Re-imagining a Jewish homeland in New York

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

It's been almost two centuries since the prominent American Jew Mordecai Manual Noah attempted to establish a homeland and refuge for the beleaguered Jews of the world in, of all places, Grand Island, N.Y.

Noah went so far as to lay a cornerstone in 1825 for the intended nation of Ararat, named after the spot where the biblical Noah's ark landed. However, the world's Jews failed to notice and Ararat was relegated to near-oblivion, a quirky episode in the saga of Jewish nationalism before Zionism caught on at the end of the 19th century.

Ararat has been the subject of many historical articles and several books, most notably Ben Katchor's 1999 graphic novel, *The Jew of New York*. Renewed attention has been paid to the story recently due to the efforts of Toronto-based artist Melissa Shiff, who has spearheaded a "Mapping Ararat" project to bring a new level of realism to Noah's near-forgotten dream.

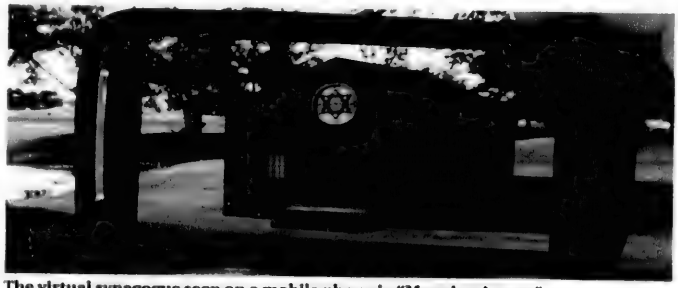
Using an app on their iPods or iPhones, visitors to the Grand Island site, near the corner of Whitehaven and East River roads may use their devices to see various imagined elements of Ararat – including a flag, port of entry, cornerstone and synagogue – inserted into the landscape. Plaques and video and audio files pop up, offering more information as visitors approach each element.

Shiff, who recently gave some group tours at the site, draws a parallel to the literary genre of alternate or "counter-factual" histories as employed by Philip Roth in *The Plot Against America* and Michael Chabon in *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* which takes place in an invented Jewish homeland in Alaska.

"In the literary world it's quite an established form, but in the visual art world, it really isn't," Shiff said, adding that in the art world, it's rare for an augmented reality project to be as extensive as Mapping Ararat. The project was conceived by Shiff and supported by a $62,000 grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The creative team also included her husband Louis Kaplan, who, like Shiff, is an academic at the University of Toronto, and technological adviser John Craig Freeman.

Living in New York for a year while Kaplan is on sabbatical there, Shiff and her team have lectured about the project "non-stop" at academic conferences and other gatherings, she said. She and Kaplan were keynote speakers at a recent conference at Rutgers University on contested memory.

Mapping Ararat "appeals to many different circles," she said. "You have the technofiles who want to hear about such an extensive project – a lot of augmented reality projects are not extensive like this; I think this is the first project of this kind that has this kind of scope. It also links into Jewish history circles and comparative literature circles and ethnographic circles. There are many communities that are interested in it."

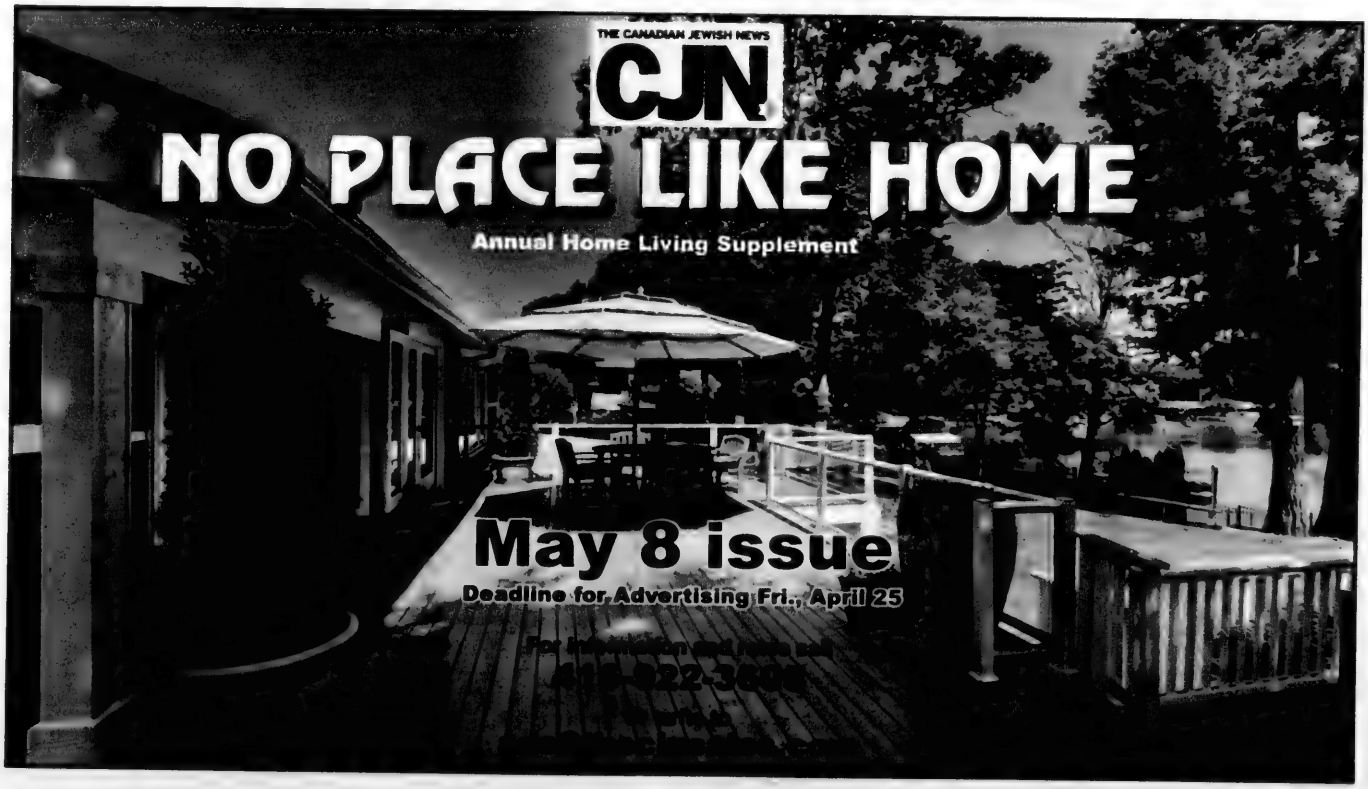


The virtual synagogue seen on a mobile phone in "Mapping Ararat."

While the funding for the project runs out in May, Shiff has already applied to SSHRC for new funding for more such projects. "The subtitle of the project is 'Imaginary Jewish Homelands,' so we're certainly considering other proposed homelands," she said. While Alaska, where Chabon's novel is set, won't be one of them, other potential localities include Suriname and the Kimberley and Tasmania region of Western Australia.

Besides the architectural renderings, Shiff has also designed a range of pop-culture pieces as if history had taken a bizarre turn and Ararat had actually come into existence. They include a postage stamp, postcards, movie poster and an Ararat dollar bill.

Might not someone possibly mistake one of these invented items as a real artifact? "Oh, that's already happened," she acknowledged with a laugh. "They were inducting Mordecai Noah into the American Jewish Hall of Fame and they happened to come across the dollar bill I designed, and they wanted to know if it was real."



Screenwriter finally has his Hollywood ending

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

It is a story worthy of an Oscar-winning screenplay: a devoted writer spends 16 years trying to break into the film business and finally makes it.

It is a tale filled with struggle and conflict, as well as the occasional plot twist. However, nearly two decades after entering film school at York University, Thornhill, Ont. scribe Shane Weisfeld finally has something of a Hollywood ending.

"I'm actually glad that things have been happening for me all these years later, instead of my early 20s when I expected things to happen," Weisfeld said. "I've got all these years of experience behind me. These years of discipline and practice definitely helped."

Weisfeld's first produced screenplay is *Freezer*, a thriller he co-wrote with longtime friend Tom Doganoglu. *Freezer* had a brief theatrical run and debuted in on-demand formats in January across North America. For two weeks, it was one of the top ten independent movies on iTunes.

The thriller stars *The Practice's* Dylan McDermott as a mechanic trapped in a meat freezer who must return $8 million to the Russian mob before he freezes to death. The film was also one of more than a dozen screenplays that Weisfeld wrote on his journey from film buff to produced writer.

Weisfeld became interested in pursuing film in his last years of high school after doing a report on the '80s classic *The Karate Kid*.

"I thought in order to be in the film industry, I have to go to film school," he says, hoping that would help him break into the industry right away. "Little did I know, it doesn't always work out that way."

At York, Weisfeld was exposed to world cinema and became infatuated with the art form. Between classes, he would spend time in the university's film library catching up on the classics. In December 1997, his final year in the film program, he actively started to query agents and producers to read his first feature script.

It was close to 15 years of "No" before a manager said "Yes" to one of his stories.

Many of his scripts were thrillers and dramas, although Weisfeld also wrote a hip-hop comedy based on his own experiences as a rap artist. Weisfeld says he was a fan of that musical genre since he was eight, back when hip-hop was in its infancy, and was known for performing gigs in high school.

While over a decade of constant writing without success could deter others, Weisfeld says it was not hard for him to stay motivated, since writing is inherent to who he is.

"I actually get motivated by reading about deals that writers make and success that writers have," he says. "It's not something I'm turned off by. I never say, 'Oh, why do they get to be successful and not me?' I love reading that stuff. It means that the [film] business is healthy… that people are always looking for great material."

Shane Weisfeld

Some of the lessons that Weisfeld has for those interested in making it as a screenwriter:

• Make the time to write and do so every day. Weisfeld says he tries to write whenever he has free time. "The most important thing is to stay consistent, so even if it's only for 20 minutes every day or a small scene every day, that's OK."

• Read interviews with screenwriters and learn from the masters. "Don't try to emulate their writing but emulate their successful habits," he says.

• Do not try to sell a screenplay until it is as good as it can be. Re-writing is more important than writing. "Just when you think it can't get better, it can. Trust me."

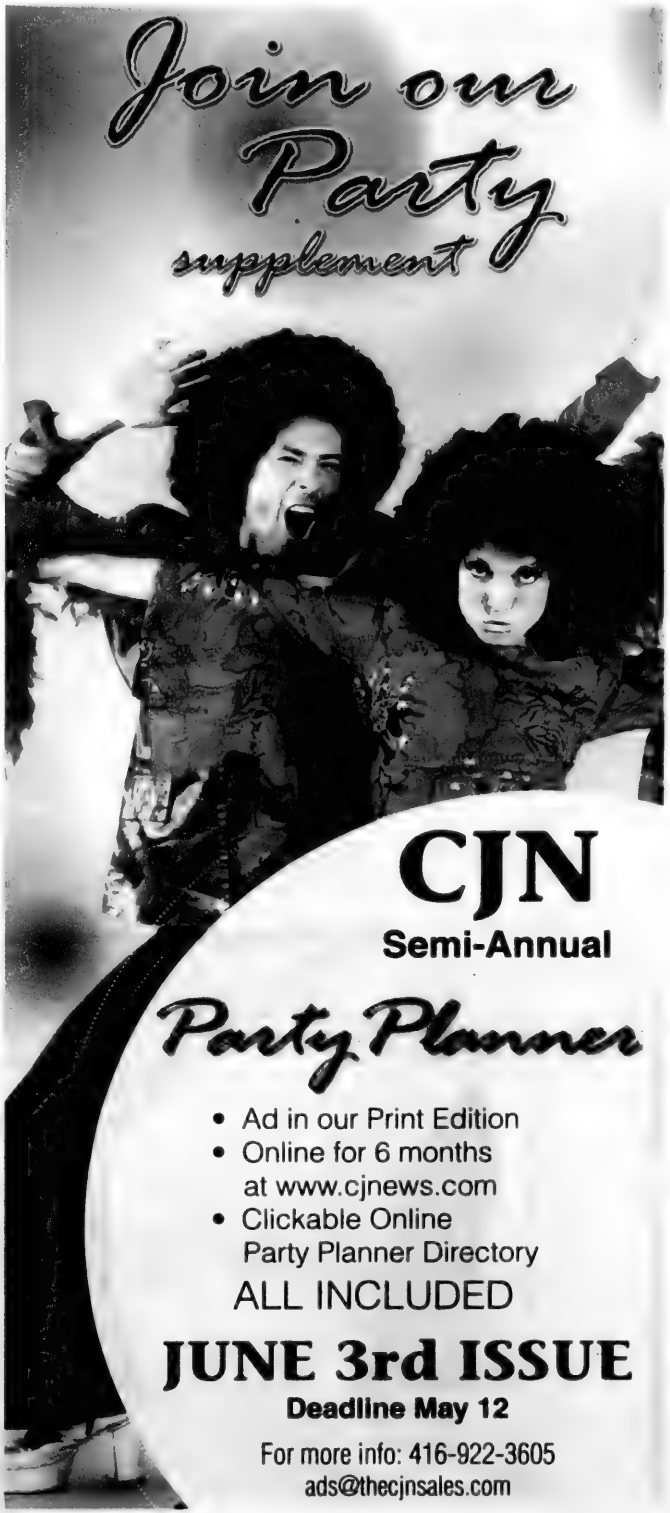
• Who you know is less important than how well you write. "A lot of writers are under the assumption… that you break into the business because you know somebody. What's going to break you in is a great script."

He cites writer/director David Mamet, who has written many books about the creative process, as a major influence. Weisfeld is also a fan of American independent maven John Sayles (*Eight Men Out*), as well as Robert Towne (*Chinatown*), Aaron Sorkin (*The Social Network*) and Steve Zaillian (*Schindler's List*).

During his prolonged creative period before getting a single writing credit, Weisfeld, now 39, began a blog. On *Unsolicited: A Screenwriter's 16-Year Journey Into the Film Industry*, he gives advice to aspiring scribes. Weisfeld says he wants to turn the posts into a book about his experiences and the lessons he learned.

Weisfeld is now writing a thriller that takes place on an African safari, as well as re-working another script. However, even with one produced credit, screenwriting is not Weisfeld's full-time job – yet.

"I'm still facing rejections. I'm still making mistakes. I'm still learning how to re-write my stuff and going back and making it great," he says. "No matter what, it's always going to be a learning process."



Deadline reminder: Due to Passover, deadlines will change. The deadline for the issue of April 10 is March 31. The deadline for the issue of April 17 is April 1. The deadline for the issue of April 24 is April 7. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, April 3

NASH AND DRASH

Cantor David Edwards, Cantor Alex Stein perform a pre-Pesach Nash and Drash, Beth Emeth Synagogue, noon. $12/$15. Advance payment only. Call 416-633-3838.

PASSOVER MELODIES

Cantor Charles Osborne teaches new melodies for the seder, 7 p.m. at Temple Sinai.

ARTWORK IN THE HAGGADAH

Elaine Gold discusses artwork in Haggadot with the Yiddish Vinkl, noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 (includes lunch.) RSVP to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

JUDAISM AS HISTORY

Rabbi Harvey Meirovich discusses "Jewish History Through the Lens of the Hagaddah," 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. On April 5, he speaks at morning services on "The Exodus from Egypt: History or Memory," and on April 6, "What I believe About God," 10 a.m.

GAME NIGHT

Camp Young Judaea alumni and camper parents are invited to a gaming night, Uptown Loft, 2464 Yonge St., 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 5

JOY AFTER HEARTBREAK

Rabbi Charles S. Sherman, author of *The Broken and the Whole: Discovering Joy After Heartbreak*, speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, today, 9 a.m. and April 6, 10 a.m.

Sunday, April 6

PESACH FOOD DELIVERY DAY

Volunteer drivers are needed to deliver Passover food boxes, 8:30 a.m.-noon, National Council of Jewish Women, 4700 Bathurst St. 416-633-5100.

AVROM SUTSKEVER

Miriam Trinh discusses "The Life and Work of Avrom Sutskever," one of the great Yiddish poets of the interwar period. Presented in Yiddish, 4 p.m., Prosserman JCC.

THE JEWS OF LIBYA

Gina Waldman, founder of JIMENA (Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa) discusses her personal experience of discrimination and persecution, Congregation Darchei Noam. Doors open 7 p.m.; program begins 7:30 p.m. $5/$10.

PIPELINES AND TAR SANDS

Diane Meredith and **John Riddell** discuss "Pipelines, Tar Sands and Climate Change," 11 a.m., 918 Bathurst St. Sponsored by the United Jewish People's Order, Toronto.

UNIVERSITY FOR A DAY

Learn more about Passover with Jewish studies scholars and teachers, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Founders College, York University. To register, visit www.jtsa.edu/JUDToronto.

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

A film about the Israeli presence in Tehran, *Before the Revolution*, with guest speaker **Paul Michaels,** will be shown at Temple Sinai. Dessert at 7 p.m., film at 7:30 p.m. $15/$18.

MYSTIC DRUMZ

Mystic Drumz presents *The Button People*, a show for children aged 3 to 11, 2 p.m., TanenbaumCHAT Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. The play is a fundraiser for the Grandmothers campaign, sponsored by the Stephen Lewis Foundation. For tickets, visit www.grandmotherspartneringwithafrica.com.

BRUNCH WITH AVERY

Enjoy brunch with **Avery Saltzman,** director of *Stars of David*, Harold Green Theatre Company, Beth Emeth Synagogue, 10 a.m. $12/$15. Reserve by April 3, 416-633-3838.

BOOK CLUB

Temple Har Zion book club discusses *The Imposter Bride*, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, April 7

SPRING LECTURES

David Mulroney discusses "Dealing with the Dragon," Temple Emanu-El, 2 p.m. $45 for the series, $12 per lecture. 416-449-3880.

VISION IMPAIRED CLUB

Mickey Lewin entertains at the Jewish Club for the Vision Impaired at its pre-Passover celebration, 7 p.m., Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. To RSVP call **Bess,** 905-508-2892. New members welcome.

Continued on page 53

A kosher chicken on every seder table?

NCJWC-TS aims to put a bird in every food box

CJN Staff

Is a seder still a seder without chicken?

That's the question many in the Jewish community have been asking since the Passover food drive kicked off.

The issue of whether the recipients are going to get a kosher chicken with their food box this year has been strongly debated at National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto Section (NCJWC-TS), because donated kosher chickens have always been part of the food drive delivery.

The recipients are among the neediest in our community. So, we have been asking if we can afford to purchase chickens this year, now that our donor is no longer in business. Almost 90 per cent of the food packed for delivery is purchased with donated funds, and this is an additional large expense.

The community has been discussing "the chickens" – the rabbis and community leaders have talked to their communities about what a loss this would be for those who depend on their box for Passover food.

As a result, the decision was made to purchase almost 2,000 kosher chickens for delivery day, April 6, and the order has been placed.

Council is confident that the generosity of the community will cover this expense, Passover food drive chair Glenda Ephron Cooper said.

She said people have been phoning non-stop to express their concern and make donations. "The public has been fantastic... Our very first supporter for this extra purchase was Terra Landscaping in Toronto, who made a very generous donation toward the chicken fund."

She added that Council has faith in the Toronto community, and "we just hope to get enough monetary donations to pay for this added financial load of purchasing the chickens." To make a donation, please call 416-633-5100, go to www.ncjwc-ts.org or www.canadahelps.org/dn/171233

In 1982, the Passover food drive, a project of National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto Section, responded to the necessity to support the more needy members of the community during Passover. They packed and delivered 25 boxes. This year, they will be packing and delivering almost 2,500 boxes. Recipients are referred through various social agencies in the GTA.

Continued from page 52

POETRY FROM THE CAMPS

Miriam Trinh discusses "Poetry from the Ghettoes and Concentration Camps," in English, 7 p.m., Miles Nadal JCC.

PASSOVER COOKING DEMO

Galya Sarner demonstrates great Passover recipes, 7 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. $25/$30. RSVP naomi@beth-sholom.net or 647-873-1238.

Tuesday, April 8

PASSOVER PREP

Cantor Eric Moses teaches songs for the seder, 8 p.m, Beth Sholom Synagogue.

April 9, Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich shares ideas to liven up your family's seder, 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue.

Wednesday, April 9

TAI CHI WORKSHOP

David Shurman leads a Tai Chi workshop, 7 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue. RSVP agol@shaarshalom.ca. $2/$5.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Seymour Schulich discusses his journey as a self-made billionaire, part of Temple Sinai's young entrepreneur series. To register, call **Hayley,** 416-487-4161.

Thursday, April 10

MUSSAR PRACTICE

Alan Moranis discusses "Personal Change with the Tools of Mussar," 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

Upcoming Events

WOMEN AND ABUSE

The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

HOST FAMILIES NEEDED

Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel is looking for families to host an Israeli hero for two weeks in June. Call 905-695-0611 or email info@beithalochem.ca.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Circle of Care needs Russian, Hebrew and English-speaking volunteers to provide support to clients and family members with life-threatening conditions.

Volunteers are needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa** 416-635-2860 or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

PASSOVER SEDERS

Chabad of Markham hosts a seder, April 14. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

Beth Tikvah holds a seder, April 14. Call 416-221-3433.

Association of Jewish Seniors and Bernard Betel Centre hold a seder, April 15. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 458

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session group for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children and adults participate in separate groups. Starts April 24, 6:30 p.m.

Mind-Body Connection for Women: A 7-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 29, Lebovic JCC, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.

Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Osnat Lippa discusses "Treasures of the Guggenheim," April 8 and April 29, 1 p.m.

Jack Newman discusses "How Jews Helped Shape Television Comedy," April 3 and April 10, doors open at 1 p.m., program starts at 1:30 p.m. For all programs, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Circle of Care offers a stress-management support group, starting April 1, 2 p.m. Call **Revital** 416-635-2900, ext. 463.

Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors 416-225-2112. April 4, drop-in social work clinic, 9:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.; April 8, **Bill Gladstone** discusses "The Jews of Toronto," 10 a.m.; April 10, lecture on "Chronic Pain Management," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine April 30 (register in advance); Dance with live music, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise starts April 22; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Day Centre for Seniors provides a friendly, secure place for seniors with dementia. Hot lunch, stimulating activities, transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

The PEP Group is welcoming new members. First program is a talk by **Vivian Felson** about Jewish women writers, April 10, Earl Bales Community Centre. Refreshments at 12:30 p.m., program begins at 1 p.m.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

The Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp present Passover Break Camp, April 14, 17, 18, 23. Call 416-636-CAMP (2267).

Musician/educator **Jordan Klapman** hosts a two-part musical journey through Jewish popular songs, April 24 and May 1, 1 p.m.

Private piano lessons are available Sundays starting April 6.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Miriam Trinh discusses "Poetry from the Ghettos and Camps," April 7, 7 p.m.

The film *The Lady in Number 6* will be shown April 13 at 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. Tickets $10 available at the door one hour prior to the first screening. www.algreentheatre.ca.

Community Passover Seder April 14 at 7:45 p.m. Call Midtown Chabad for tickets, 416-516-2005.

Register for the Joke Lab with actor **Jack Newman** and learn how to tell hilarious jokes and humorous anecdotes, April 24-May 15, 7 p.m.

Register now for spring film studies with **Adam Nayman,** looking at the work of **David Lynch,** starting April 28.

Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition (male voices needed) July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. ext. 250.

Duets, Portraits of Aging and the Art of Care, photos by **Debra Friedman,** is at the gallery, until April 22.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays, until May 6, 7 p.m., Wednesdays until May 7, 11 a.m. MELT Method – hand and foot, Mondays April 7-May 12, 2:30 p.m. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays until June 18, 12:15 p.m. Introduction to healthy breast yoga, April 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

Zen kids art for children age 4 to 6 starts Thursdays, May 1.

Karate club for children aged 7 to 10, Tuesdays starting April 29. To register, **Jennifer** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275.

Vendors wanted for an Israeli market for Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration, May 6. Email **Andrea** at adaiam@srcentre.ca

Harkada Party with guest artist **Roger Weiger** will be held April 5, 7:30 p.m. $10

Israeli Dance Concert, with the Shalom Israeli Dance Troupe, Noam Bamachol, the FJC Dance Team and Klezkonnection, April 6, 6:30 p.m.

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Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Happy 27th birthday to Adam Leinwand. It's the last one you'll celebrate as a single man. Love you, Julie

Hazel & Kelvin Wayne are happy to announce the engagement of their daughter, Jennifer, to Eric Kaplun, son of Bella and the late Sasha Kaplun. Mazel tov!

Happy second birthday Orrie! From Abba-Shayle Rothman, Ima-Noa and big brother Aedden. We all love you.

Mazel tov on the engagement of Brandon Kovshoff, son of Selena Kovshoff & David Picov, to Carissa DiStefano, daughter of Connie & Joe DiStefano.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to **cblackman@thecjn.ca**

Adam Somer & Becca Unterman welcomed baby girl Ruby Sydney on March 12. Excited grandparents are Karen Fenwick & Saul Unterman and Brenda & Michael Somer.

Playing to win

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

I was at home when my phone buzzed with a text from my son. He was playing for the school basketball team in a city an hour away, and his five words carried disappointment and sadness. "I'm just a benchwarmer, mom."

I'm not one of those parents who cheers on sports games from the sidelines. Perhaps I'm still scarred from high school athletics, when my best friend and I were consistently the last members picked for any team during gym classes, a painful memory to this day. It sounds callous, but for me, sports has never held even a glimmer of interest, not even when my own children are playing.

But something changed when I learned my son had spent most of that game on the bench watching instead of playing. What upset me was the injustice of his exclusion. He'd attended practices dutifully and loved being part of the team – until that game. "I'm not a bad player," he insisted. "I don't know why they didn't let me play."

The indignation of having been left out hung around the house like a damp cloud for a few days. I felt hurt on his behalf, compelled to try and make things right. So I did what any writer-parent would do: I penned a letter to the principal.

"It wasn't fair," I declared. "I was under the impression that in team sports, everyone gets a turn. How could the coach exclude certain players and justify that exclusion by the team's victory? Wasn't the victory hollow when only the best players had performed?"

"We don't guarantee that every player will get to play," the principal responded. "Sure, they can get a place on the team. But it's the coach's decision about who plays the games. And we play to win."

A friend explained it better a few days later. In elementary school, the games are all about playing fair, giving everyone a turn and learning to be a good sport. Not so in high school, where the emphasis shifts to winning.

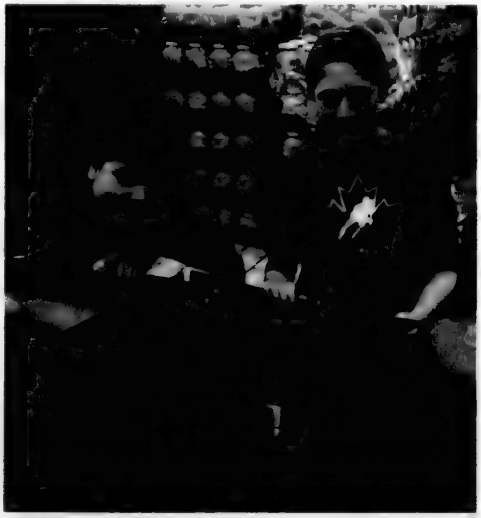
"The weaker players sit on the bench so the team can have its best shot at victory," she said. "That's just the way it is, regardless which sport we're talking about."

I was astonished, but enlightened, too. As parents, we want desperately to defend our kids from insults, bruised egos and perceived injustices. Their hurt becomes our hurt, and we feel compelled, angered even, to speak out on their behalf.

But perhaps sitting on the bench offers some important life lessons, such as the humility to admit you're not the strongest player, the insight that you need to work harder to be chosen for the next game, and the understanding that as unifying as the word "team" appears to be, it's composed of members who are not equally competent. You either shine, or be outshone.

It's going to be the same scenario at every job interview a few years down the line. The strongest candidates will be selected, while the rest will warm the bench on the sidelines until they improve their game.

So maybe warming a bench for a few games is a crucial part of the game itself, in that it deftly illustrates the distance between where you are and where you want to be. It's what you do with that knowledge that makes all the difference, on the basketball court and off.



PASSOVER PREPARATIONS

Grade 8 mentors at Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School recently teamed with their Grade 6 mentees and helped packed food for the National Council of Jewish Women's Passover food drive. Pictured are Grade 6 student Jacob Levy, left, and Zachery Brown, who is in Grade 8.

Top Chef judge shares macaroon recipe

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

When asked about her stellar rise to fame, Gail Simmons, a celebrity judge on the reality show *Top Chef*, says the stars were aligned when she started out as a food critic.

The Toronto native was at the right place at the right time. "I could never have predicted this career. I happened to come of age when food and pop culture intersected."

She attributes this "food revolution" to the creation of the Food Network: through the television exposure, chefs and culinary experts became media stars.

This year, Simmons, 37, is adding some glitter to the Canadian reality competitive cooking show, *Recipes to Riches*, which features home cooks. She is one of three judges who will decide which recipe will win the $250,000 prize. The contest's grand finale airs April 2 at 9 p.m. on CBC.

"I was thrilled do a project for the CBC," says Simmons, who has been living in New York City for the last 15 years. "What I love about the show is that it is so Canadian. The stories and the food are wonderful."

And she has enjoyed working with her fellow judges. "We have such a good time together. You never know how the chemistry will work."

Judging home cooks is a very different experience than the professional chefs she is accustomed to on *Top Chef*, she says.

She has been with the show since its first season in 2006, and she was the lead critic on the spinoff, *Top Chef: Just Desserts*, which ran in 2010 and 2011. She also works as a special projects director for *Food & Wine* magazine and is a regular on American network television shows. "I am often invited to talk about the latest food trends," she says.

In December, she took on a new role – motherhood – when she and her husband, Jeremy Abrams, who's originally from Montreal, welcomed their daughter, Dahlia Rae.

Simmons traces her interest in food to her mother, Renee Simmons, a culinary expert in her own right. She ran a cooking school out of her home and she wrote a food column for the *Globe and Mail* in the late '70s and early '80s.

"Food always played a big part in our home. My mother cooked seven days a week. Everything was fresh and homemade. My mother was ahead of her time."

When Simmons was a student at McGill University, she wrote restaurant reviews for a campus newspaper, and when she graduated, she got an internship as a food writer and restaurant critic at *Toronto Life*. "My mother tried to discourage me from having a career in food... I was always drawn to food criticism."

Gail Simmons

She left Toronto for New York in 1999 to attend the Institute of Culinary Education. For the last 10 years, she has been working for *Food & Wine*. When the idea for *Top Chef* was conceived, Bravo approached the magazine, she recalls. "The network wanted us to help promote the show."

At the time, there were no shows about celebrity chefs, she says. "Nobody was doing a serious food show about professional chefs.

"*Food & Wine* sent me do a screen test. It was frightening. I was already doing television. I was going on talk shows to talk about whatever we had in upcoming issues of the magazine.

"I was very nervous. So many reality shows had failed. Television is so fickle. It was a big risk."

Eight years later, the show is still very popular and it has been renewed for a 12th season. *Top Chef* has garnered many Emmy Award nominations, and in 2003, it won for the best reality competition show. There have also been spinoffs like *Top Chef: Just Desserts* and *Top Chef Masters*.

Two years ago, Simmons published her first book, *Eating with My Mouth Full: My Life as a Professional Eater* (Hyperion, 2012). She says the book focuses on what it's like to work in food media. There's even a section on how she maintains her weight, because it's a question she gets asked very frequently.

She says she takes care of herself by working out regularly, eating healthy food, and when she is judging the chefs, she only tries a small portion of their food. "I don't eat every thing on my plate. In New York, I walk everywhere. There's a real culture of walking."

Despite her busy television schedule, Simmons continues to work for *Food & Wine*. "I represent the magazine to the media and I work with various chefs on a variety of projects.

"I am now a brand ambassador for *Food & Wine*. I love the magazine and all the people I work with."

TOASTED CHOCOLATE COCONUT MACAROONS

Simmons and her husband usually go to Montreal for Passover. They spend Rosh Hashanah in Toronto with her parents, Renee and Ivor Simmons, her two siblings and their families. Below, Simmons shares her recipe for chocolate macaroons, one of her favourite Passover desserts.

3 egg whites
1/2 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tbsp. sugar
1 14-oz. can kosher for Passover sweetened condensed milk (recipe below)
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 tsp. lemon zest
20 oz. sweetened shredded coconut
7 oz. dark chocolate (60-70% cocoa), coarsely chopped

Preheat oven to 325. Beat egg whites in an electric mixer on low. Once whites are broken up, add cream of tartar and sugar. Increase speed to medium and beat until whites are frothy.

Shut off mixer and fold in condensed milk, vanilla and lemon zest. Add coconut and mix until well incorporated. Let mixture sit for 2-3 minutes. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper. Drop 12 heaping tablespoons of the batter on each tray, spacing them apart evenly. Bake for 20-25 minutes. Let cool. Melt chocolate in a double boiler over low heat or in the microwave. Dip half of each macaroon into the chocolate. Place on tray and allow chocolate to set. Serve when cooled. Makes 24 cookies.

KOSHER FOR PASSOVER CONDENSED MILK

If you can't find kosher for Passover condensed milk, which would be milk that is not sweetened with corn syrup or barley malt, you can make your own.

The following Internet recipe, a substitution for 1-1/4 cups sweetened condensed milk, comes from *Pesach Recipe Substitutes* on the Orthodox Union (OU) website.

1 cup instant nonfat dry milk
2/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup boiling water
3 tbsp. margarine

Blend all the ingredients until smooth. To thicken, let set in the refrigerator for 24 hours.

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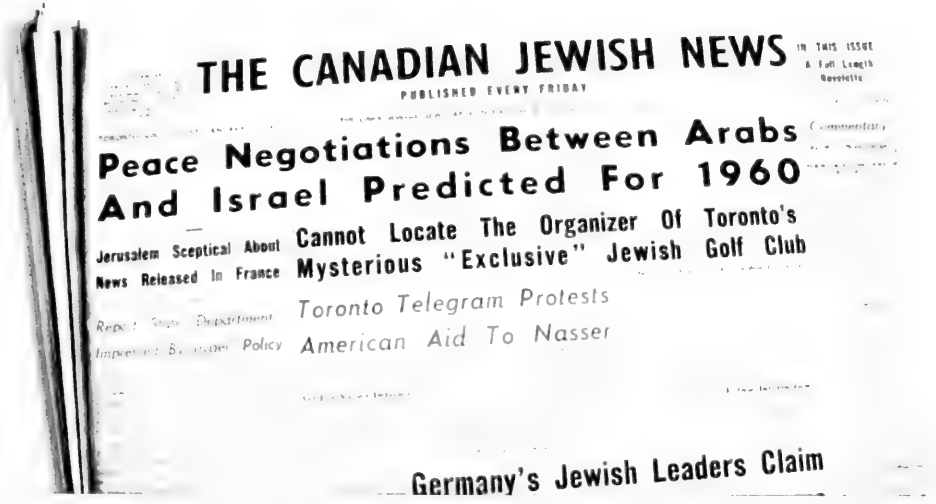
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Jerusalem Sceptical About News Released In France
Cannot Locate The Organizer Of Toronto's Mysterious "Exclusive" Jewish Golf Club
Toronto Telegram Protests
American Aid To Nasser
Germany's Jewish Leaders Claim

The new and improved *Canadian Jewish News* emphasizes modernity, on the one hand, and tradition, on the other. It's a delicate balancing act, but that's what Judaism is really about anyway, isn't it?

PAGE 8

Activist not welcome

'The mayor' of the gay Jewish party scene in New York received a less than cordial reception in Montreal.

PAGE 42

Literary Supplement:

Look for our 52-page supplement of prose and poetry. **SECTION B**

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	7:36 p.m.	8:41 p.m.
Montreal	7:17 p.m.	8:23 p.m.
Toronto	7:38 p.m.	8:43 p.m.
Winnipeg	7:58 p.m.	9:09 p.m.
Calgary	8:07 p.m.	9:20 p.m.
Vancouver	7:41 p.m.	8:51 p.m.

Celebrating freedom on Passover

Rabbi2Rabbi: The seder recounts the story of our liberation, but how can we make it rich with meaning if we're too tired from all the cleaning?

PAGE 4

Lev Tahor is 'a holy mess,' new lawyer says

Removals pending: Guidy Mamann calls for solution to immigration issues.

PAGE 34

Ari Mandel says don't worry, It Gets Besser

Q & A: He was raised a chassidic Jew in New York. Today he lives a secular life.

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SUPERMODEL SATISFIES MUPPET, AIRLINE LEAVES VIOLINIST HANGING

Bar Refaeli too hot for Israeli TV

A campaign ad for fashion brand Hoodies, starring Israeli supermodel Bar Rafaeli and a muppet known as Red Orbach, made waves last week after being deemed too risqué for daytime television audiences in Israel. In the spot, Orbach fantasizes about multiple sexual encounters with the blonde bombshell, and it ends with the tagline "It couldn't get any better than this. Or could it?" According to a ruling by censors for Israel's Second Authority for Television and Radio, there were just "too many sexual insinuations" for the spot to run before 10 p.m. Maybe Red was showing too much chest hair.

Perlman gets Air Canada apology

Air Canada apologized last week to Israeli-American violinist Itzhak Perlman and donated 500,000 Aeroplan miles to Chai Lifeline, which supports families of kids with serious illnesses, after an airline employee abandoned the disabled virtuoso with his luggage, crutches and violin. The man met Perlman to help him as he deplaned at Toronto's Pearson Airport, but left him on an elevator to fend for himself and make his way to customs and immigration. Perlman had polio as a child and uses crutches and a mobility scooter to get around. He was in Toronto to play a benefit for Chai Lifeline. For our report on the concert, please see page 15.

Was it good for you? Bar Refaeli and her felt friend revel in simulated post-coital bliss.

Did Trudeau really say that?

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau played defence last week after Winnipeg Tory MP Joyce Bateman accused him of taking a more "balanced line" on the Middle East, "signifying a shift away from support for Israel"and "opposing our efforts to defend [Israel's] right to exist and to a Jewish homeland." Trudeau supposedly made the remarks to Iranian newspaper *Salam Toronto* last month, and the comments made news in Israel, where right-leaning *Arutz Sheva* said he accused Prime Minister Stephen Harper of "pandering to the Jewish vote." Trudeau countered that he hadn't made the comments, but that he told the paper he favoured reinstating ties with Iran, which Harper ended, and accused Harper of developing foreign policy based on electoral concerns. ■

Inside today's edition

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Numbers

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Reform rabbis who shaved their heads at the movement's rabbinical convention in Chicago last week, part of a campaign that raised $570,000 for pediatric cancer research.

7

Lev Tahor members who were arrested last week for alleged immigration violations. See our story on page 34.

Quotable

"

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— Ari Mandel of It Gets Besser on leaving ultra-Orthodoxy. See p. 74

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Letters to the Editor

Looking for seder memories

I am working on a project that I hope eventually will become an anthology of stories people retell from their family seders.

I want to get stories about mishaps, surprises, discussions, humorous events and so on. I know whenever I get together with people at seders, we always talk about seders we have attended in the past, why we remember them and we exchange some very entertaining, vivid tales.

I was wondering if *The CJN*'s readers might like to contribute to my project. Their stories can be submitted anonymously if they prefer.

Please contact me by email: pawsawhile@eastlink.ca, or call 709-481-2043.

Sheina Lerman
Rattling Brook, Nfld.

Thanks to WordSwap

My husband and I had the honour of hosting three of the eight WordSwap members for Shabbat dinner ("Israeli Arabs help to debunk apartheid myths," *The CJN*, March 20). Rabea, Muhamed and Ortal volunteered to leave their very full and busy student lives to come to Canada and help our students stand up to the anti-Semitism and lies that they face on campus.

Druze, Jew, Bedouin – it doesn't matter for this group of pro-Israel advocates. In fact, it's their diversity that helps demonstrate to the ignorant hatemongers on campus how wrong they are about Israel.

I want to thank all the members of WordSwap for their enthusiasm and dedication to Israel (and our students). I trust that next year, StandWithUs will be able to obtain the fundraising required to bring this group back for a third year.

Sadly, there is much to do. Thankfully, we have WordSwap to help us.

Susan Kendall
Thornhill, Ont.

Women saying *Kaddish*

I found myself in the midst of quite an emotional, empathetic reaction when reading Norma Baumel Joseph's article about saying *Kaddish* ("Saying *Kaddish* again, but still invisible," *The CJN*, March 20). As a contributor to the recent book, *Kaddish, Women's Voices*, by Michal Smart and Barbara Ashkenas, which won the National Jewish Book Award, I have had mixed experiences on the "other side of the mechitza" when saying *Kaddish*.

Though it has been many years since my parents died, my recitation of *Kaddish*, now at yahrzeits, depending on where it is said, has received "mixed reviews".

It indeed both saddens and angers me that, as far as we have come in modern day Judaism, and with the knowledge that it is indeed perfectly acceptable for a woman to say *Kaddish*, there still remain people (of both genders) who see a need to demean and diminish not only women's observance, but also their feelings, particularly of grief, when it comes to saying *Kaddish* in the presence of a minyan.

In knowing that there is indeed a lot of grey area where many have seen black and white, the minhagim (customs – and they are indeed customs and not necessarily Jewish law) surrounding *Kaddish* and mourning (and other practices) have become structured strictures instead of opportunities for growth and grieving.

I suppose what struck me hardest was Joseph's acknowledgement that she is next. I share in that disconcerting feeling. I do truly hope that, in the example I set, my own children (I have two daughters, as well as a son) will find it somehow more comfortable to say *Kaddish* at the appropriate time.

May more and more women take the role of setting the example of grieving through the recitation of *Kaddish* and other practices, as there is indeed healing to be found there, so the women who come next might have it just a bit easier.

Joyce Solomon
Thornhill, Ont.

Bernie Madoff's identity

When the Bernie Madoff story hit the news, everybody was aware of his identity as a Jew ("No betrayal: Madoff," *The CJN*, March 27). When the people who were victimized by Madoff turned out disproportionately to be Jews, I said a silent thank you prayer, as did many Jews. The anti-Semites would have shouted that the Jews were victimizing the gentiles again.

Murray Rubin
Toronto, Ont.

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*

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Celebrating freedom at the seder

Passover recalls our liberation, but how do you make it meaningful and delicious without running yourself ragged?

Rabbi N. Daniel Korobkin
BETH AVRAHAM YOSEPH CONGREGATION, TORONTO

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow
TEMPLE EMANU-EL-BETH SHOLOM, MONTREAL

Rabbi Korobkin: One of the biggest challenges Jewish educators have is making Judaism relevant to children. How do we give them a seder experience that's both enriching and entertaining, one that will make them proud to be Jewish and want to learn and do more? What works for you, your family and your congregants, Rabbi Grushcow?

Rabbi Grushcow: I've always loved the rabbinic teaching that the seder table can be set upside down, so that when participants see it, they're immediately engaged with questions. The very format of the seder is conducive to the aspects of Judaism that modern Jews treasure: questioning and conversation, an appreciation for history and story, and good food. Anything that helps deliver the essential message of Pesach – that we began in degradation and slavery and emerged into freedom – is powerful. We have a tradition of asking each guest to bring something that signifies freedom for them. People have brought their conversion certificates, passports and running shoes. Once, a young girl spoke about learning to read and write. It's a great conversation starter and a great equalizer. The seder is most effective when everyone feels they have a place at the table.

Rabbi Korobkin: In our home, no two seders are ever the same, since we try to cater the flow to our guests. When it's just family, the challenge is catering to different ages: for our six-year old, we'll have plastic frogs hopping around the table. For adult children, we'll set aside time after the small kids are asleep to have them present more complex divrei Torah. Other times, we host unaffiliated Jews who are sometimes having their first traditional seder at our home. In those situations, we'll read mostly in English, discuss the Exodus on a very basic level, and try to cater to their level of education. When we lived in Los Angeles, our African-American neighbours once joined us, and we spent a large portion of the seder on the verse, "Our ancestors were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt." We discovered a history and language of liberation common to both our cultures. In the end, we try to make everyone feel comfortable, welcome and free to say or question whatever they like.

Rabbi Grushcow: It does sound like our seders have a lot in common! When I'm teaching about Pesach, I find my students – especially those who weren't born Jewish – appreciate that Judaism is a religion that doesn't just take place in the synagogue. Family recipes are part of what make the seder so powerful for me and part of what we talk about with guests. But the cooking and home preparation make Pesach our most labour-intensive holiday. Even as a child, I was struck by the irony that the festival of freedom involved so much work. How do you make the seder a meaningful and delicious experience of freedom for both guests and hosts?

Rabbi Korobkin: It's not an easy balance. In a seder class I gave to a group of ladies, many of whom were dreading pre-Pesach efforts, I noted that if those preparing are exhausted by the time they start the seder, it's not really possible to fulfil its primary mitzvah: "In every generation a person is obligated to view himself or herself as if they are now leaving Egypt." Many people go to such extremes in cleaning that it's easy to lose the forest for the trees. I remind people that Pesach cleaning is about making sure all chametz has been put away and sold, and that the house gets a thorough cleaning. No more, no less. This is one reason that years ago, I took it upon myself to kasher the house and do a large amount of the cooking before Pesach, because it's important that my wife not get stressed out by a holiday that's about liberation. As long as we put cleaning into perspective and preparation is a team effort, we can manage without too much stress.

Rabbi Grushcow: For me, the work is mitigated in some ways by a feeling of connection. Most important, we never want the perfect to be the enemy of the good. It's impossible to make exactly the same seder one's parents or grandparents made. And for those who are new to Judaism or Jewish practice, the image of the ideal seder can be daunting. What matters is coming together, eating, and telling the story. The perfect chicken soup is wonderful, but you can still have a seder without it. ■

How to reach us

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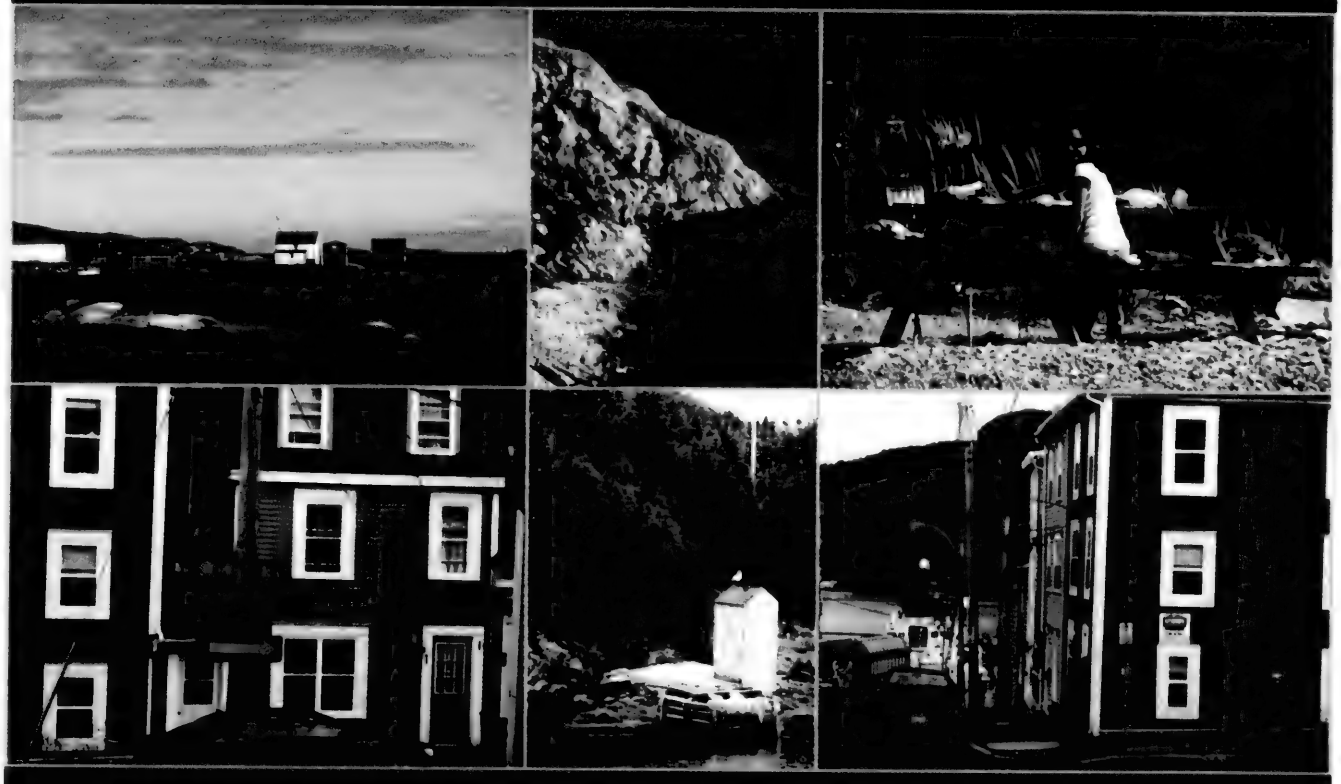

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Ultra-Orthodox Jews collect water from a mountain spring outside Jerusalem on April 6. The water will be used to make matzah.

From the Editor's Desk

Where do peace talks go from here?

Last week's breakdown in peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians was discouraging. Nevertheless, there are lessons to be learned.

Firstly, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has failed to inspire confidence in either side – or in anyone – that he can broker a deal. He has been completely ineffective, and it's time Barack Obama found someone new to take on a mediator's role. And while we're on the subject of the U.S. president, he has yet to show he possesses the fortitude to orchestrate a serious peace process. He's running out of time to do so.

Maybe I'm being too harsh on Kerry and Obama. After all, they have the misfortune of attempting to work with Mahmoud Abbas, a man who clearly doesn't understand the concept of give and take. The Palestinian Authority president's refusal to accept Israel as a Jewish state effectively ended these negotiations. Unless and until the Palestinians are willing to acknowledge the most basic principle of Israel's existence – that it is the Jewish homeland – there is no peace deal to talk about. Quite the opposite: when Abbas signed on to 15 United Nations treaties and conventions last week, he signalled a renewed offensive against Israel. Why should anyone believe he is a genuine peace partner?

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his negotiating team don't come out of this looking particularly strong, either. The decision to delay the release of Palestinian (and a few Israeli-Arab) prisoners in hopes of extracting a promise of further negotiations did not end well. Abbas' rigidity on the Jewish-state issue and his refusal to commit to continuing talks beyond the end of April certainly put Israeli leaders in a tough spot – but reneging on the prisoner transfer ultimately gave Abbas an opening to apply to the UN.

What happens next is anyone's guess. The Palestinians might play hardball and move the fight to the UN. Then again, given that they managed to wrench away more prisoners from Israel and attain greater status at the UN during these peace talks, all without giving up anything, perhaps they will think they have reason to come back to the table. A renewed terror campaign is less likely, but the possibility can't be overlooked.

Meanwhile, Israeli negotiators have every reason to be frustrated by the unreasonable expectations being heaped on them from all sides. Still, they will have to find a way to move forward.

As for the Americans, Kerry and Obama have each signalled they are growing impatient with the two sides. Clearly, the feeling is mutual.

This much we do know: the majority of Israelis want to talk peace, while the majority of Palestinians don't. According to the Israel Democracy Institute's Peace Index, nearly 70 per cent of Israelis are in favour of peace talks (though just 28.5 per cent believe dialogue will lead to a peace deal anytime soon). Meanwhile, the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey's latest figures show 55 per cent of Palestinians are against continued negotiations. Sixty-two per cent would reject a framework agreement that recognizes Israel as a Jewish state.

Peace can only be achieved when both sides truly want it. That is simply not the case. Not yet, anyway. ■ — **YONI**

OPINION

Why we must fight BDS on campus

Marc Newburgh and Raphael Szajnfarber

In recent days, student unions at McMaster and Ryerson universities have been targeted by activists pushing resolutions to endorse boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel alone. With support from Hillel and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), Jewish students and their allies have been vigorously working to expose these odious proposals for what they are: a modern-day blacklist and blatant discrimination on the basis of national origin. In so doing, we have learned first hand that BDS on campus has virtually nothing to do with Israel, and everything to do with the well-being of Jews and Zionists on campus.

To be clear, Canadian universities are actually strengthening their partnerships with Israeli universities. Last summer, during a trip to Israel by Canadian university presidents, co-hosted by CIJA and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) signed an accord with Israel's association of university heads. As a result, every publicly funded Canadian university is now in a formal partnership with Israeli universities, and the AUCC has committed to expanding joint research projects, study opportunities, and faculty exchanges. This is not just an open refutation of BDS. It's a tangible building up of all that BDS activists, in their wildest fantasies, hope to destroy.

Indeed, research shows that not one university administration in Canada or the United States has supported BDS. In contrast, some have openly spoken against symbolic BDS resolutions passed by student governments.

In the case of the University of Windsor Students Association's recent referendum on BDS, the university president issued a strong response, declaring that "the University of Windsor has not endorsed the BDS movement" and that "the university will not allow the results of any referendum to compromise our values and our commitment to all who come here to study." The school's president subsequently launched an investigation of the referendum, citing allegations of misconduct throughout the referendum process. In his initial conclusion, the president ruled that the referendum "failed to adhere to the bylaws, processes and constitution of the UWSA" – a validation of the concerns of Jewish students and a significant blow to the credibility of BDS on campus.

For our students on the "front lines" of these symbolic battles in Hamilton and Toronto, calls for BDS are having no effect on trade or partnerships with Israel, but they have unavoidable effects on the place of Jewish students on campus.

The slanderous and detestable rhetoric that invariably accompanies BDS campaigns aims to cast Israel in a perpetual state of controversy. Associating with the State of Israel as the democratic homeland of the Jewish People is a core aspect of Jewish identity, secular and religious alike. Simply put, Jewish students cannot help but feel uncomfortable, alienated and – at times – intimidated by those who call for the Jewish state to be singled out for boycott.

At this point, we have strong reason to believe that mainstream students have entirely tuned out BDS, as evidenced by the fact the recent resolution at McMaster passed without quorum (and, therefore, enjoys no democratic legitimacy). In the case of Windsor, less than six per cent of students voted to support BDS.

But if BDS is eventually successful in creating a set of liabilities around those who support Israel's existence (distinct from particular Israeli policies), then it will pose an unacceptable restriction on the right of Jewish students to be openly, expressively Jewish. This is what we fight when we fight BDS. This is why we must ensure that what is currently a marginal phenomenon becomes a reviled one, denounced by mainstream students and campus leaders.

Hillel exists to provide every Jewish student with a comfortable Jewish gathering place on campus. As an extension of this, we have the responsibility to help keep collective student space – union meetings, public quads, and academic associations – free from discrimination and toxic rhetoric. Just as previous generations fought to end the social alienation of Jews, we must work to expose BDS as a form of prejudice and ensure that the broader student body rejects it accordingly. ■

Marc Newburgh is executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto. Raphael Szajnfarber is director of Jewish student life at McMaster University.

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ROMSPEN

The journey to a new CJN

An audacious plan to reshape and rethink what this newspaper means to Canadian Jewry

YONI GOLDSTEIN
ygoldstein@thecjn.ca

Almost exactly one year ago, the staff of *The Canadian Jewish News* was informed the paper would be closing shop, and in the days that followed, the news filtered out to the Jewish community. This week, *The CJN* is debuting a brand new design and embarking on an audacious plan to reshape and rethink what this newspaper means to Canadian Jewry.

How did that happen?

Clearly, you, our readers, were unsatisfied with the product we were producing – frankly, you felt *The CJN* wasn't delivering the goods. So you started to tune us out. And yet, when it was announced the paper would be folding, your reaction was immediate: Save *The CJN*!

Your support came through loud and clear. *The CJN*'s board of directors, led by Elizabeth Wolfe, worked behind the scenes with Canadian media veteran Robert Attala to establish a business model that would rescue the newspaper, while grassroots organizers extended the conversation online. Within days, the #SaveTheCJN campaign gathered 3,000 signatures and 45,000 page views. After a few weeks, hope was already emerging *The CJN* might be preserved. It took a few more months to get things fully back on track, but here we are.

This week we debut a new look and new features, while many of your old favourites remain.

But enough about the past, let's talk about the here and now. What you are holding in your hands is in many ways a brand new publication. The paper stock is brighter; the images are bigger and bolder; the lines are clean and modern; and the logo directly acknowledges the colloquial name by which this newspaper is almost always referred to: *The CJN*.

But this redesign is about more than looks. This week, we debut a number of new features, including our history page, called "Back Story," and "Rabbi2Rabbi," which presents conversations between two rabbis on a wide range of topics.

You will also find a bevy of new writers that reflect the myriad of opinions in the Jewish community. We have added more than 15 new regular columnists who will debut over the next month, and many more talented essayists and thinkers will contribute periodically.

At the same time, many of your old favourites remain, including a host of columnists you've come to expect in *The CJN*. And there's one more important thing we haven't changed: The font and size of the text (if you want to get specific, it's called "Utopia 9.5").

In other words, the new *CJN* emphasizes modernity on the one hand and tradition on the other.

It's a delicate balancing act, but that's what Judaism is really about, isn't it?

. . .

When we set about how to reinvigorate the *CJN* in January, we had two initial goals. The first was to re-structure this paper as a newsmagazine – meaning, a hybrid publication that provides you with the news you need to know and also analyzes what that news means. *The CJN* remains committed to reporting on the Jewish community in the comprehensive manner, but in the future, we will be equally devoted to commentary, analysis and opinions.

It is our belief that a thinking community is a healthy community, and a community that challenges itself can only gain from the experience. You may not always agree with what our columnists or religious experts have to say, but our hope is you'll learn something new in every issue of *The CJN*.

Our second goal was to talk about issues of concern in the Jewish community that for too long have been swept under the rug – issues such as poverty, addiction, abuse and women's rights. In the weeks leading up to the launch of the new *CJN*, we have already started down this path, and we intend to continue.

We strongly believe it is our duty to ask the tough questions, even if they are sometimes hard to hear. And when we do so, it is our intention to also provide solutions – anyone can be a critic, but if there is no follow-up, ultimately there's not much point.

But we don't want you think it's all going to be gloom and doom. The Jewish community of Canada is strong and vibrant. There is an abundance of uplifting stories to tell, and we will do just that. We want to celebrate Canadian Jewry.

I'd like to conclude by thanking the staff of *The CJN*, the board of directors and the many community leaders and philanthropists who have helped us arrive at this point. I appreciate your tireless efforts over the last year to revive and refresh *The Canadian Jewish News*.

We are tremendously excited about the future of *The CJN*, and hope you are, too. We invite you to engage and communicate with us – and to keep challenging us to improve. And if you like what you see, we hope you'll consider supporting us by subscribing and spreading the word that *The CJN* is back, and better than ever. ■

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OPINION

So the world remained standing

Avrum Rosensweig

I have been honoured over the years to work with people who are willing to take on enormous responsibility to help others.

I believe it is these individuals who ensure the balance of our existence is tilted toward goodness. These people mirror today what Moses was trying to accomplish 3,000 years ago in his quest to "Let my people go." As commanded, this servant of God defended the beaten and heroically led the masses to the road out of Egypt – a place rife with the brutality of injustice.

The starkness of Moses' task and the clarity of his goals show how crucial it is for those who are good to stand up to dark forces and out-fight them, so that the world remains standing.

I see this same starkness today, in 2014, when I read about the history of Canada and some of the blights on our character and our past. Recently, dozens of native Canadians spoke to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission about how they were scooped out of their parents' hands as youngsters and sent off to "white homes," where they were adopted.

Coleen Rajotte was taken by children's services from her Cree community in Saskatchewan when she was three months old, and raised by a Manitoba family. She said that through this process, she lost her culture, her language and the love and familiarity of her real family.

(Some 20,000 native children were taken from their homes and placed with non-native families within a 20-year period, a course often considered to be an extension of the residential school system and a bid to "take the Indian out of the child.")

Yet, while this ugliness was happening, some very good people decided to take the reins of humanity and play whatever role they could years later in returning these grown children to safe earth, where they could mend, where they could repair their bodies and spirits. These are often quiet, low-key types, some of whom we will never know, some of whom are no longer with us, but all of whom made a decision early on to take on some of the pain of our aboriginal brothers and sisters, and walk with them toward the light of their personal and collective exodus. They must be remembered, honoured and celebrated by us.

I believe I have been in the presence of righteousness, because when I was with such people, I could exhale, knowing evil is not left uncapped, knowing the door to freedom, fairness and justice has been left ajar, ever so slightly.

I felt such a vitality when, along with two Holocaust survivors, Gerda Freiberg and Nate Leipciger, I visited the Pusuma family, a Jewish-Roma family given refuge by a church against a deportation notice. I wondered how it was the survivors were able to expose themselves to the plight of the Pusumas, knowing what they know about the Holocaust and its indignities. How could they ingest such injustice again? (Would we blame survivors for staying away from such places? Not for a moment. After all, they deserve the rest.)

Yet Gerda and Nate went, representing other survivors and those who perished, and all of us, the Jewish People. Their pain returned, yet they wanted to know about the beatings the Pusumas received from neo-Nazis in Budapest only a few years ago.

The wounded shared with the wounded, and in this way, they created healing and sought goodness.

It is said we were all at Mount Sinai. While there, we had a chance to meet the Israelites who had been enslaved. It was nasty. It was clear they had been affected and infected by the viciousness of their taskmasters.

But then we were also privy to the holiness of leadership, of those who led them across the sea, to that small hill, and helped them rediscover their holiness and self-respect. We knew while we stood there that it was those people who kept the world standing, and we remembered that Godliness and goodness will prevail when most people decide to oppose indifference, and instead grab onto the four-corners of compassion and action.

Chag Samayach. Happy Pesach. ■

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

Two-state solution: nightmare or reality?

Bernie Farber

I have a recurring nightmare, but first let me tell you the seeds that I believe originally spawned it.

It was June 1967, the Six Day War had just erupted. I was 15 years old, standing beside my father at Congregation Beth Shalom in Ottawa. It was the largest synagogue in the city, and it seemed that all of Ottawa's 5,000 Jews had crowded, shoulder to shoulder, into the sanctuary to hear Israel's ambassador to Canada, Gershon Avner.

Tall and elegant, Avner spoke with the grace of an academic. That night, his message was clear. Israel, he told us, was in a fight for its very existence. If it were to lose this war, the Jewish People's hopes and dreams for a Jewish homeland would be over. It was a night I will never forget. It was the first time I ever remember seeing my father, a Holocaust survivor, cry.

Israel was victorious in a war that lasted only six days, but would result in decades of consequences.

Israel tripled its size, acquiring the Sinai from Egypt as well as the West Bank and Gaza from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria. Eventually, following another almost catastrophic confrontation with Egypt in 1973, Israel – thanks to the courage of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to seek reconciliation – traded land for peace. And though it is a cold peace, it has held to this day.

Syria remains intransigent, while Jordan simply walked away from any further responsibility for the West Bank. And that has left Israel and world Jewry in a continuing conundrum.

Since 1967, Israel has had to struggle with the injustice of being an occupier. Indeed, many of us who grew up with Israel in the postwar period always believed that a just solution would be found. Once the dust settled, surely we would find a way to regain the high road and get out of the business of occupation.

This proved to be much more difficult than ever believed. Days turned to weeks, weeks and months to years. Occupation became more entrenched. Jewish settlements began springing up, which solidified Israel's grasp on the occupied territories. The dream of a peaceful, two-state solution began to grow ever dimmer.

The Oslo accords brought some glimmers of hope, but that, too, seemed to be more a hope than a reality and proved in the end to be, as my father would have said, a *bubbe mayse* (a fairy tale).

We came close on few more occasions. Even a very generous offer of Gaza and 97 per cent of the West Bank by then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak was turned down by a myopic Yasser Arafat. Sadly, this led to a second intifadah and mistrust on both sides.

Clearly, in order for Israel to survive as a nation that values justice and equality, a solution that gives a measure of fairness to both sides must be found. It's here that my nightmare begins: what if a solution is never found?

For Israel to continue to rule over four million people is untenable. Israel's own census experts, demographer Sergio Della Pergola of Hebrew University and Arnon Soffer, a geographer at the University of Haifa, have warned, "Without a partition deal, Jews will eventually become a minority, because of higher Arab population growth."

Recently, even Israel's finance minister, Yair Lapid lamented, "Every moment we don't separate from the Palestinians is a clear threat to the existence of Israel as a Jewish state."

And so the recurring nightmare: no final status deal is reached, and according to Israel's own census bureau, in about a generation, "the higher Arab and lower Jewish growth rates will converge." Sadly, therefore, the unthinkable becomes thinkable. As Israel's justice minister and chief peace negotiator, Tzipi Livni, as well as former prime ministers and even Shin Bet directors have warned, failure to reach a just two-state solution may mean Israel could become an apartheid state. There is only one answer, and again Soffer and Pergola state the obvious, noting that "if Israel gives up most of the West Bank, it can assure a Jewish majority at home for eternity, [but] keeping the West Bank means you must give up on a Jewish state."

We must be brave. It's time we all support Israel in taking the bold steps necessary to ensure its survival as a democratic, equality-loving Jewish state. It's time to end the nightmare. ■

OPINION

Evangelicals who distort history and religion

Rabbi Dow Marmur

Critics of the pro-Israel stance of millions of American mainstream evangelicals have said that they may love Jews, but they hate Judaism. Their love is manifest, above all, in their embrace of Zionism and their unequivocal commitment to the State of Israel. Their hatred, or at least animosity, is in their theology.

It's usually described as supersessionist or replacement theology. It teaches that the church has replaced Israel as God's chosen and that the new covenant with Jesus renders obsolete the old covenant with Abraham. Similarly Jewish law has been superseded by Christian love. Commandments such as, "Love your neighbour as yourself" can only be fulfilled in the religion of Christ.

In this scheme of things, the presence of Jews in the world adhering to their allegedly outdated faith delays Jesus' second coming. But unlike those Christians who in ages past sought to punish Jews by obliterating or humiliating them, today's mainstream evangelicals maintain that, when all Jews come together in the land of their ancestors, they'll see the light, embrace the faith in Jesus and thus make possible the fulfillment of the Christian promise of the Second Coming.

Many Jews choose to respond with enthusiasm to Christian Zionists, despite their theology, because they promote tourism to Israel and influence members of the U.S. Congress to support the Jewish state.

However, in recent years, some younger evangelicals seem to have distanced themselves from the uncritical view of the State of Israel by offering their own hostile versions of Jews and Judaism.

Influenced by liberation theology that takes the side of the underdog and denounces those in power, they want the Palestinian narrative to guide evangelical Christianity. They seek to affirm Christ at the Israeli security checkpoints that they accuse of epitomizing oppression.

Palestinians are viewed as victims while Zionists are regarded as villains. The evangelical revisionists say they love Jews but have extended their disdain of Judaism to include the State of Israel and, by inference, its Jewish citizens and supporters.

Much of this teaching is apparently being promoted by Bethlehem Bible College.

Last month, it sponsored another conference with the telling title, "Christ at the Checkpoint." Reports indicate that the 650 participants from 15 countries got minimal exposure to the Jewish narrative. They were told that Jesus wasn't a Jew, but was a Palestinian, and that the notion of a Jewish People is a late invention with no roots in the Land of Israel.

No wonder, therefore, that Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement urging well-meaning Christians to stay away from "Christ at the Checkpoint" and described it as using religion "in order to mobilize political propaganda."

This skewed version of history isn't only in sharp contrast to the teachings of their parents and grandparents but also in opposition to a recent pronouncement by Pope Francis, who stated that "we hold the Jewish People in special regard because their covenant with God has never been revoked." That's one of the reasons why it has become easier for this Jew to talk to critical Catholics than to ostensibly friendly Protestants.

The stance of the latter is often highly selective. Not only does it tend to ignore the growing number of Christian Arabs in Israel who want to be part of the Jewish state, but these champions of the rights of the Palestinians seem to be ominously silent about persecution of Christians in Muslim countries.

Bernard Lewis, the doyen of Middle East scholars, distinguishes between being pro-Arab and anti-Jewish. Pro-Arabs champion the cause of Arabs under all circumstances, while anti-Jews do so only when Jews are on the other side. "Christ at the Checkpoint" seems to belong to the latter category. ■

Iran's charter of intolerance

Sheryl Saperia and Danny Eisen

Canadian stakeholders have approached Senator David Tkachuk, who championed the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA) for eight years before it became law in 2012, with a recommendation for a new bill. The proposed legislation would enhance Canada's existing sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, specifically targeting the regime for its terror sponsorship and human rights violations. Current sanctions relate solely to Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program.

The proposal comes on the heels of fresh reports of Iranian contempt for human rights and international law. In March alone, Iran was caught smuggling missiles on a commercial ship, to terrorist organizations in the Middle East; a former Iranian intelligence officer admitted that Iran ordered the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, which killed 270 people; an Ahwazi Arab-Iranian poet and human rights activist living in the Netherlands was kidnapped, beaten and interrogated by Iranian agents; and a Canadian court found Iran liable for its support of terrorism in a historic ruling under the JVTA. Pursuant to court orders, seven-million dollars' worth of Iranian bank accounts and property situated in Canada will be turned over to victims of terrorist groups on Iran's payroll.

Since 1979, more than 100,000 Iranians have been executed, women are still stoned to death for adultery, and Amnesty International has crowned the Iranian regime "the last [state] executioner of children." Iran has the highest per capita rate of capital punishment in the world. Even Iranian nationals living abroad have been unable to escape. Iran's death squads have killed over 100 dissidents in various countries, including the United States and several European nations.

As torture statistics are harder to quantify, the precise number of individuals flogged, mutilated or raped under the direction of Iranian authorities is difficult to ascertain. But the pervasive use of these punishments on the multitudes passing through Iran's criminal justice system is well documented.

All of this should make Canadians wonder: what are the Iranian regime's intentions with regard to the new charter, and what does it mean for Canadian policies on Iran?

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani was a close aide of Ayatollah Khomeini and is a current devotee of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, with impeccable regime credentials. As president, he now oversees his country's assistance to Bashar Assad in slaughtering the Syrian people and the training provided by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to civilian militias that work in concert with the Venezuelan government in the violent repression of the Venezuelan populace.

Given Rouhani's résumé and the regime's record of violating the international human rights treaties to which it is a signatory, it seems that the "Charter of Citizens' Rights" is more a "charter of values" – designed to ensconce the Khomeinist values of intolerance rather than recognize the inherent rights of all citizens regardless of religion, creed, gender or ethnicity. As noted by Nazila Ghanea, who teaches international law at the University of Oxford, the Charter's reliance on Iran's existing legal frameworks brings with it "explicit discriminatory exclusions" that will legally formalize Iranian abuses in practice and in principle.

The legislative proposal to Senator Tkachuk is thus both timely and necessary. For, despite its malevolence, the Iranian regime craves legitimacy as a regional leader and world power, and bristles at international censure even while defying it. Nuclear sanctions have brought Iran to the negotiating table, and past international campaigns have successfully saved imprisoned Iranians from death. This bill will provide an additional lifeline to Iranians whose fates and futures are being papered over by Rouhani's charter of intolerance, and a new opportunity for Canadians to mitigate some of the cruelties of the Iranian regime. This bill is best passed sooner rather than later. ■

Sheryl Saperia is director of policy for Canada at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. Danny Eisen is co-founder of the Canadian Coalition Against Terror.

News | GTA

Goldkind in race for mayor of Toronto

Ari Goldkind says the only way to solve Toronto's transportation problems is by addressing the need for more tax revenue.

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Ari Goldkind doesn't seem to mind being called one of the "fringe" candidates for mayor of Toronto. As far as he's concerned, that's a temporary situation that will change as soon as he sits down for "an adult conversation" with the people of Toronto about the solutions he's offering to the problems facing the city.

None of the other candidates will offer much more than shopworn slogans when pressed on the vital issues touching the city. That is, when they're not avoiding the tough questions altogether. He, on the other hand, makes it clear he won't avoid the dreaded term that some politicians – he points his finger directly at current mayor Rob Ford – have made into "a four-letter word," taxes.

There's no way to sugar-coat it, he suggests. The City of Toronto faces transportation problems and a crumbling infrastructure, and these can only be addressed by more tax revenue.

Goldkind believes the people of Toronto would be ready to part with more of their cash to address these concerns. Wouldn't you, he argued, if all it meant was the value of two or three tanks of gasoline a year – $150-$200 based on property taxes for a house valued around $600,000-$700,000. The money that would be raised would go to two funds, one for transit, the other for infrastructure.

And the city would get a subway relief line and light rail lines to speed the transportation of commuters.

Goldkind would also implement a toll on drivers using the Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway. Three-quarters of the people using those highways don't live in Toronto and don't support the roads' maintenance through their taxes. Furthermore, imposing tolls would cut congestion and make the daily commute for most users much shorter, he said.

Goldkind, 40, launched his bid for mayor a couple of weeks ago. Unlike the five main contenders – Ford, John Tory, Olivia Chow, Karen Stintz and David Soknacki – he has no prior political experience.

But he does have the gift of the gab. He's confident that if elected, he can persuade Queen's Park and Ottawa to return to Toronto some of the taxes the city contributes to the other levels of government.

He's critical of the way his opponents articulated their positions at the recent debates: "These are people who can't string a sentence together without a script," he said. "My whole life is unscripted."

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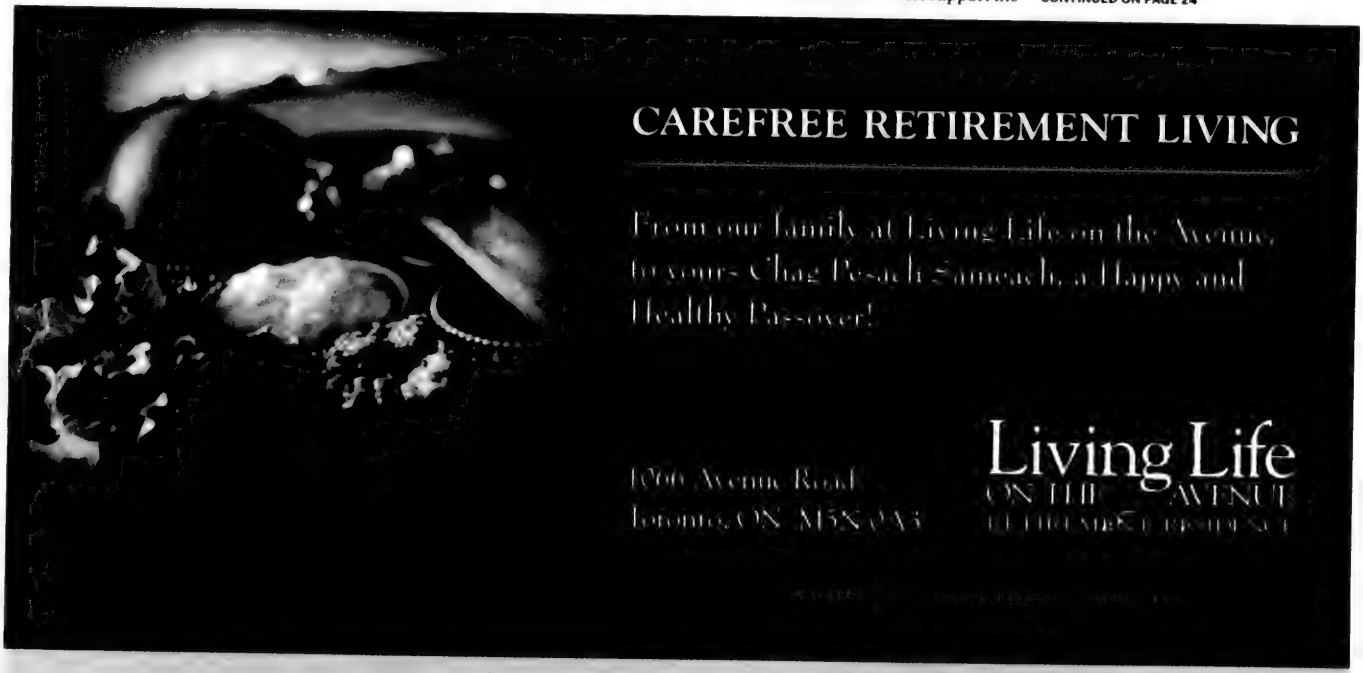
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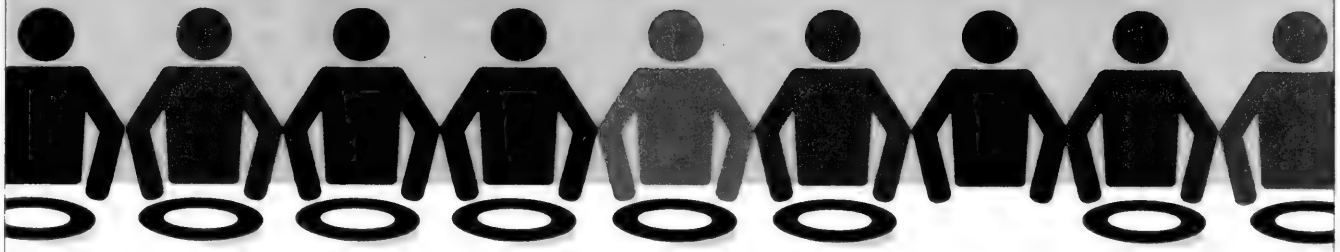

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Lung transplant survivor becomes an advocate for organ donation

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Dov Altman always tells audiences at his speaking engagements that Israel is a miracle, but since his double lung transplant last September he's been adding that he, too, is a miracle. Then he raises the subject of organ donation.

"The fact that I'm standing here speaking is a miracle," Altman, executive vice-president and CEO of Canadian Friends of Bar-Ilan University, said at a speech he gave at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation recently.

Altman, now 54, was diagnosed with a lung disease called pulmonary fibrosis in 2007. However, he was symptom-free for the next few years, because the disease lay dormant. "I had imagined it was a chronic disease, and I would live to a ripe, old age and not have to worry," he said.

Suddenly, in February 2013, Altman began to experience symptoms of the disease, which causes scarring in the lungs that prevents oxygen flow. "By the end of March, I was very limited in my breathing," he said. His health deteriorated so much over the next few months that he went from being healthy and robust to using a walker.

The only treatment option for pulmonary fibrosis is a transplant, so in May, Altman entered the assessment program at the Lung Transplant Clinic at Toronto General Hospital. "They want you in the best shape possible to make sure nothing else can go wrong in the process," he said.

Altman was put on the waiting list for a transplant in August, and he began a regime of physiotherapy three times a week, consultations with a dietitian, and interviews with a psychologist and and a social worker. "They prepare you both physically and mentally for the procedure and the wait," he said.

Altman added that the wait is a double-edged sword, because "you need a transplant, but you have to wait for somebody to die. At the same time, you're getting weaker. They tell you that the average wait is seven months, but one woman I met waited two years."

At this writing, 1,534 people in Ontario were waiting for organ transplants. In 2012, 161 Canadians died while they were waiting, 97 of them in Ontario, according to the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Dov Altman

While he was waiting, Altman turned to his rabbi, Steven Saltzman of Adath Israel Congregation, for advice. Rabbi Saltzman told him, "You're not waiting for someone to die. They're going to die anyway. You're waiting for someone to make the courageous decision to become an organ donor."

To Altman's surprise, just five weeks after he was put on the waiting list, in September, he got "the call."

He and his wife, Elana, were at the monthly information session Toronto General holds for people who need transplants. The first speaker was the transplant co-ordinator, who stressed how important it was to pick up the call when it comes. If you don't take the call within the hour, the co-ordinator moves on to someone else.

Altman got several cellphone calls from his dentist's office while he was at the meeting, which he ignored. Then he received another call, from an unidentified caller, which he took.

"Sure enough it was TGH saying, 'We have a match,'" he said.

"I was lucky, and it's because I'm tall. The criteria for a match are blood type and size. I have a common blood type and a large chest cavity," said Altman, who's six foot four. "Any size lung would fit into me."

Before the surgery could begin, though, Altman, his wife, his sister and other family members waited at the hospital for another four hours while the surgeon determined if the lungs were healthy enough to use. They were, and Altman went into surgery for 11 hours.

He was told he would be in an induced coma for a day or two, but he woke up three hours after surgery with a tube in his throat. "It was amazing. When they took the tube out, I was breathing with my own lungs, with no assistance." He began physiotherapy almost immediately after surgery. Soon, he was up walking the hospital corridors, and he went home after 2-1/2 weeks.

The biggest adjustment, Altman said, was getting used to taking the drugs that prevent his body from rejecting the lungs.

"I take 40 to 50 pills a day – anti-rejection drugs and drugs to counter the anti-rejection drugs," he said. "The biggest risk for not surviving is not taking the rejection drugs," he added, explaining that sometimes people who have had transplants may feel so good that they stop taking their drugs.

The drugs, however, lower Altman's resistance to infection. For three months after surgery, he didn't go to a play, restaurant or anywhere he might pick up an infection.

A fundraiser for Canadian Friends of Bar-Ilan University, Altman is now back on the public-speaking circuit and he's back to walking at his regular quick pace. But every day he tests his lung capacity – "if it's down, I call and go in" to the transplant clinic – and he takes his temperature daily, because fever can lead to rejection.

Altman says the support he got from his his family, including his wife, his two children, Neil, 22, and Jillian, 18, as well as his extended family and friends was the greatest gift of all. His neighbours in the Cedarvale area of Toronto took to bringing meals to his wife.

Only 24 per cent of Ontarians and 15 per cent of Torontonians are registered to be organ and tissue donors, according to the Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGL), provincial agency that plans, promotes, co-ordinates and supports organ and tissue donation and transplantation across Ontario. With such low rates, Altman said "his life, whether professional or private, is about telling people the importance of becoming an organ donor."

His campaign is on Facebook, and he has a page connected to the TGL's website, at https://beadonor.ca/dov-altman, where people can register to become donors. His goal was to get 150 registrations, and at this writing, he had 125. He noted that it's important to register rather than just sign the back of your driver's licence, in case you don't have your driver's licence with you in a medical emergency. "You can save up to eight lives," he said.

For more information, visit Altman's blog at www.carepages.com/carepages/Dovsjourney. ■

Music

Itzhak Perlman plays Toronto:
A gifted violinist stuns the heart, stirs the soul

MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Emotions inevitably soar whenever Itzhak Perlman plays his violin. He is a uniquely gifted musician whose tender-hearted nature, uncanny understanding of most composers' intentions for their work and sheer, dynamic, physical skill always combine to create a memorable auditory-sensual-musical experience.

His ability to stun the heart and stir the soul with the sounds he evokes from his instrument may be unparalleled among violinists in our generation.

When those sounds are the liturgical, folkloric, Yiddish melodies and tunes of the Ashkenazi Jewish world; when Perlman shares the stage with the renowned Yitzchak Meir Helfgott, chief cantor of Park East Synagogue in New York and the cantor's piano accompanist Cantor Daniel Gildart; when Perlman and Helfgott are joined by the Klezmer Conservatory Band and the 17-piece Eternal Echoes Chamber Orchestra conducted by Russell Ger; and when the repertoire of selections is arranged by the scholar composer Hankus Netsky, the result is an emotional feast.

Itzhak Perlman, left, and Cantor Yitzchak Meir Helfgott

Indeed, such was the musical-emotional banquet last week at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto. The two virtuosos, in a sense, reprised their performance of a year ago at the same venue. The musical offerings were not the same as last time, but the dreamy, sentimental evocations and electric charges of spirit and enthusiasm were.

From the very first instant Perlman "scootered" onto the stage, he held the audience rapt with his personality and the music that flowed from his violin. His solo virtuosity, his duets with Helfgott, his accompaniment of other performers and his playful banter with Netsky and the audience were the solid, colourful twine that held the concert together.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Happy Passover

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Audience treated to variety of 14 offerings

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

The large, appreciative audience was treated to a variety of some 14 offerings that included lively, high-spirited klezmer dance tunes, soulful Yiddish melodies and soaring cantorial piyutim (prayers). The adroit, smooth relationship between Perlman and Helfgott was never more poignantly demonstrated than during their performance of the two Yiddish songs A Dudele and A Yiddishe Mameh.

A Dudele, the theologically definitive monologue by the storied chassid, Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev, and A Yiddishe Mameh, the tearful reminiscence by an adult child, embodied the musical and emotional essence of the evening. In each song, Perlman and Helfgott achieved a combined musical splendour that built upon the characteristically minor key, lachrymose centre of Yiddish melodies, but rose far above to an impassioned affirmation of collective belonging and comfort.

The encore selection – Shlomo Carlebach's rendition of the Passover Haggadah song Adir Hu – was a rousing, foot-stomping, sing-along delivery performed by the entire ensemble.

Itzhak Periman

> *Many people left concert humming songs*

As they left the auditorium, many audience members could be heard humming bits and pieces of the songs the masters had performed for them.

The concert, entitled Eternal Echoes: Songs and Dances for the Soul, was in support of Chai Lifeline Canada. It was the seventh annual Sing for the Children event on behalf of the organization, whose services are dedicated to helping families cope with the emotional, financial and other distresses that arise when a child is struck with serious illness.

Yummy Schacter, who along with his wife Shoshana, founded the annual Sing for the Children program seven years ago, described the Perlman-Helfgott concert as "very moving and uplifting. We achieved our double purpose of providing an evening of incredible entertainment as well as highlighting the important work of the organization. Every year, the event continues to grow and raises more awareness for Chai Lifeline."

Craig Fried, director of development of Chai Lifeline Canada told The CJN the organization's donors are its "heroes" since it is they who "afford us the opportunity to provide the critical support that our children and families need in their most vulnerable time." Fried praised the organization's supporters for "helping establish an organization that provides care with compassion and a high degree of support to achieve the best outcomes." As an example, he noted that the organization recently received a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for its after-school therapy program called Shining Stars, for children with physical disabilities or those who suffer from cancer. Two donors have since come forward to ensure the program's long-term stability.

The organization used the occasion to honour Dena and Daniel Gryfe and Bracha Silver for the respective and impressive examples of philanthropy and strength of character.

All of organization's programs are free of charge to children and their families. For more information, call 647-430-5933 or visit www.ChaiLifelineCanada.org. ■

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Zippan family planning 19th seder

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

In a tradition they are proud of, all four generations of the Zippan family will be gathering from across North America for its 19th family seder on Erev Pesach, April 14.

"Invitations go out to more than 40 families, comprising over 100 people. Attendance is usually 50 to 70 people. This year's seder has 63 confirmed guests," said family member Jonathan Gladstone.

Zelig Tsipaniuk (Zane Zippan) and Chifra Klara had seven children, all born in or near Brosilow, in what's now Ukraine, between 1894 and 1915. One of their children, Baruch, died in 1917 of a fever, while fighting in the Russian Revolution. The other six Tsipaniuk children survived to immigrate to Canada with their parents in 1926 and ultimately simplified the spelling of their name – some used Zippan, but others chose to use Zippin. Those who came to Canada were Chaya Sura (married Abe Cutler), Ben Zippan (married Sarah Goldman), Tybel (Tilly) Zippan (married Max Gladstone).

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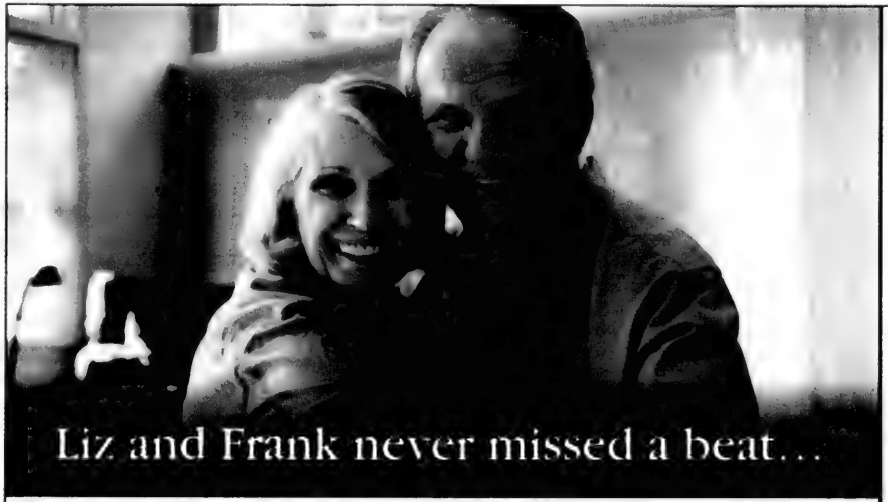
From left is Dr. Zane Cohen, Joan Cohen and Rose Zippan



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Photos and stories go back to the 1940s

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Sam Zippin (married Fay Noble), Tsipura (Sylvia) Zippan (married Joe Cohen) and Jack Zippan (married Rose Klein).

They were among the early members of Toronto's Kiever Congregation, where many of the family are still members today. All six children, and later their spouses, children and grandchildren, remained close over the years. The Zippan children have all passed away, but left their children with a sense of the importance of family. The last of the six, Yankel, or Jack, the youngest, died a few years ago. His widow, Rose, died just recently.

"We have photos and stories from family seders going back to the 1940s. There's one photo in which my father, Norman Gladstone, is about 13 years old, which means it was during World War Two," Jonathan said.

Miriam Freedman is a granddaughter of Zelig and Chifra, through her late mother, Sylvia. She's also one of the two main organizers, along with her cousin, Beverly Freedman, who is a great-granddaughter – her mother's parents were Chaya Sura and Abe. Beverly's mother, Betty, married Murray Freedman.

Jonathan Gladstone is a great-grandson. "My father Norman's parents were Tilly and Max," he explained. "The original children's generation is now all gone. But most of the grandchildren and great-grandchildren survive, and the first of the great-great-grandchildren (Beverly's granddaughter, Lea) is a toddler now, along with the youngest of the great-grandchildren. And there are more of those likely yet to come!" Jonathan said.

"My mother, Sylvia Cohen, was the one that kept the family together. She held the seders every year and the entire family came. As she got older, she wasn't well and we broke up into groups," Miriam Freedman said.

"In 1995, my cousin, Ruchel Gladstone, whose mother was a sister of my mother, decided that nobody was happy with this arrangement as we all loved being together. From then on, we started having the seder at my aunt's apartment party room."

Making sure everyone knows about the seder takes careful organization.

"Jonathan sends out a notice to everyone months before – a save-the-date – and then he sends out an email as to when and where," Miriam said. "Beverly and I go down the list and decide what everybody should make. Jonathan designs the most beautiful place cards with some kind of symbol for Pesach on it. Cousins come in from California, Florida and Montreal – nobody wants to miss out."

They will miss having Rose Zippan at the seder this year, Miriam said.

"My aunt, Rose Zippan, was the only living original member at the seder. We would do a little tribute to her and tell her how happy we were that she was here with us. She recently passed away at the age of 99. I remember with fondness at seders past every generation, young and old, came over to talk to Auntie Rose.

"My son-in-law, Jeffrey Hoffman, now runs the seder. We have a portable microphone that gets passed around, everybody reads from the Haggadah while 'together aloud' the children recite the four questions and we all sing songs."

Arranging food for so many people is also a challenge, but, in addition to deciding what people should bring, the cousins have developed a system for ensuring that there is enough food and some traditional dishes are served.

"My daughter Karen, cousin Beverley and I make 20 pounds of gefilte fish for the seder, using a recipe that dates back to when my mother still held her seders. Everybody has a comment to make about our gefilte fish, such as, 'it's better than last year,' and most all the comments are favourable," Miriam said laughing.

Miriam and Beverly document exactly what they serve at the seder, and afterward, they go through the list and make notes, such as "fantastic," or "let's not make this next year," "too much food," or "not enough."

"When we go through the menu the next year, we have everything written down with comments. It's a lot of shlepping, but well worth the effort.

"My mother taught my brother and I that family is the most important thing. Seeing everybody come to the seder hugging, kissing and so happy to see each other – it's very special.

"That's what my mother taught us, and we're passing it on," Miriam said with a tear in her eye. ■

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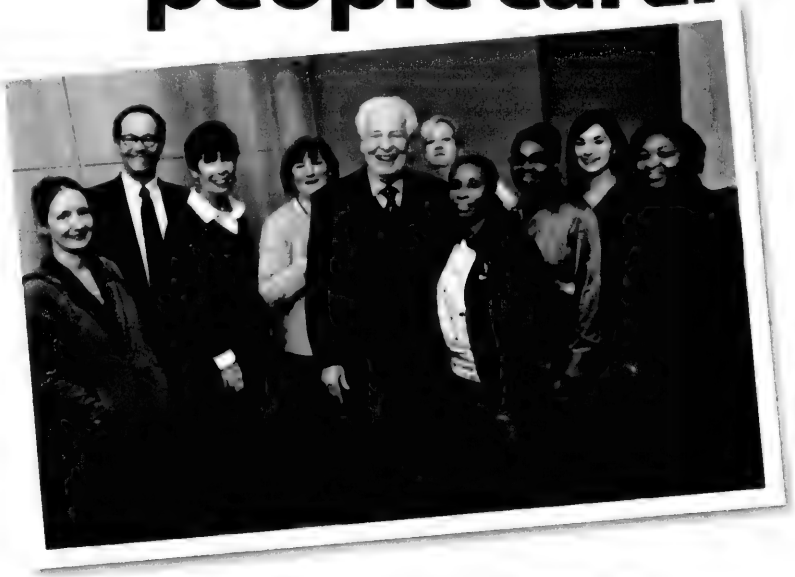

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Israeli columnist rejects 'two-state solution'

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

For a typical Canadian observer of the Middle East, Caroline Glick's viewpoint and solutions seems to come out of left field. Or in her case, right field.

A widely read columnist for the *Jerusalem Post*, Glick says we ought to abandon the "two-state solution." Ignore doom-and-gloom prognostications that Israel will be swamped by a demographic surge of Palestinians. It's not happening, she said. Israelis are having more babies than the Palestinians.

Stop being so defensive about asserting Jewish rights. It's our land and always has been. By agreeing to hand over some of it to the Palestinians as part of a failed peace process, Israelis have in effect endorsed the Palestinian narrative that they are at fault for the conflict, she argues.

The solution, said Glick, in an address last week at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, is to do what Israel did in Jerusalem and the Golan – apply Israeli law to Judea and Samaria, a.k.a., the West Bank.

Caroline Glick

"This land is ours by history, by international legal rights, and it's ours by justice, and we have to assert those rights," she said.

Glick is author of *The Israeli Solution: A One-State Plan for Peace in the Middle East*. Her position stands in sharp contrast to the one adopted by successive Israeli governments, but she believes Israel's international standing was stronger, not weaker, when it stood up to international pressure.

Israel thought that by yielding its rights and turning over territory, it would foster international goodwill and enhance its diplomatic cachet. Instead, the opposite has occurred.

If Israel wants international respect, it has to assert its rights, she said. If Israel wants to tell advocates of boycotts, divestments and sanctions where to stick their positions, it has to be assertive.

"You can't do it if all you say is we want defensible borders" and if you agree that the other side, which "exists only to destroy you," has rights.

Speaking at an event organized by the Toronto Zionist Council, Glick suggested that her audience imagine what would happen if Israel does hand over Judea and Samaria to the Palestinian leadership. Even if you consider Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas a moderate – a suggestion she questioned – he'll bring in terrorists from UN refugee camps. In an open Jerusalem, they'll be able to walk into the Old City through the Damascus Gate, exit through the Jaffa Gate and walk right into the new city.

"They have been marinating in genocidal Jew hatred for 66 years. What are the chances they want peace? Zero," she asserted.

Glick, who was embedded in a U.S. army unit during the 2003 Iraq war, said the United States really doesn't understand the region.

"You can't get it because your guiding policies are all wrong," she said.

Glick noted that contrary to accepted wisdom, the Palestinian public's perception of Israel is not all bad. A survey recently revealed that two-thirds to three-quarters say the democracy they most admire is Israel's.

Another poll revealed that while 46 per cent of Israelis opposed a unilateral withdrawal from Judea and Samaria, 59 per cent of Palestinians oppose it.

"These numbers are extraordinary. What they tell us, if we know how to empower Palestinians to lead the good life, they will do so," she said.

Another survey showed that while 30 per cent of Palestinians preferred to live under Palestinian sovereignty, 35 per cent preferred Israeli sovereignty.

And in Israel itself, Palestinian Christians are abandoning the pan-Arab ideology. "They no longer want to identify as Arabs, but as Christians," she said.

They look next door and see what is happening to Christians throughout the Middle East. Arab families are enrolling their children in Hebrew-language schools and Israel has seen a 300 per cent increase in the number of Arab Christians volunteering for military service.

"This is an earthquake," she said, adding there are now unique opportunities to change the status quo. ■

COMMENT

Remembering Kev

CARA EDELL
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

As a journalist, I report on the good, the bad, the happy and the sad. While I was trained to be emotionally removed from the subject matter I cover, it is sometimes not that simple. When a story or person is so touching and inspirational, I cannot help but feel. It may not be the most objective response, but I am human, after all.

Today I received shocking and very unfortunate news from a young woman I interviewed a month ago. Her name is Nadine Block, and she informed me that her father, Kevin, passed away from the cancer that plagued him.

For those who did not read my article on "Keeping Kev" – the social media campaign that Nadine and her brother Jamie created to save their father's life – I will provide a brief summary.

In June 2013, Kevin Block, 56, was diagnosed with Stage 4 non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He endured countless attempts at various chemotherapies without success. Kevin's illness left him unable to work, and as a result he lost his business.

At the end of January 2014, Nadine, 23, and Jamie, 17, received the devastating news that there was no cure for their father in Canada. They immediately began "Keeping Kev" to fight for his life.

Their campaign's mission was to raise the required funds for Kevin to be able to participate in a clinical drug trial only available in the United States. It was his only hope for survival.

When I spoke to Nadine for my story, I asked her what message she wanted to spread to other young people through her campaign.

She said: "First, appreciate every day that you have with your family because you never know when that can be taken away from you. Second, never underestimate what you are capable of doing. Almost one month ago, I would never have imagined that my friends, family and I would have created such a success in such a short period of time. Being proactive and positive goes a long way. Third, don't sweat the small stuff. Life is too precious."

From left: Rachelle, Nadine, Kevin and Jamie Block

Her words could not be more powerful. We are all guilty of taking our blessings for granted. We are all guilty of being lazy or not stepping up to the plate.

When Nadine emailed me this morning about Kevin's passing, she thanked me for my "hard work and dedication" in publicizing her family's situation. It means a lot to me as a writer to know that people appreciate my efforts, but I didn't become a journalist to receive praise.

My mission in my career is to help others through my words. I strive to bring attention to worthy causes. I try to make an impact so that something positive can come from the negative in our world.

The story of Kevin Block is one I will never forget. I did not have the pleasure of meeting this man in person, but he and his family have tugged at my heartstrings.

If you take anything from this article, take this: life is unpredictable, so make the most of what you have. And above all, love. ■

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 10, 2014

Mother celebrates her son's triumphs

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Nothing in life can prepare new parents for the experience they are about to have. But for Andrew Trossman and Marcy White, the birth of Jacob, their first child, was like riding a roller-coaster that never stopped.

In May 2002, Jacob was born with paralyzed vocal cords; severe stridor, a high-pitched, wheezing sound caused by disrupted airflow in the throat or larynx; and an inability to swallow without aspirating. He spent the first three months of his life in Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children.

It took a further seven months to get a diagnosis.

Jacob has a rare disorder called Pelizaeus-Merzbacher disease (PMD), which affects approximately one in 100,000 live births worldwide and is not limited to any particular demographic population. It is a progressive, degenerative central nervous system disorder in which co-ordination, motor abilities and intellectual function deteriorate.

PMD is categorized as a myelin disorder, in the same family as multiple sclerosis and is inherited as an X-linked recessive trait. The affected individuals are male, but the mothers are the carriers.

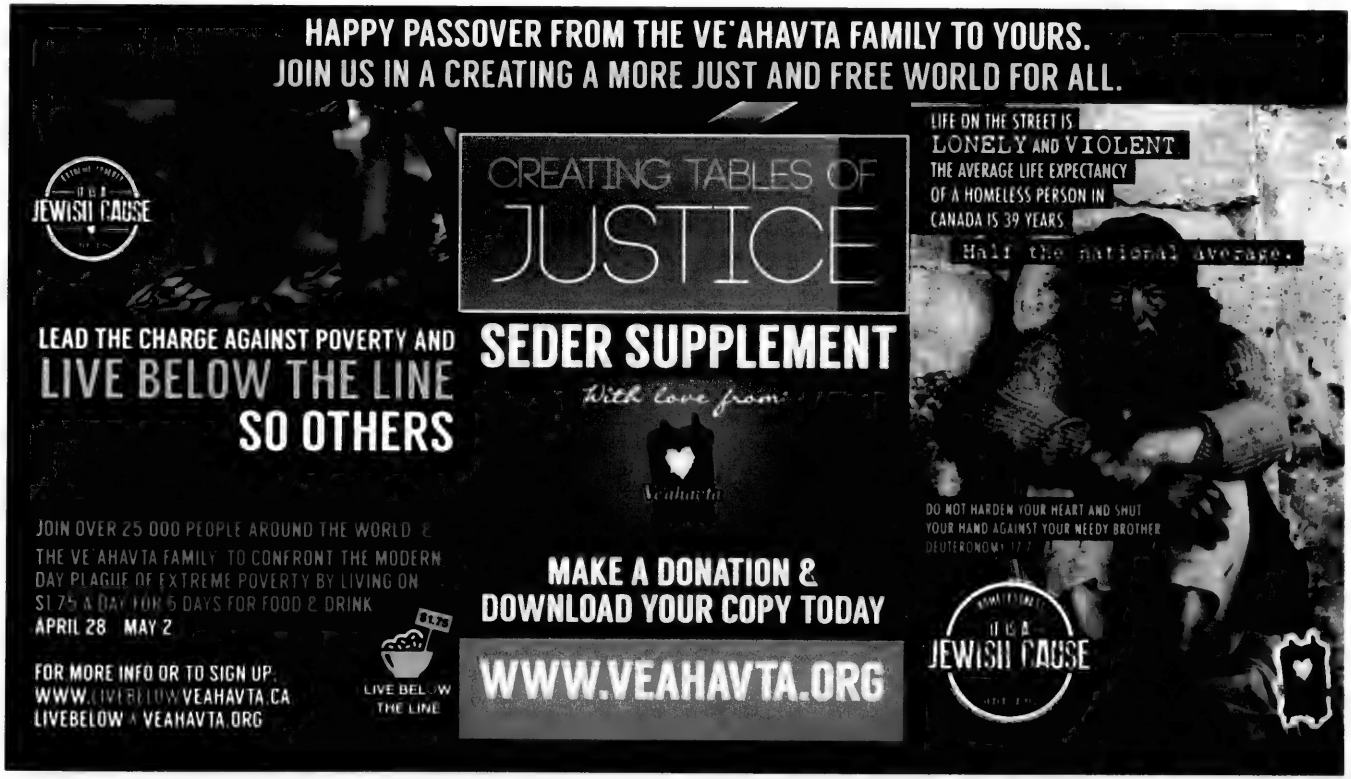
Jacob Trossman is seen with the book *The Boy Who Can*, and his mother, Marcy White, who wrote the book about him.

Marcy White, Jacob's mother, recently launched her first book, *The Boy Who Can: The Jacob Trossman Story*.

The medical professionals were not optimistic that Jacob would have the ability to learn or to understand what was going on around him. Part survival manual, part parent-child love story, *The Boy Who Can* is a chronicle of a mother's refusal to accept the limitations placed on her son. Each chapter of the book begins with a meaningful quote that summarizes its main theme.

"One hundred per cent of the proceeds of the book will fund Jacob's care. He has extensive medical needs, with 24-hour nursing care and special equipment, medicine and supplies. Not much is understood about PMD, with virtually no research in Canada. Jacob is not given the best outlook, but what both we and the doctors have seen is that Jacob *can do* – he is capable and he needs academic stimulation."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25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Goldkind slammed Ford for use of crack cocaine

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Goldkind practices criminal law. He worked for a time in the corporate field, but found it too boring. The criminal bar, on the other hand, is where the action is. It's stimulating – just take a look at the potential clientele in any courthouse on a given Monday morning – and it affords him the opportunity to employ his gifts of persuasion.

He clearly knows how to deliver a zinger. He slammed Ford for his use of crack cocaine and for his simple message of keeping taxes in check; he said Chow is a money machine beholden to special interests; Stintz has flip-flopped on the Scarborough subway; and Tory won't provide details about what his plan was for transit.

"People know exactly what they're getting" with Tory, Stintz and Chow, "and all they're getting is either Ford light or Ford without the crack," he said.

But doesn't your lack of political experience harm your chances, he's asked.

"We have a bunch of career politicians running for mayor. How's that working out?" he replied. "It's time for fresh ideas, real solutions, having a grown-up conversation about the problems Toronto faces."

Items on Goldkind's agenda include:

- replacing the proposed Scarborough subway line with an light rail alternative;
- building "a full relief [subway] line all around the city and LRT lines elsewhere;
- stopping expansion of Billy Bishop airport;
- privatizing garbage collection in areas not already receiving that service, but only "if it saves the taxpayer money."

Goldkind said his focus "would be to convince the unions to be competitive. The old days are over. The public sector doesn't get to be paid wages higher than those in the private sector. Those days are unfortunately behind us."

Goldkind believes that as his message gets out, it will resonate with Toronto voters.

Goldkind prides himself in being self reliant. The child of divorced parents, he was raised from age 11 by his grandparents. One of his first jobs, at 11, was selling popcorn and Cracker Jack at Maple Leaf Gardens. For eight years he sold programs at SkyDome.

He put himself through university, first as an undergraduate at Queen's and then through law school at the University of Toronto.

"I've always been self-sufficient," he said. "I understand the need to invest in myself and take risks."

But being charitable is not something for which one should be defensive, he continued. He believes in taking care of people who are less fortunate than himself. "And that means supporting the city that can be so great for all."

"We have a responsibility to leave the city better than we found it." ■

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS

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iPod created just for Jacob to communicate

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

"White 'tells it as it is' [in her book]," said Dr. Tom Chau, senior scientist and vice-president of research at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital. "She openly acknowledges her own brokenness, weaknesses, fears, dashed hopes and disappointments. These are counterbalanced by glimpses of possibility and celebration in precious moments."

Chau created a communication device, an iPod, just for Jacob, which has opened a whole world for the child. On the outside, it appears to be a regular iPod, but the inner workings are programmed with several main categories and sub-categories that Jacob can activate with just a slight movement of his head.

Jacob is now 11 years old. He is in a wheelchair and can't walk, but he can move his head a little with some purposeful movements. His vocal chords are paralyzed, and although he can neither swallow nor speak, he can make sounds.

"Breathing is a challenge, and making himself understood is frustrating," White said. "Parenting Jake is immensely hard, and watching other children thrive sometimes makes me want to run away and hide."

> *If I had one wish for Jacob, it would be to talk. If he could talk, he could tell us what he really wants and what is going on in his mind.*

But despite the hardships, and there are many, Jacob has managed to experience some very typical rites of passage.

Jacob is a Grade 5 student at Elkhorn Public School, where he has a helper and a nurse at his side. He loves to learn and his favourite subject is French.

He also attends Hebrew school at the Hebrew Academy of North York and has become a fixture at Yedidus, a program run at Bais Yaakov High School every Sunday morning by Jewish teenage girls.

"Some of the most phenomenal examples of compassion and love are showered on Jacob when these kids play with him, talk to him and spin him in circles to make him laugh," White said.

Jacob can communicate by opening his mouth for yes and making a sound for no. He loves to swim, ski and be around people.

"If I had one wish for Jacob, it would be to talk. If he could talk, he could tell us what he really wants and what is going on in his mind."

She knows their time together is limited. "His life span is short. There are numbers that are talked about, but I can't bring myself to say those numbers. His condition will worsen as he ages. We have already seen that start to happen," White said.

The Boy Who Can is available in soft cover and ebook. Visit: www.theboywhocan.com to purchase the book and www.curepmd.com to learn more about PMD. ■

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Meir Medical Centre honours Justin Trudeau with award

PAUL LUNGEN
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The Canadian Friends of the Meir Medical Center gathered at a Toronto synagogue over the weekend to present awards of merit to a trio of recipients, but one of those receiving the award, the one everybody wanted to see, was conspicuous by his absence.

Instead, the 200 supporters who had gathered at the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue were treated to a 5-1/2-minute video in which Liberal party leader Justin Trudeau – the missing award-winner – expressed his regret for his absence, explaining he wanted to spend as much time as he could with his new baby. He praised the Israeli hospital for its commitment to equality and justice while pointing to the values shared by Canada and Israel – democracy, openness, tolerance, respect for the rule of law and, in particular, the desire for peace.

"In this regard, the Liberal Party of Canada will have Israel's back. Not because it is in our political interests to do so at home, but because it is the right thing to do," he stated.

He said support for Israel should cross party lines.

Coincidentally, just a week earlier Trudeau told a local Farsi language weekly newspaper, *Salam Toronto*, that "[Harper's] stance in matters regarding Israel or the United Nations is highly focused on what will affect his position in the ballots," according to a translation provided by journalist Jonathan Halevi on his blog, *Alternative Angle*.

In his message at the synagogue, Trudeau quoted former justice minister Irwin Cotler, saying that Canada must help stamp out the new anti-Semitism, which requires it to fully participate in international organizations such as the United Nations.

"We must be present in these institutions to make our case, lest we risk losing by default to the purveyors of hate," he said.

Trudeau expressed support for U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's peace initiatives. "Direct negotiations are the only path" toward a just and enduring peace, he said.

To the delight of many, he concluded his address by wishing everyone a sweet Passover, doing so passably in Hebrew and more clumsily in Yiddish. Be that as it may, the evening was one of celebration as he and other award winners were feted for their commitment to helping others.

Joining Trudeau as 2014 Medal of Merit recipients were Allan Abramovitch and his wife, Jacqueline, as well as Karen Mock, and her husband David Mock.

Dr. Eytan Wirtheim

The Liberal party turned out in great numbers for the event. Headlining the Liberal lovefest was Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, who brought greetings and praised the Meir Medical Center as "a worthy beacon of inclusion" that "helps human beings in need."

Also present were several Liberal MPPs, former federal cabinet ministers Bill Graham and Joe Volpe, who also serves as the Canadian support group's campaign chair, as well as municipal politicians, including mayoralty candidate David Soknacki.

If a bomb had gone off in Liberal party headquarters that evening, it's likely there'd have been no one around to be hurt.

Which ties into recent developments at the Meir Medical Center itself. Arie Raif, vice-chair and CEO of the Canadian Friends group, noted that Israeli hospitals are on the front line of the country's defence efforts.

As a result of indiscriminate missile attacks, there's a trend developing in the design and construction of Israeli hospitals. Hospitals are going underground.

They are hardening their structures with extra concrete, and architects are putting emergency rooms, intensive care units and operating theatres below ground level, placing these vital facilities out of harm's way – at least for the smaller missiles in their enemies' arsenals – and providing a measure of reassurance to the doctors, nurses and other staff whose work can't stop, even when an air raid warning sounds.

The Meir Medical Center in Kfar Saba is set to become one of the new breed of hardened healing centres. Construction will begin on a new $130-million orthopedic and emergency hospital designed to the new specifications. But constructing underground facilities, with the extra cement, heavy doors, smaller rooms and other costs makes them very expensive – they can cost up to 50 per cent more than a ground-level hospital.

And so, supporters of the hospital are being asked to come forward with a contribution, name a wing, a room or a piece of equipment if they like, but help the hospital continue to serve the people of central Israel.

Last weekend's dinner enabled the hospital to alert its supporters about the good work being done at the facility. Dr. Eytan Wirtheim, the Meir Medical's CEO, was in town for the dinner and to promote the hospital.

Meir Medical is comparable in size to Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. Located in central Israel, the hospital has 700,000 people in its catchment area. The 863-bed hospital serves 58,400 inpatients a year and performs about 20,000 surgical procedures annually. It is one of the largest emergency hospitals in the country.

Its cardiac electro-physiology unit was funded, in part, with $1.2 million in contributions from Canadian supporters.

The unit is part of the hospital's credo of providing excellent service – and of providing medical services regardless of religion or nationality. Twenty per cent of the hospital's patients and staff are non-Jews. "Israelis, Palestinians, Muslims and Jews all work together at Meir," Wirtheim said.

That has resonated among local supporters, Raif noted. Some 20 per cent of local supporters are not Jewish. They are attracted to the hospital because of its policy of treating all people alike, he said.

Connections between Meir Medical and Canada are also apparent in various research projects, he said. Several Israeli doctors are in Toronto working with colleagues thanks to a number of fellowships, funded by Canadian and Israeli supporters.

There are currently joint projects linking Meir Medical to Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital, Montreal's Jewish General Hospital and the University of Toronto.

In the last three years, Canadian supporters have raised more than $2.5 million for the hospital. "We think we will raise another $1 million in 2013-14," said Raif.

Meir Medical operates on an annual budget equivalent to $330 million, Wirtheim said, adding that benefactors are free to designate how funds they provide to the hospital are employed. ■

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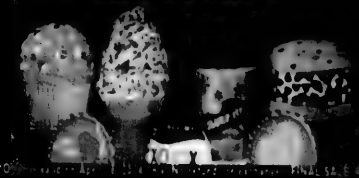

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GUEST VOICE

It's all about the size of your cup

RABBI YOSSI MICHALOWICZ
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The seder begins with the recitation of the *Kiddush*. There are many laws regarding this step. We're told how much we're required to drink from the kiddush cup, what position we're to be in when drinking the wine, how much we may dilute the strength of the wine, etc. Yet, the Code of Jewish Law tells us something that would seem to be irrelevant to this step – it tells us what the size of the cup should be. The cup should be able to contain a *revi'it* of wine (approximately four ounces). Why did the rabbis legislate the size of the cup?

There's an age-old question of how we view a cup that's filled halfway to the top. Is the cup half full – the optimist's point of view – or is it half empty – the pessimist's point of view? We have always been taught to be satisfied with our lot and see the cup as half full. But are we happy with that? Who are we fooling? After all, the cup that's half full is simultaneously half empty.

Additionally, we see that King David himself said, in Psalm 23, that "my cup overflows" – so even he states that the overflowing cup is indeed the blessed state to be in. So why be satisfied with less?

I believe that the essential question that a person must ask is not whether one's cup is half full or empty. Rather, we must consider the following: "How large is the size of my cup?" In other words, it's a question of our expectations.

Consider the huge 64-ounce Big Gulp cup one can buy at the local 7-Eleven convenience store. Even if it contains 20 ounces, we'll feel deprived. Yet if we take the contents of that cup and pour it into a kiddush cup that contains the volume of a *revi'it*, we'll see that our cup is overflowing beyond our wildest dreams!

If we expect God to provide us with constant Big Gulp portions in life, we'll forever struggle to fill our cup and either exhaust ourselves with effort or have to "settle" for a cup that's half full when we really know it's half empty. Or we can choose to lower our expectations and use a reasonably sized cup and see God's bounty overflowing to us.

The seder is an evening to show our gratitude to the Almighty for all the things He does for us. We will review the history of our people and see how much we should be grateful for. However, if we have unreasonable expectations, we will always feel we should have had more. The seder is an evening where we want to shep naches from our children and grandchildren. Many of us are expecting a perfect evening, with all our expectations of a perfect seder being met. But we will only, at best, have a seder that is "half full," and thus really "half empty," so we'll leave disappointed.

King David experienced many trials and tribulations in life, yet he never saw himself with a cup that was not full. I can only imagine that his cup contained a *revi'it*, so he always experienced feelings of overflowing gratitude.

This is why the rabbis taught us how to have an amazing seder – first check the size of your cup! You will walk away with overflowing feelings of gratitude to God for all your blessings! ■

Rabbi Michalowicz is spiritual leader of the Westmount Shul in Thornhill, Ont.

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This year slaves, next year free

RABBI JOE KANOFSKY
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

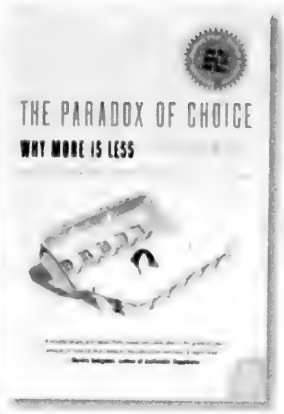
When spring is in the air, the bud is on the tree and the temperature is above freezing, I hesitate to get negative. Yet, I can't help wondering about how the very things that are supposed to set us free have a very sneaky way of ensnaring and enslaving us. The benefits of plenty, the freedom of choice and the ease of global communication have somehow become limiters of the exercise of our freedom, rather than vehicles of freedom's expression.

Many or most of us live in a state of material safety and well-being that our forebears would not have imagined possible. A country that shields our well-being and our civil rights not just as citizens, but as Jewish citizens. A standard of health care and a life expectancy that's a leader among world societies. And in the GTA and other Canadian cities, a range of opportunities to learn about and engage in Jewish life that can only be called an embarrassment of riches. How wealthy we are!

Yet, all this begs the question: what are we doing to take advantage of this wealth? How much are we enjoying the dividends of freedom and plenty? At Pesach time, it's worthwhile to think about the material allure, the "fleshpots of Egypt" that kept us reined in by our stomachs, willing to trade freedom for a hearty meal. Part of the problem with a full stomach is that we don't hunger for anything. We have it all! But we don't really enjoy any of it to the fullest.

In a world of endless choice, what do we choose? A few years ago, I read *The Paradox of Choice*, a book that describes the lengths to which the very notion of consumer choice enslaves us. There are so many choices, so many items and options and possibilities competing for our limited attention that it's sometimes difficult to make any choice at all. I myself have walked into the drugstore in recent years hoping to procure a bottle of shampoo, only to walk out empty-handed, overwhelmed by the choices.

We all know that the largest group among our people is "Jews for nothing." This silent majority are our brothers and



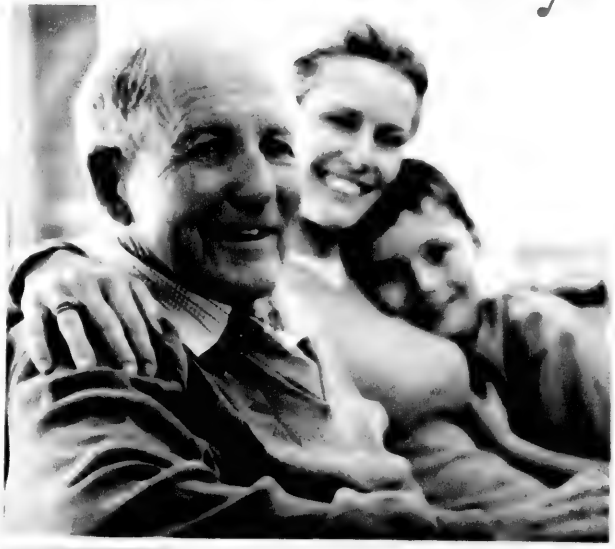
sisters who choose nothing. They opt out of even the minimum level of affiliation, the minimum level of identification, the least bit of growth and depth and learning as Jews. What are we doing on a personal level to connect with them? What are we doing to recognize the "Jew for nothing" in each of us, at some level or another?

I've written previously about those people we know who are in contact with everyone but in touch with no one, including themselves. Where technology allows virtually instantaneous global communication, it seems paradoxically very difficult to sit and have a conversation about things that are important to us.

Yet this is precisely what Pesach and the seder offer us: the chance for genuine communication, to sit around the dinner table with our family, with our children (or our inner child) and talk for a few hours about what's most important to us: where we come from, what we are and where we're going.

This year let's let the seder be not an annual chore or empty ritual, but a re-orientation to what we really are, deep down: free Jews, proud of what we are and the nation we belong to, and rejoicing in each other's company and shared commitment. ■

What will your legacy be?



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Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy Passover! *Chag Sameach.*

Health

Brain talk series brings neuroscience to community

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

We all have those tip-of-the-tongue "senior moments" as we age, especially when trying to recall a name, a number or what we were about to do.

"Senior moments" can be disturbing, but such temporary memory loss is a normal part of aging, the audience was told at a recent talk at the Baycrest winter garden.

In celebration of the Rotman Research Institute's 25th anniversary, Rotman scientists are presenting, throughout the year, a series of short talks on the latest developments in brain and aging, with a focus on bringing neuroscience to members of the community.

Jed Meltzer, a neuro-rehabilitaton scientist at the institute, gave the first talk in the series March 28, speaking to more than 40 community members on the topic, "Can we really fix dementia?"

"The surest sign of real dementia is a change in the person's ability to handle their daily affairs," Meltzer said.

Dementia is a disorder in which people slowly lose their cognitive abilities. It's an umbrella term for a variety of brain disorders. Symptoms may include loss of memory, judgment and reasoning, as well as changes in mood and behaviour. Brain function is affected enough to interfere with a person's ability to function at work, in relationships and in everyday activities.

Dementia is caused by the slow degeneration of brain cells. The cognitive symptoms of dementia vary according to which parts of the brain are affected, and these differ in different types of dementia.

Dr. Jed Meltzer SUSAN MINUK PHOTO

According to a 2012 study commissioned by the Alzheimer Society of Canada, the number of Canadians living with cognitive impairment, including dementia, now stands at 747,000 and will double to 1.4 million by 2031. These figures comprise not only Canadians diagnosed with dementias, including Alzheimer's disease, but also those with cognitive impairment, which frequently leads to the more degenerative forms.

There are ways you can actually decrease your chances of getting dementia.

"The biggest intervention you can make is to take care of your heart with diet, exercise, controlling cholesterol and high blood pressure," Meltzer said. "This can reduce your chances and it can slow down progression.

"The No. 1 controllable factor is cardiovascular health. When you are in your 30s and 40s, doing aerobic exercise has its pay-off decades later. You want to be in as good a shape as you can be earlier in life. That is going to reduce your chances of getting dementia later in life. Walking is also an excellent exercise, and it's easy."

Several diseases cause dementia. "The most common is Alzheimer's. Others include frontotemporal dementia, Parkinson's diseases can include dementia as a symptom, and vascular dementia, which is sort of like mini-strokes, which build up over time," he said.

Some forms of dementia turn out to be treatable. For example, normal pressure hydrocephalus, where there is too much pressure inside the brain, can be relieved with minor surgery.

"If someone is showing signs of cognitive decline, it is always worth getting evaluated. Some 10 per cent of cases turn out to be treatable," Meltzer said.

"There are three goals of research efforts worldwide," he said: "1. Stopping the biological process that causes the disease – the buildup of proteins in the brain cells; 2. Early diagnosis. Goal 1 and goal 2 have to go hand in hand because any effective intervention has to be done early. We need to find this cure for the process and deliver it to people who are going to need it before they really become afflicted with dementia; and 3. Effective treatments to treat the symptoms. We can probably find better medications to slow down the progression and help people cope with the disease longer and, besides medication, we can expect improvements in brain training and possibly from brain stimulation."

The Meltzer lab is focusing on early diagnosis and treating the symptoms. The current study examines the electrical activity of the brain, which may be altered at the earliest stages of dementia. Because dementia progresses gradually over the years, early diagnosis is essential to successfully treating it. The study consists of three components: cognitive testing, magnetoencephalography (MEG) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

The Rotman Research Institute is one of the top five brain research institutes in the world. The primary research focus is on memory and the executive functions of the brain, both in normal aging and in the presence of diseases.

The next brain talk will be April 29 on "An Agatha Christie Mystery: Finding Alzheimer's on the Page," with scientist Regina Joke. ■

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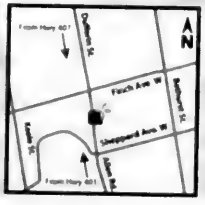

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Ontario Jewish Archives launches upgraded website

FRANCES KRAFT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre has launched a new mobile-friendly website. The site includes an interactive map feature called Jewish Landmarks of Ontario, and more than 25,000 entries describing OJA holdings.

Ontariojewisharchives.org went live March 24, and was designed to be accessible to everyone – "our grandparents, our school-aged children, and of course, the scholars of Ontario's Jewish history and heritage," the centre's director Dara Solomon said in a news release.

An Ontario government grant of $49,050 provided about half the funding for the upgrade. The remainder came from community donors and the federation.

Redesigning the site was one of the first things Solomon wanted to do when she became director of the archives in May 2012, OJA archivist Donna Bernardo-Ceriz told *The CJN*.

The website's "Landmarks" feature focuses on Toronto's Kensington Market/Spadina area, and other places will be added in the future, Bernardo-Ceriz said.

Dara Solomon, Ontario Jewish Archives director

The feature consists of "an interactive map where you can click on points of interest on the map, and a pop-up box appears with a brief history of that site, and then scanned media from our holdings – photographs, audio-visual clips, and documents," she explained.

Other online content includes documents, photos, videos and exhibitions on topics including artists, community leaders, Jewish organizations, anti-Semitism, small Jewish communities, early synagogues, and the Jewish Canadian military experience.

The centre's previous site, designed in the early 2000s, "was good for what it was, and [for] the time," Bernardo-Ceriz said. However, it lacked some "key features," like the new data base and its descriptions of the archives' holdings, almost 4,000 of which can be seen online – enabling users to research, or just browse, from home.

"In the past, when people had a research inquiry, they would call or email us, and we would do the search ourselves to find records that were appropriate for their research. We would be making decisions in many ways on their behalf about what types of records they should be looking at."

Researchers who use the archives include genealogists, academics, students, television production companies, and donors to the centre. Genealogists in particular may be interested in 1925 and 1931 Toronto Jewish city directories with business and residential listings. The directories were on the old website, but "hidden," said Bernardo-Ceriz. "Nobody knew they were there.

"We have such wonderful treasures ... about 5,000 cubic feet of records, about 60,000 photographs, and none of it was really being presented to the community," she added.

"We're really excited to have it up there. I hope people really take advantage of what's on offer. The whole idea is to get it out there to the community so that they know we're mandated with safeguarding the Jewish community's heritage and their history. We want to make sure they have access to it as well."

Solomon stated in the press release, "We hope to make the diversity of the Ontario Jewish experience relevant for a 21st century audience, and to encourage visitors to the website to consider their own pasts and to contribute their voices to this ongoing story."■

Campus

Pro-Israel students walk out of Ryerson BDS vote

CJN STAFF

Pro-Israel students at Ryerson University walked out of a student union meeting after the undergraduate body passed a motion advocating boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel.

The campus group Students for Justice in Palestine tabled the item at the April 2 annual general meeting of the Ryerson Students Union (RSU). The raucous event at Ryerson's student centre reportedly started 45 minutes late because of an extra-large turnout of more than 100 students.

SJP leaders claimed to have collected some 1,600 signatures on campus in support of the resolution, which calls on the RSU to cut ties with companies that do business in Israel.

Efforts by pro-Israel students to defer the motion to next year or to a student-wide referendum were defeated when discussion was cut short and the resolution was put to a vote. The item wasn't initially on the AGM agenda, but ended up being considered first, because most of the students were apparently there to debate it, the *Ryersonian* student newspaper reported.

"It's unjust and clearly one-sided. This was not the majority of student body, walking in here we were already a minority," first-year radio and TV arts student Jessie Saunders-Drutz was quoted as saying by the rival *Eyeopener* newspaper.

"Our side was not heard, and any option to have a referendum or postpone it a year was defeated instantly because of the unequal numbers. This wasn't a debate, there was a predetermined answer before we even we walked into the room, and that's not a democracy."

The meeting reportedly degenerated into shouting on both sides, with anti-BDS students ripping up their voting cards and storming out of the meeting after the resolution passed.

They led a protest outside the room, carrying signs saying "Hate Off Campus" and "RSU Represent Me Too," the *Eyeopener* reported.

"Ryerson is supposed to be multicultural, and that's the main reason I chose to come here over other universities. But today, on Ryerson campus, I've never felt so belittled and uncomfortable in a room," first-year film student, Julia Bond told the paper. "The RSU is supposed to be unbiased and neutral. But they aren't. They're Palestinian."

In a statement on its Facebook page, SJP said it was "extremely happy with the outcome" adding that it "was very telling of where the campus is in regards to this issue. An 80-per-cent majority never comes easy, and we believe we achieved this through campaigning over the last six months on campus. We reached out to our student body and got signatures from more than 1,600 students endorsing this motion."

SJP president Mohommad Horreya, a fourth-year business student, was buoyed by the result, but decried the ruckus.

"It's unfortunate that this happened and had to end in this way. [The anti-BDS students] should have kept calm and followed order so that the discussion could have continued," he told the *Eyeopener*.

Hillel@Ryerson strongly condemned the vote.

"BDS is at its very core a manifestation of discrimination as it specifically targets individuals based solely on their nationality," said president Shannon Riley.

"This kind of divisive and toxic campaign does nothing but create a hostile and intolerant environment for Jewish and pro-Israel students on campus. A university is supposed to strive for an atmosphere of respect and tolerance, where open dialogue is encouraged. This cannot exist when there are attempts to isolate a portion of the student body."

She accused the RSU of "taking a stand on divisive Middle East politics instead of focusing on representing students' voices" and commended pro-Israel students "for standing up against this blatant discrimination and for refusing to back down in the face of such a shameful resolution."

Riley added that BDS "has one purpose, which is to demonize and delegitimize the State of Israel. It is an impediment to peace and runs contrary to our core value of academic freedom and the integrity of this university. And that is why not one university administration in all of Canada, including Ryerson, has ever supported a single BDS motion." ■

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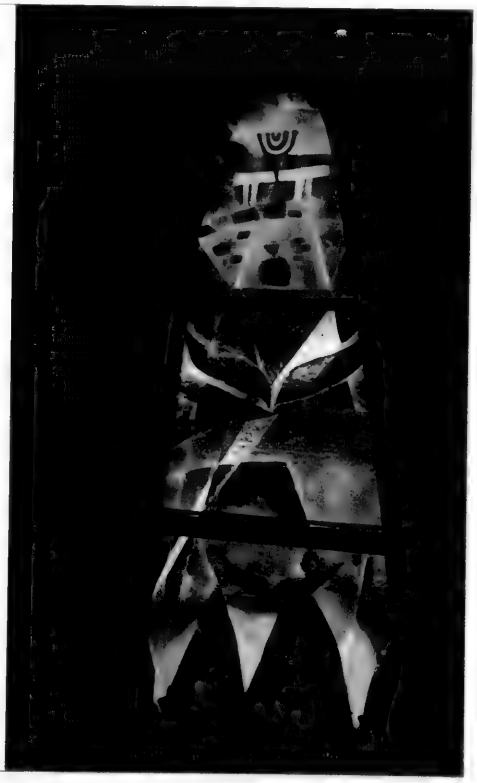

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 10, 2014

Three Lev Tahor members awaiting deportation

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

The Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) has ordered three members of Lev Tahor held in custody pending deportation to Israel.

The three were part of a group of five arrested at the Lev Tahor community outside Chatham, Ont. Two of the five were released prior to the April 4 hearing. Two others weren't present when 20 agents of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Chatham police and representatives of the Chatham-Kent Child Protection Services raided the community last week.

The IRB ordered Yochanan Lavar, 19, a father of three, removed on April 10. The others are Avraham Kabaz Kashani, 39, and Odel Malka, 30. Removal dates have not yet been set for them.

Guidy Mamann, who represented the three at the hearing, said there is likely nothing that can be done to prevent the removals. However, he said a "global" solution was needed to address the immigration status of the other members of Lev Tahor, the ultra-Orthodox community that moved from Quebec to Ontario last November.

"We have to recognize that we have a community here. They have huge families. Their children are Canadian citizens."

Mamann has been retained to help sort out and consolidate the defence of Lev Tahor members on a number of legal fronts, including immigration issues and allegations of child abuse and neglect. He was scheduled to travel to Windsor earlier this week with two Lev Tahor members who also face immigration issues. Discussions will begin with CBSA but ultimately a decision on the members' status will have to be made by the immigration ministry, he said.

The Lev Tahor members entered the country legally, pose no dangers to the Canadian public and should be allowed to remain on compassionate grounds, he said.

Some of the Lev Tahor children
PAUL LUNGEN PHOTO

Mamann said he is putting together a defence team to address allegations of child neglect, none of which have been proven in court.

"My goal is to see parents reunited with their children," said Mamann.

"You see a Jewish kid taken from their parents and it hurts."

Last week, an Ontario court heard a Lev Tahor appeal from a decision that enforced a Quebec court order to apprehend and place into care 14 Lev Tahor children. That case was set to resume on Wednesday of this week.

In yet another development, a 17-year-old member of the community who had been apprehended with her infant in Calgary and placed with a Toronto family, was released. Her baby remained in foster care.

"I left to Calgary with my baby with the sole purpose of saving my baby from being a life orphan for no reason," she stated in a public email. "The [Children's Aid Society] is worried that this point will be used against them... in court, so they chose to release me 12 hours before the hearing starts."

About 250 members of Lev Tahor left Quebec late last year in the midst of an investigation by the province's child protection authorities into allegations of child abuse and substandard education. A Quebec court subsequently ordered 14 children from a number of Lev Tahor families removed and placed with foster parents.

To date, Lev Tahor members have been represented by a number of lawyers on an ad hoc basis.

"What is lacking here is a clear direction and co-ordination," Mamann said. "Lev Tahor members are so overwhelmed they're frozen where they are and can't make any decisions."

Previous lawyers did not receive proper instructions, and the Lev Tahor members "let immigration issues slide."

Their financial resources are also drained.

"It's a holy mess," said Mamann.

Going on the offensive, Mamann accused law enforcement and immigration officials of acting in a "disproportionate" and "backhanded" manner.

"This is a group that's pretty benign. Out of 200 people, seven had immigration problems, and all could have been fixed pretty well."

Mamann said the raid coincided with a meeting in Toronto between Lev Tahor representatives and immigration authorities that was meant to resolve the issues. He questioned the timing of the raid, suggesting it was meant to further disorient the group before the court hearing, Mamann said.

Lev Tahor spokesman Nachman Helbrans said he was angry at the arrests. "It is outrageous that while 200,000 persons are officially known to be undocumented in Toronto area alone, the CBSA found it necessary to make a community-wide raid with extensive forces when it was not any suspicion of a crime or wrongdoing," he said.

Mamann said that given the apprehension of 14 kids, the constant unannounced visit by child-care workers and the recent raid, the Lev Tahor "children are under tremendous stress. They want to be with their parents, and their parents want them back."

He said one family was separated after being returned from Trinidad. They had been en route to Guatemala, where another Lev Tahor family now resides after fleeing there last month ahead of child custody hearings.

When the father "finally saw his child, he was overcome and collapsed." He's undergoing medical care because of the strain, Mamann added.

Mamann questioned why the CBSA would use its limited resources to go after Lev Tahor members who pose no threat to the public when there could be as many as one million undocumented people living in Canada.

Mamann was particularly scathing in denouncing Denis Baraby, the director of Quebec's department of youth protection for the Laurentians region. Baraby told the *Gazette* in Montreal that he would ask for the removal of all children in the Lev Tahor community.

"I think the community is preparing a mass move," he told the *Gazette*. "If we want to protect the children that are in the community, we need to start working on the exit of the 114 other children."

"It's pure madness," said Mamann.

If there are serious allegations against a particular parent, then the individual case should be dealt with, he said, but to threaten apprehension of an entire community's children is unprecedented.

"I've never seen that in western civilization," Mamann added. ■

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Young Jews want open discussion on Israel

JANICE ARNOLD
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A small group of Jewish students and other young people gathered at the McGill University law faculty April 2 in the hope of setting an example for a new openness in the community toward diverse opinions on Israel and Zionism.

The panel discussion was organized and moderated by Rachel Deutsch, a McGill graduate and social worker, who believes Jews, especially the young, should be able to publicly express their critical or simply questioning views on Israel, as well as the relationship between the Diaspora and the Jewish state, or their own Jewish identity.

She wants to encourage a "respectful conversation" between these Jews and those with mainstream opinions.

Deutsch said such discussions are usually private, among family and friends, and even then, they're fraught with tension. Those who do speak out risk – or fear – being ostracized from the community, subjected to scorn and branded as troublemakers. It may even strain personal relationships, she said.

The result, she said, is the sense that some topics are taboo, and it's better to remain silent.

The evening saw a rare instance of a self-described Zionist sitting together with an anti-Zionist on the panel. Menachem Freedman, a "progressive" Zionist, and Sarah Woolf, who is active in promoting the Palestinian cause, including Israeli Apartheid Week, sat together at the table without any conflict between them.

Sarah Woolf, left, Sam Bick, Menachem Freedman and Avishai Sharon take part in a discussion at the McGill law faculty. JANICE ARNOLD PHOTO

Freedman, a law student, is a native of Montreal who studied at a yeshiva in Israel and served in the Israeli Defence Forces. He serves on the board of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre.

Woolf, a McGill graduate, is an editor at the *Montreal Review of Books* and a researcher for the online Museum of Jewish Montreal.

They were joined by another law student, Avishai Sharon, an Israeli who has been living in Montreal for the past three years, who served in the IDF, attended Hebrew University of Jerusalem and was engaged in Israeli-Palestinian dialogue; and Sam Bick, a graduate of the Jewish day school system who is now involved with an organization advocating for social justice in the Middle East.

Freedman said apathy is a growing problem among young Jews whose views on Israel or the conflict are outside the mainstream, and that isn't good for the continuity of the community.

"We have to create a more inclusive Jewish community in Montreal, or there will be more alienation," he said.

Bick said his 12 years at Solomon Schechter Academy and Bialik High School did not prepare him for critical thought. "Political Zionism was not questioned. We were not even aware it was a choice, but it is a choice, and that has to be recognized... We have to create more space for dissent within the community."

Sharon said discussion of this kind is inhibited because soon the argument turns to "the existential threat" faced by Israel from the Arabs.

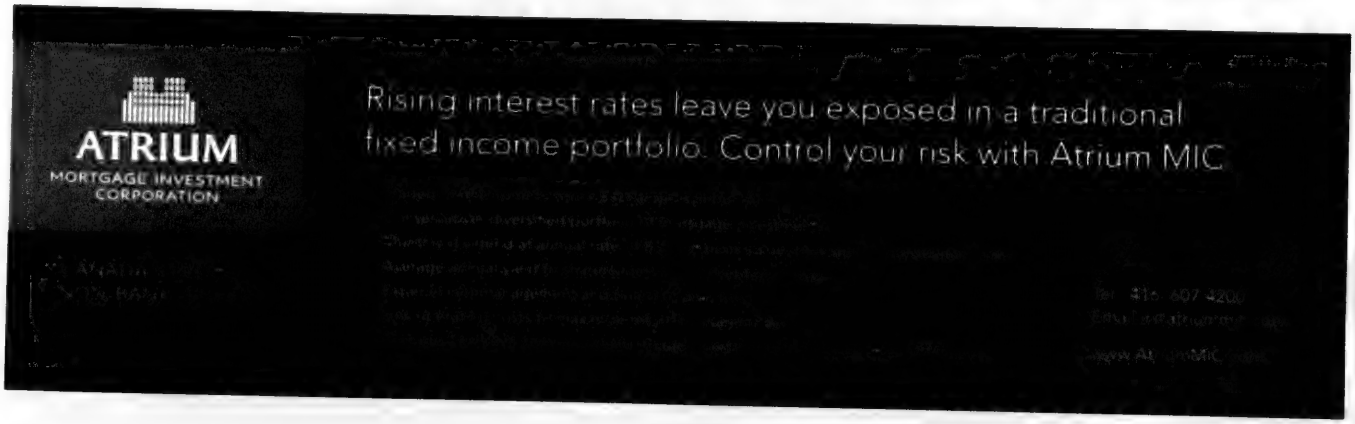
Both he and Woolf regret that, according to them, fear underlies Jews' relationship to Israel and frames the debate.

"I want to disentangle fears about the Jewish identity from Zionism, it isn't necessarily the answer," she said. "I do not want my fear to be responsible for someone else's oppression, and I think that's what is going on."

Deutsch, who works at a native women's centre, said she is inspired by other communities that have overcome their reluctance to address painful, even shameful, issues by talking about it openly.

She is working on a film in which young Jews with critical or questioning views on Israel and Zionism and what it means to be Jewish express themselves candidly.

Deutsch had hoped to have more panelists and audience members with mainline positions about Israel and Zionism, and had reached out to Hillel and other community organizations to participate, but received a lukewarm response. ■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Holocaust education inadequate in Quebec: study

CJN STAFF
MONTREAL

A Université de Montréal study has found that Holocaust education in Quebec high schools, especially French ones, is "often superficial and partial," due largely to a lack of adequate history textbooks.

The study by Sivane Hirsch and Marie McAndrew said the situation "prevents Quebec's students from fully grasping the impact of this historical event on contemporary society."

The Holocaust is mentioned in the curriculum for the mandatory History and Citizenship Education program, but only in passing, and at least two of the prescribed textbooks make no reference to it at all. The authors are also critical that teachers are not provided with clear guidelines on how to treat the Holocaust, how to define it and explain its historical significance.

"Partial representations of the Holocaust risk being as problematic as false ones," the study concludes, "for both can lead to similar misunderstandings or encourage negative attitudes towards its victims."

> *[Education] is often superficial and partial*

One book discusses the concentration camps from a longer historical perspective globally, without ever specifically speaking of Nazi concentration camps, they found.

"It is regrettable that only one textbook, *History in Action*, presents the Jewish resistance, by showing a photo of 'Jewish fighters during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising', the study states.

"*From Yesterday to Tomorrow* is the only [textbook] that deals with the importance of teaching the Holocaust today, mentioning the 'duty to remember' horrors, as well as the people who resisted them."

McAndrew is the Canada Research Chair in Education and Ethnic Relations, and Hirsch is a postdoctoral fellow in her department. ■

Université de Montréal SHUTTERSTOCK PHOTO

Exclusive

Oliver to end deficit and broaden ties with Israel

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Joe Oliver

In his first media interview since being appointed finance minister, Joe Oliver told *The CJN* he will seek to "broaden" Canada-Israel investment ties as well as balance the federal budget by next year in a steady-as-she-goes approach to lower taxes and "create job growth from coast to coast."

Oliver also strongly defended himself against an Opposition accusation that he's a climate change denier.

"I was disappointed to hear that," Oliver said in the half-hour telephone interview, referring to comments by New Democratic Party leader Thomas Mulcair, who had called Oliver's appointment to the prestigious finance post an "embarrassment" due to his supposed denial of climate change.

"I do not deny climate change. It's a question of what policy should be. Policy, that's all. Not every project that exploits natural resources hurts the environment."

Oliver, 73, a Montreal native and three-year MP for the Toronto riding of Eglinton-Lawrence, described himself as a "late bloomer" in politics after four decades in finance.

His first days in the new job, he said, have been spent in briefing rooms, talking to his provincial counterparts and appointing political staff.

Oliver has visited Israel six times, three of them in his previous post as natural resources minister before succeeding Jim Flaherty March 19 to become Canada's first Jewish finance minister.

That appointment, Oliver said, came out of the blue. Flaherty had been finance minister for eight years, since day one of the Tory government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

"I was on a flight to Vancouver when the call came through," Oliver related. "I had no idea what it was about, and I had no idea Jim Flaherty was going to resign."

Nevertheless, Oliver sees himself as well suited to his new role and the culmination of his many years of experience.

"It will make me more effective," he said.

Asked if he now realizes he had become the de facto "minister of the Jewish community" as the result of his appointment, Oliver laughed.

"I am proud to have the chance to serve all Canadians. There are substantial numbers from the Jewish community in my riding, and I am have very grateful for their support and everyone's support," he said. "It's been very meaningful to me."

More concretely, Oliver has a plan of action as finance minister.

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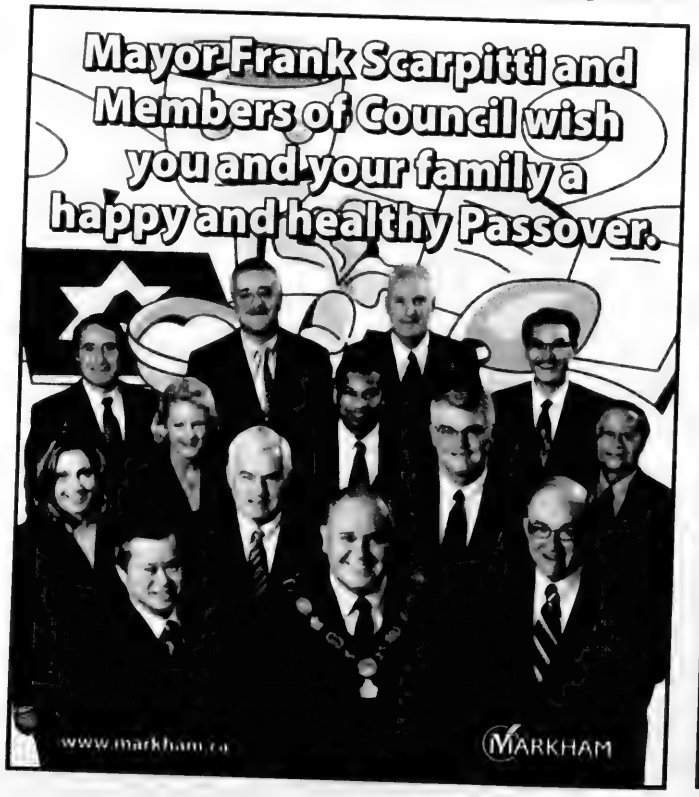
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Bilateral friendship with Israel to continue: Oliver

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He will balance the federal budget in 2015, he said. Canada is in an enviable position, because "our net debt is half that on average compared to other members of the G7 nations."

As the country's demographics change, it will also be important to make sure that seniors can continue being part of the workforce if they want to be, he said.

"We want to make sure that those who work are working because they want to, not because they have to [for financial reasons]."

Oliver expects the unprecedented level of bilateral friendship and co-operation that has flourished with Israel under Harper's Tories will continue. (Oliver accompanied the prime minister on his historic first visit to the Jewish state in January.)

Regarding how that goal might be furthered on his watch, Oliver said the focus will be on "broadening the investment relationship" to fuller potential, adding "we are now in our early days and we have to see how that can be done."

He said there's no reason bilateral trade between Canada and Israel could not increase substantially from its current level of $1.5 billion.

Oliver said he doesn't regret using the word "radical" to describe certain environmental groups. In his view, they're so dogmatic that they "oppose every single major project" out of a perceived threat to the environment that's not necessarily backed up by evidence.

When he was natural resources minister, he was a strong supporter of the controversial XL Keystone pipeline, which was opposed by environmental groups.

He noted he also worked closely with Israel in providing expertise on tapping vast natural gas deposits off its Mediterranean coastline and on high-tech innovation. ■

Pictured, from left, are Mark Cascella, Lara Hana Brady, Robin Lampard, George Brady, Madeleine Albright, David Brady, Teresa Brady, Doug Brady and Carol Shea

Stately presentation

Toronto Holocaust survivor George Brady and family last week presented former U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright with a copy of a book of poems by Hanus Hachenburg, for which she wrote the foreword. Brady and Hachenburg were contributors to *Vedem*, a magazine written by boys interned in the Terezin (Theresienstadt) ghetto during World War II. Hachenburg continued to write until his death in Auschwitz. The Czech-born Albright was in Toronto for the Global Progress Dinner, hosted by the Canadian Centre for Progressive Policy.

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 10, 2014

Halifax philanthropist to be honoured by JNF

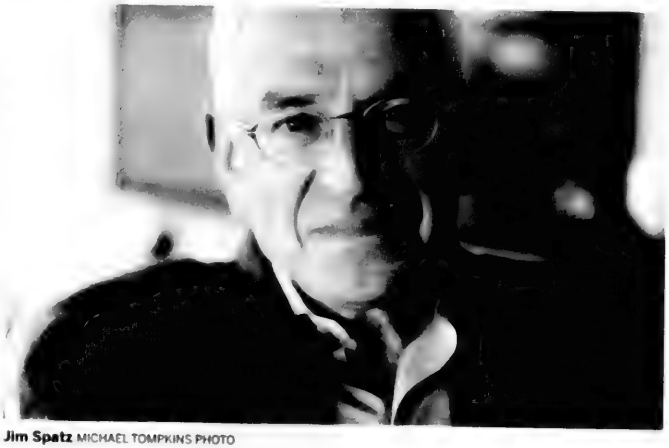
JOEL JACOBSON
ATLANTIC CORRESPONDENT, HALIFAX

Halifax businessman and philanthropist Dr. Jim Spatz will be the honoured guest at the 2014 Jewish National Fund Negev Dinner May 22.

Proceeds from the gala event will be directed to the Jim Spatz Bike Path at Tel Aviv's Independence Park, the first time JNF will have a project in Tel Aviv. Journalist and linguist Rex Murphy will be keynote speaker.

Spatz, 65, the son of Holocaust survivors, arrived with his parents at Halifax's Pier 21 in 1949 at age 11 months. He graduated from Dalhousie University's medical school and was a general practitioner in Dartmouth, N.S. for five years before taking residency training at McGill. After 10 years working in the emergency room at Montreal's Jewish General Hospital, he returned to Halifax to join the family real estate development business in 1988.

Now recognized as one of Nova Scotia's leading real estate developers, Spatz grew up around the business started by his post-World War II immigrant father, Simon who started as a small grocer and then branched into apartment ownership, the forerunner of today's multi-million dollar real estate empire.



Jim Spatz MICHAEL TOMPKINS PHOTO

"There was never any expectation that I would have to come back to the family business," said the chair and CEO of Southwest Properties. "In fact, as he'd spend Sunday cleaning his store, my father always told me he wanted better things for me."

Yet, as Simon Spatz grew his grocery store into building ownership and then development, he'd share information with his son, especially how he looked at the financial aspects of buildings he was considering acquiring.

"And he'd take me to his construction sites on weekends and I found that fabulously interesting. That's what really hooked me. I became addicted to the smell of freshly poured concrete at a young age," said Spatz. "It moved from back of mind to the front that I'd return."

He made the transition at about age 40, moving "from doing something that I was pretty good at, to something where my significant qualification was that I was the boss's son."

He continued to learn from his dad, a man then in his mid-70s, who worked into his 80s.

Today, the doctor-turned-developer has expanded the company's portfolio and geographic reach. Spatz has led the company in the development and acquisition of investment property throughout Atlantic Canada and beyond, increasing Southwest's size in terms of both assets and revenue by more than 10-fold.

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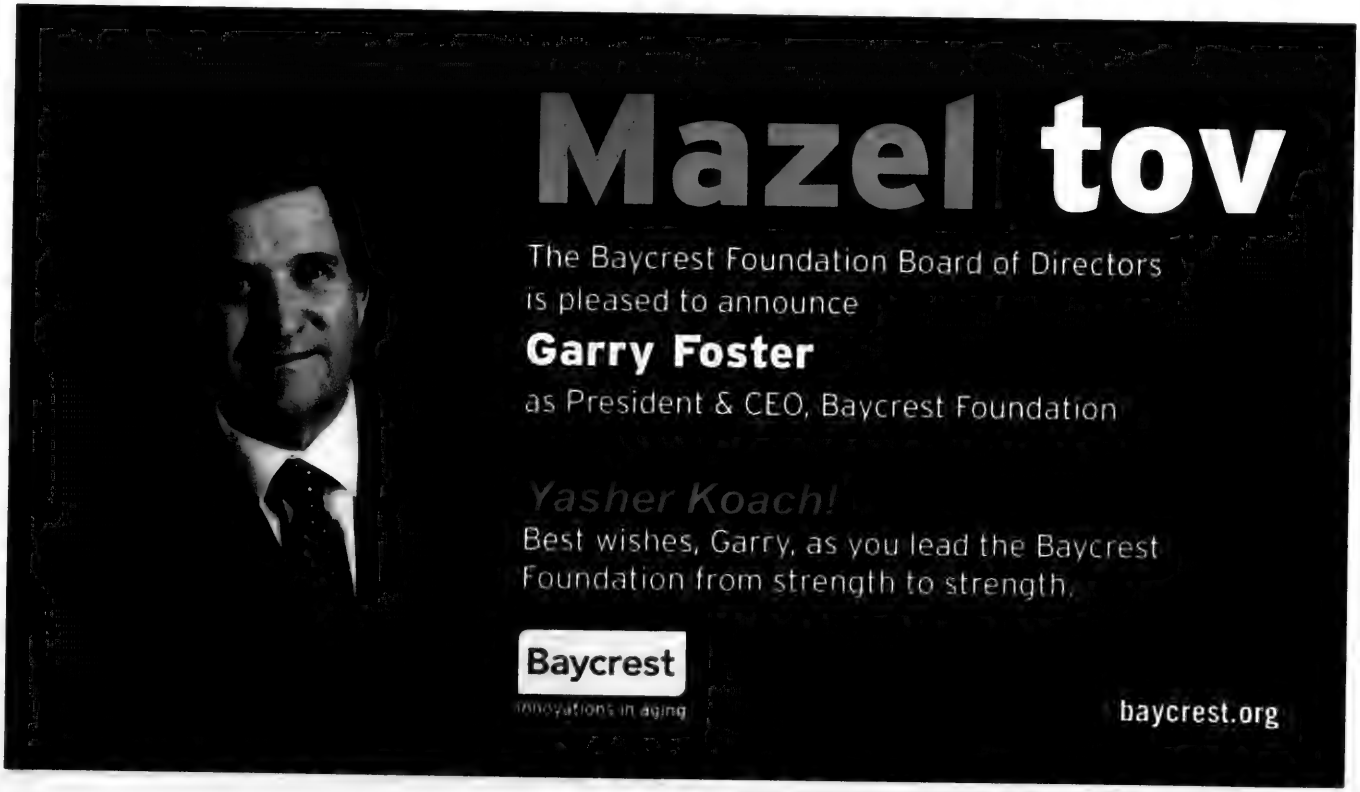

Spatz grew up in household of immigrants

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He has been involved in community activities for decades, both Jewish and secular.

"He's been a wonderful supporter of the Atlantic Jewish Council and the State of Israel," said AJC executive director Jon Goldberg. "He's been a member of our board and management committee for many years and has been on several AJC missions to Israel."

Halifax lawyer Victor Goldberg, a past chair of AJC, worked for more than 10 years as Camp Kadimah co-chair with Spatz.

"I did the grunt work but Jim's keen eye for detail and love for the environment meant he was great for our physical plant and camp beautification," Goldberg said. "On each trip to Israel, his interest in 'green' projects was evident, the projects you think of when you think of JNF."

Spatz is the perfect honoree for the JNF dinner because of that interest, said Goldberg.

A self-admitted perfectionist, Spatz added, "growing up in the house of immigrants, my parents always hated waste.

> *Wonderful supporter of Atlantic Jewish Council and Israel*

That's carried on to my business philosophy. My father always built using good materials that would last for a long time, and always aimed for good energy efficiency."

Southwest's recent award of LEED Gold for The Grainery Lofts, the first multi-unit building east of Montreal to gain that designation for meeting LEED sustainability standards, is "a continuation of how my father developed his building, always aiming for efficient buildings with high life-cycle value."

He grew up with a sense of gratitude for being in Canada and the Halifax community. His parents instilled in him the understanding that those who can, should give back.

Spatz sits on the board of the Beth Israel Synagogue. He is a lifetime director of Halifax's Neptune Theatre and, in 2010, was appointed by Premier Darrell Dexter to serve on the Premier's Advisory Council on the Economy. He is also an active participant of the World Presidents' Organization.

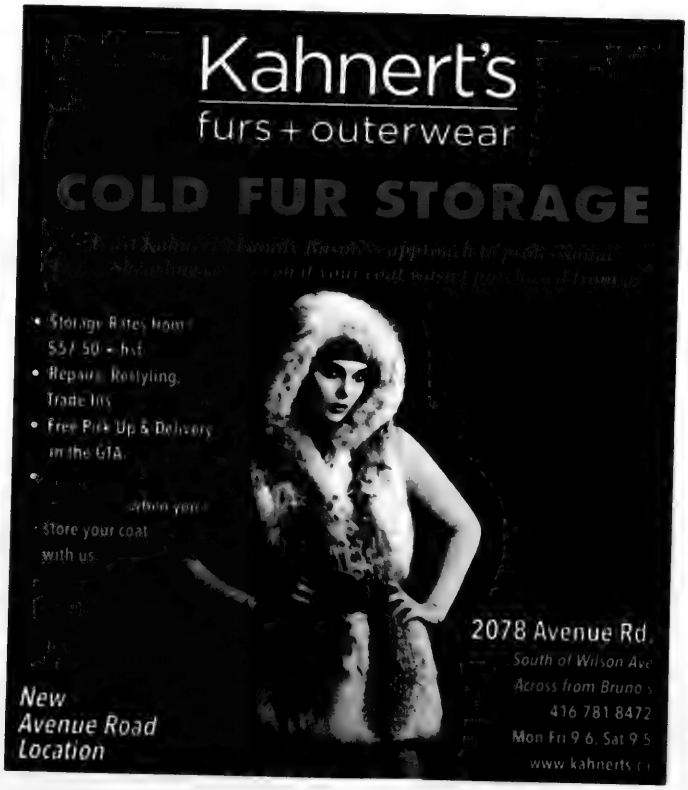
In 2014, Spatz will conclude a five-year term as chair of the board of governors at Dalhousie University, following his appointment to the board in 2001.

He has funded the Simon and Riva Spatz Chair in Jewish Studies, in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Dalhousie. The program in Jewish Studies will start in 2015-2016.

The Spatz Theatre at Citadel High School in Halifax was dedicated in his family's name three years ago.

"It's a great honour that JNF is recognizing me [at the first JNF dinner in Halifax in 18 years]," said Spatz. "I'm thrilled to help re-launch the dinner, and hope it's not another 18 years before there's another one."

Tickets for the dinner are available through JNF Atlantic Co-ordinator Sue David at Atlantic@JNF.ca or 902-444-4563. ■



Protest tries to shut down pro-Israel gay activist

JANICE ARNOLD
JARNOLD@CJNEWS.CA
MONTREAL

The man dubbed "the mayor" of the gay Jewish party scene in New York received a less-than-cordial reception in Montreal.

Jayson Littman, the founder of He'bro, which organizes gay social and cultural events, had his talk at Hillel House on March 27 drowned out by protesters.

His scheduled presentation on "Out in Israel" drew a flood of objection on social media days in advance and a score of demonstrators at the event.

The most vocal opponent of his appearance beforehand was the Centre for Gender Advocacy, an independent, but student-funded, organization at Concordia University, which describes its mandate as promoting gender equality and empowerment, particularly among "marginalized communities."

The approximately 20 noisy demonstrators identified themselves as Queers Against Israeli Apartheid.

The controversy led Queer Concordia, the main LGBTQ group on campus, to withdraw its support for the event earlier that day, said Michelle Soicher, a fellow of the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA), the event's main sponsor.

Jayson Littman
ANDREW WERNER PHOTO

Littman, who recorded the incident and posted it on YouTube, said some 20 people showed up and began chanting about Israel's occupation and oppression of the Palestinians as he was about to speak.

"They demanded that I leave the premises and that the lecture be cancelled," said Littman, who added he was "a bit nervous." He said they began moving closer to him and gesturing with their hands, which Littman interpreted as an attempt to "provoke some kind of physical confrontation. But everyone on our side remained really calm."

The protesters weren't ejected, but were given the opportunity to stay if they behaved. Security guards moved the meeting to another room, stopping the demonstrators, who continued to be disruptive, from coming into the new space, he said.

They demanded to be let in, shouting that this was like a "checkpoint" in Israel, Littman recalled. Eventually, they were escorted out of Hillel House, and he went ahead with his scheduled talk before an audience of about 20.

A leaflet they left behind said, "Under the guise of speaking about LGBTQ issues in Israel, this event – its speaker, sponsors and hosts – are attempting to excuse and promote violence and hatred toward Palestinians (including Palestinian queers) and the ongoing occupation and colonization of Palestinian territory."

The event is part of "an aggressive public relations campaign to market Israel as an oasis of gay tolerance and democracy in the Mideast, surrounded by 'backward' countries where gays have no rights. The campaign is not about supporting queers in Palestine or elsewhere in the Mideast who are resisting homophobia."

Soicher described comments on the event's Facebook page as "hateful, rude and petty." Few addressed the topic at hand: LGBTQ rights in the Middle East.

Gender Advocacy also accuses Israel of "pinkwashing," which it describes as Israel's use of "its relative... acceptance of queers to reinforce its position as the 'Middle East's only democracy'" to deflect attention from alleged abuses of Palestinians' human rights. Gender Advocacy endorses Israeli Apartheid Week, which took place at Concordia and other Montreal universities in March.

The U.S.-based CAMERA is a pro-Israel group that monitors media coverage of Israel and the Middle East. Soicher, a second-year theatre student, is one of 27 North American university students (one of two in Canada) who are CAMERA fellows this year. They try to offer balance to anti-Israel activity on campus.

She began working to bring Littman to Concordia back in September.

Her goal was to have him speak to a broad audience on campus about the situation of the LGBTQ community in Israel in comparison with neighbouring countries.

She partnered with Queer Concordia, which agreed to have its name associated with the event and to promote it among its more than 1,000-person Facebook invitation list, as well as book space on campus. It wasn't able to secure space, but that was not due to the nature of Littman's talk, Soicher believes. Hillel House is off campus, on Stanley Street.

The intent was to steer the discussion away from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and overt politics, Soicher said, and encourage a dialogue that she thought would be of interest to the greater Concordia LGBTQ community.

Her aim, she said, was to present a positive side of Israel that's little heard on campus. Although pro-Palestinian activity is not as vitriolic as it was years ago at Concordia, it is pervasive, she added, and has become "academically valid," noting the Concordia Graduate Students' Association last year endorsed boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel.

"It's cool to be pro-Palestinian," Soicher said. "But I didn't realize until now how strong the anti-Israel feeling is."

Littman, 36, is the former New York director of A Wider Bridge, an organization, Soicher said, that seeks to foster connections between the LGBTQ community in Israel and North America. He has also led LGBTQ Taglit-Birthright trips to Israel.

The reason Queer Concordia gave her for pulling out is that it "wants to remain neutral," but Soicher believes it "bowed to pressure from those who wanted to skew this event into something that it was not."

Queer Concordia declined to comment to *The CJN* about its decision.

Soicher does not blame Queer Concordia and respects what it did. "I'm not angry at all. Their heart was in the right place...They didn't want to. I know they felt terrible," she said.

Littman, who speaks on other campuses in the United States, said this was the most hostile reception he has ever received. "I have had threatening messages on social media, but obviously when people are in your face, it's different."

If the protesters had stayed, he said they would have heard that he doesn't portray Israel as a haven for gays, but as a democracy whose courts have allowed gays to win rights, as they have in the West.

"The one reason the Israeli government promotes Israel as gay-friendly is capitalism. It wants to bring in tourism." ■

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New centre planned for Jewish Youth Network

CJN STAFF

The Jewish Youth Network of Ontario announced last week that a property has been purchased for a new campus on Bathurst Street, just north of Highway 407, in Thornhill.

The state-of-the-art campus will be named the Miriam and Larry Robbins Jewish Youth Centre and has been dedicated by Larry Robbins, principal partner of Erin Mills Development Corporation and Great Gulf Homes.

Robbins, along with his family, is a longtime friend and supporter of JYN. At a recent celebration, hosted at the home of Allen and Brenlee Gales, Robbins was recognized for his devoted commitment and outstanding contribution to Jewish youth, and renderings for the building project were unveiled.

The new centre, slated to open in 2015, will include a sports lounge, youth cafe, classrooms, social space, basketball court, and playground.

As a fund-matching fundraiser, Robbins topped up his donation with an additional matching grant of $540,000 to kick-start this unique project. ■

From left are Chani Nachlas, Denise Robbins, Rabbi Shmuli Nachlas, Larry Robbins, Lorne Robbins, Monty Robbins and Allen Gales.

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Brothers recount grandfather's role in saving Jews

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@cjnews.com

In 1972, Jose Arturo Castellanos was living the quiet life of a retired diplomat when acclaimed novelist Leon Uris came knocking on his door.

Uris wanted to speak to him about World War II and Castellanos' role in it – specifically how he used his position as a diplomat to save Jews.

A native of El Salvador, Castellanos shared his countrymen's modesty and didn't particularly like to blow his own horn, said two of his grandchildren, Alvaro and Boris Castellanos. Their grandfather's exploits were not widely known at the time outside of family circles.

That was about to change, as Uris' subsequent interview drew widespread attention to Castellanos' key role in drawing up citizenship papers that saved the lives of an estimated 40,000 Jews during the Holocaust.

Castellanos was subsequently named as a Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, taking his place alongside wartime heroes like Raul Wallenberg and Oskar Schindler.

Today, the Castellanos brothers live in Toronto. Their grandfather is long dead, but the two are hoping to keep his memory alive through two films they are making about him. The first, a 15-minute documentary, is already complete. They will present it on April 29, two days after Yom Hashoah, at the House of Quality Jerusalem, a centre for artists and cultural life in the Holy City. A three-minute trailer for the film can be viewed at http://igg.me/at/wayoftherighteous.

They are currently working on a full-length, 90-minute film that they hope to complete in a year or two, if they can get the funding for it.

Boris, left, and Alvaro Castellanos

The brothers travelled to Israel last year to interview survivors. They've also met their grandfather's diplomatic colleagues, and they've talked to historians.

They think there may be a Canadian connection to the story. Given that many of the Jews their grandfather helped were from Hungary, and there is a substantial Hungarian Jewish population in Toronto, the brothers are hoping that anyone with a tale to tell will come forward, and perhaps be included in the film.

"We were thinking, what are the chances that someone in Canada was saved by one of these documents?" Boris said.

For the brothers, their grandfather's deeds have particular meaning, and not just because they are proud he saved many lives.

"We are Salvadorans rescued by Canada from a very bloody civil war," said Alvaro, 44. "To have a Canadian angle to the story, by people who have been rescued, is very important to us."

"That is a powerful part of the film," added Boris, 40.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46

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THE PHONY DEBATE OVER LEGISLATING "JOINT CUSTODY"

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 32 years

Bill C-560, moved to second reading in Parliament on March 25. If passed on third reading with Royal Assent, Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott's private member's bill will amend Canada's Divorce Act to create a rebuttable presumption of equal shared parenting (ESP.) ESP would mean parents from a divorced union have an equal role in raising their children, unless one parent can prove why this should not be the case.

Barbara Kay recently championed this legislation in the National Post (Wed. March 19/14) claiming that this draft legislation will cure the problems in the family law system. She describes it as very adversarial system for high-conflict cases, whereby one parent (usually the mother) "wins" primary residence for the children, producing injustice, heartbreak and financial ruin on a massive scale.

She also quotes Toronto lawyer Brian Ludmer who claims that in Australia, ESP, in combination with related measures such as increased use of family mediation services, has resulted in 72 % of parents now being able to resolve post-divorce parenting arrangements without the use of legal services.

However, Helen Rhodes, a Law Professor at the University of Melbourne reviews an empirical study of the 2006 Australian legislation that is similar to Canada's Bill C-560 in a paper found on the internet entitled "The Dangers of Shared Care Legislation: Why Australia Needs (Yet More) Family Law Reform." She concludes that "the reforms have been successful in producing an increase in "substantially shared care arrangements" since the legislation came into force. At the same time, however, the research indicates that a significant number of these arrangements are characterized by intense parental conflict, and that shared care of children is a key variable in affecting poor emotional outcomes for children. " Among studies she cites was the "MacIntosh data" which revealed that a significant proportion of the children in the sample, shared care was a source of "psychological strain" "where the key factor ... was the presence of ongoing conflict between the parents." She identified such EPS legislation as the source of the harmful care arrangements they found. Accordingly, various family law lawyers argue against legal presumptions about children's interests.

By example, Tennessee Lawyer Francis King penned an article dated April 6, 2013 called "Tennessee Moves Toward Equal Parenting Time...But Not So Fast." Apparently, in 2011 the Tennessee Legislature enacted T.C.A. 36-6-106, which provides a version of EPS, namely that "in taking into account the child's best interests, the court shall order a custody arrangement that permits both parents to enjoy the maximum participation possible in the life of the child consistent with the factors set out below, the location of the residences of the parents, the child's need for stability and all other relevant factors etc." Apparently, some Tennessee courts have interpreted this new law to indicate a presumption of joint custody in the absence of "clear and convincing evidence that it would be inappropriate." However, Mr. King notes that the problem with the Tennessee legislation is the law's criteria by which parenting time is then defined is so broad that the exceptions easily swallow the presumption of joint custody in any given case. He cites an example of a recent decision where the father drank excessively at least six nights per week and had posted pictures of himself and the children with his girlfriend on the internet while he was still married: "his past conduct hurt him severely on the parenting time issue" notwithstanding the "presumption" of joint custody.

As a Toronto lawyer who has practiced family law for 33 years, I find this debate between pro and anti EPS legislation, to be phony and irrelevant, although clearly an honest one. In the real world of the family courts, Judges makes decisions based on the facts of each case albeit within the context of the law. They will continue making decisions based on those facts, far less then on "presumptions." Moreover, what many pro-EPS lawyers forget is that under section 20 of Ontario's Children's Law Reform Act (CLRA) and similar provincial legislation across Canada, we already have EPS legislation for non-married parents and couples who are already divorced. It reads in part as follows "...the father and the mother of a child are equally entitled to custody of a child." The same section only suspends that right in section 20(4) if on the separation of the parties a child lives with only one of them "with the consent, implied consent or acquiescence of the other parent" or by "[written] separation agreement or court order." But if that does not happen, the Court presumes equal and joint custody. Moreover, for married couples, section 16(10) of the Divorce Act already imposes on the courts an obligation that "in making an order [concerning custody] shall give effect to the principle that a child of the marriage should have as much contact with each spouse as is consistent with the best interest of the child, and for that purpose, shall take into consideration the willingness of the person for whom custody is sought to facilitate such contact." Yes, unlike section 20 of the Children's Law Reform Act, the test for married couples getting a divorce, appears to be more about "best interests" and not a "presumption of joint custody." However, even in Canada's Divorce Act, the Court must look towards "maximizing contact" when assessing a child's best interests.

More importantly, my experience concerning the difference of "presumptions" in these statues is that the Courts dispose of custody cases irrespective of these differences i.e. as between unmarried vs. married couples. It is true that the Divorce Act for married couples uses a different presumption, one of "best interests." But the presumptions have made little difference "on the ground" in most cases.

So what factors influence a decision in custody cases, especially in high conflict cases, if not such presumptions? Many other factors: the status quo, the experience of one's lawyer, the strategy used to present the facts, whether a parenting assessment is ordered, the identity of the assessor, money for legal fees, whether legal aid will fund the case, which Judge or Judges are involved, the past conduct of the parents, whether there are child protection issues, whether the children have any disabilities, the parenting time they have devoted to the children, shared with the other parent and willingness to share.

Most importantly, which parent is really willing to listen?

To conclude, passing legislation with "presumptions" in an attempt to cure the insane costs and delays associated with high conflict family law cases is like trying to waive a magic wand at a high speed train before it runs you over. Much more creative ideas with better funded strategies are sorely required. But to speculate on such solutions will require a different article.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit

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Castellanos was exiled to Mexico after the war

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 44

Not only are they reaching out to survivors who personally benefited from the documents their grandfather provided, they are asking survivors' children to come forward with their stories, or perhaps with the original wartime documents they may have come across in their parents' files. These could be a compelling visual representation of his exploits, they said.

When Castellanos was assigned to the El Salvadoran diplomatic corps in the late 1930s, there was little to suggest he would play an important role in saving so many lives. He had been a bit of a trouble maker back in El Salvador, advocating democracy, so the fascist regime dispatched him to Europe in 1937, where they thought he couldn't cause much trouble, Alvaro said.

He was first assigned as part of a weapons procurement team, but was later appointed consul general in Liverpool, England.

In 1941, Castellanos was assigned to Hamburg, Germany, where he issued visas to Jews to enable them to leave the country. Later he named George Mandel-Mantello as first secretary, a fictitious post that didn't exist in the Salvadoran foreign service. Mandel was a Hungarian Jewish businessman whom Castellanos had met earlier in his career. To make his name more Spanish, Mandel changed it to Mantello.

In issuing citizenship documents to European Jews, Castellanos was violating instructions from his government. Later, he would tell his family, "Anybody else would do the same. It was part of my job," Alvaro recalled.

Jose Arturo Castellanos, left, and George Mandel-Mantello

Clearly, his Salvadoran modesty played a role in downplaying his achievements, but his flouting of the rules could have gotten him into deep trouble. Their grandfather, however, was disaffected with the country's dictatorship, so his reaction was "to say screw you, Fascists," Alvaro explained.

For the next two to three years, after being reassigned to Geneva, he and Mandel-Mantello issued life-saving documents to Jews facing deportation and death.

> *Our Jewish friends and clients who found out we were in research for our documentary really encouraged us to go to Israel and start our film project*

Jews in Budapest in possession of the papers could find refuge in international safe houses, such as the Glass House, a former glass factory in which the Swiss government harboured thousands of Jews who possessed Salvadoran papers and those of other countries.

"Granddad arranged the documents, and Mantello found Jews to be helped," Alvaro said.

After the war, Castellanos returned to El Salvador but was exiled to Mexico for advocating democracy. In 1950, he was reappointed to the diplomatic corps. He retired in 1956 and died in 1977 at age 86.

Alvaro conceived of the documentary 12 years ago, based on the stories the boys had heard since childhood. The project was put on hold after their mother suffered a stroke, but it was revived thanks in part to the encouragement of their Jewish friends and clients.

"Our Jewish friends and clients who found out we were in research for our documentary really encouraged us to go to Israel and start our film project," Alvaro said.

"For me, that brought the whole thing back," Boris said. "Some Jewish friends are the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors."

Now, the brothers, filmmakers and artists, have put their event planning business on hold – though they still do work for longstanding clients like ORT Toronto and Ve'ahavta – and they're focusing their attention on their film project.

If they succeed in getting the funds to complete the full-length documentary, their grandfather's remarkable story will reach an even larger audience, Salvadoran modesty or no modesty. ■

Survivors and their family members are asked to contact Boris at: 647-780-2674, or send an email to: alvaro@eventplanit.net.

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Canadian woman headed Hawaiian federation

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Enid Evelyn Cohen Lichter, the first female head of the Jewish Federation of Hawaii, always marched to her own drummer.

Enid, who died of old age in Phoenix, Ariz., on Feb. 7 at 97, was a philanthropist who supported Jewish organizations in Canada and the United States. A native Torontonian, she was a feminist in a time when options for women were limited. She was also a free spirit who went where her heart led her, sometimes to her parents' chagrin.

Enid's parents were Essie and Arthur Cohen, philanthropists whose donation to Mount Sinai Hospital built the hospital's lobby. The couple's picture still hangs in the Mount Sinai lobby today.

The lobby is dedicated to Jacob Cohen, Arthur's father, who was Canada's first Jewish magistrate. Enid's father, Arthur Cohen, who died in 1975, was a Canadian movie industry pioneer. President of Holy Blossom Temple from 1928 to 1931, Cohen was a founding member of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, which became the United Jewish Appeal.

Arthur and Essie Cohen's disapproval rained down on their daughter's head when, as the mother of a young child, Enid decided to divorce her first husband, Albert Krangle. Divorce was considered quite daring in the 1930s, said Daryl Collier, Enid's granddaughter. It stigmatized women and divorce laws were strict.

Enid fell in love with Robert Shapiro, and in 1938, she left Canada, with two-year-old Patricia in tow, to join him in New Jersey. She married Shapiro when her divorce finally came through in 1941. She became a military wife, said Collier, adding that Shapiro was "the love of Enid's life."

The couple travelled a lot, and Enid, who had studied at Wellesley College in Massachusetts in an era when not many women went to university, wrote a travel guide for women.

"She didn't believe in a woman behind her man," Collier said. "She had a voice."

Enid Evelyn Cohen Lichter

In the 1960s, when the couple's family had grown to include two more children, Shapiro decided to divorce Enid because he wanted a "change of lifestyle," Collier said. "She was devastated."

Enid's feisty response to heartbreak was to take a trip around the world, to have an adventure, Collier said. She stopped in Honolulu, where a friend fixed her up with a dinner date with Martin Lichter, whom she ended up marrying.

In Hawaii, Enid volunteered for the Jewish Federation of Hawaii. She was named president of the federation in the mid-1960s, the first woman to hold that position, and she held it until the late 1980s.

"She raised tons of money and was a prominent figure in Hawaii," Collier said.

"She was career-minded. Had she been born at a different time, she would have had a powerful career. Working with the federation was her outlet."

Up until her death, Enid supported Jewish community organizations in the United States and Canada, including Mount Sinai Hospital and Holy Blossom Temple.

"She was always proud to be a Jewish Canadian," Collier said.

The motivation for Enid's philanthropy in the Jewish community can be summed up by one of her favourite sayings, from Hillel: "If not now, when? If I am not for myself, then who will be for me."

"In every part of her life, she lived by that," Collier said.

Giving to those less fortunate was an idea that Enid instilled into her grandchildren. "That's how I live my life," Collier said.

She remembers her "Gran" as a strong woman who believed in being independent at a time when women were very dependent on men.

"She was my role model," Collier said.

Enid Evelyn Cohen Lichter is survived by her daughters, Patricia Shenker and Ronny Perin, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. ■

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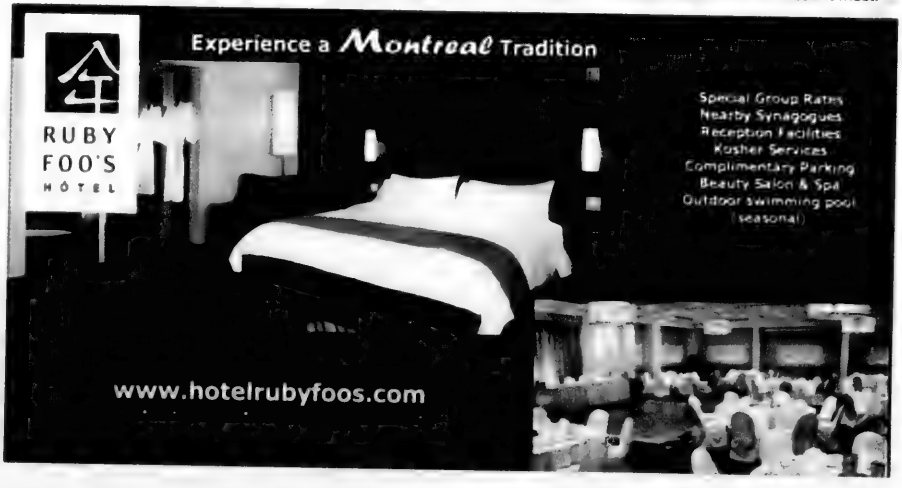

Knesset hosts play on Begin by Canadian playwright

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@cjnews.com

In researching the life and times of the late Menachem Begin, playwright Gordie Wiseman uncovered something quite unexpected.

As he was going through the archives at the Menachem Begin Heritage Center in Jerusalem, he came across a letter from Albert Einstein. The renowned physicist had written to the *New York Times* in 1948 "vilifying Begin, when he was first coming to the United States."

That wasn't so odd, reasoned Wiseman, considering Einstein and Begin came from opposite ends of the political spectrum.

But for Wiseman there was another, karmic aspect to uncovering the letter.

Many years before, he had written a one-man play under his pen name Gabriel Emanuel, which was called *Einstein*. It had a successful run in Toronto theatres and internationally.

Einstein's letter turned up while he was contemplating another one-man play, this one called, *Mr. Begin*. That play, featuring renowned Israeli actor Danny Steg, is currently making the rounds in theatres across Israel.

A few weeks ago, *Mr. Begin* was performed in the Knesset before an audience of parliamentarians and cabinet ministers, including former Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

A number of Begin's elderly colleagues were also in attendance as was Begin's daughter, Hasya.

It turns out, there's an appetite in Israel for a play about Begin, who is remembered as a strong leader who made peace with Egypt but who also ordered a military strike on Iraq's nuclear reactor.

Living in Israel for the last five years, Wiseman sensed "there's a feeling in the country that he's missed.

Gordie Wiseman meets Hasya Begin, the late Prime Minister's daughter, during a performance in the Knesset of Wiseman's play, *Mr. Begin*.

"I think there's a kind of lack of direction and leadership," he said on the phone from Israel. "Menachem Begin always had a clear vision where he wanted to lead Israel, and he was steeped in Jewish pride."

When U.S. president Ronald Reagan, advised by his vice-president George Bush and senior official James Baker, criticized Israel for the Iraq reactor bombing and held back a strategic arms agreement, "Begin said Israel had been around 3,700 years without a strategic arms agreement with America and would be around another 3,700 years. That's the kind of response we don't hear anymore, to stand up to a U.S. president," Wiseman said.

"We don't have to apologize all the time. We should be proud of what we have accomplished and that we're here to stay," said Wiseman, who worked as a lawyer in Canada and Israel.

So far, the play has been performed in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and in smaller centres. Audiences range in size from 120 to 400, with the largest to date in Ariel, which lies across the Green Line outside pre-1967 Israel.

So far, the mainstream media in Israel is pretty much ignoring the play. Their political slant coupled with the fact the play premiered in Jerusalem, not Tel Aviv, has kept them away, Wiseman believes.

"But 50 per cent of the population is excited to see a play about Begin, see the debate rekindled and see a different side of the debate," he said.

There's a lot to tell in the life and times of the former prime minister. Born in Poland, Begin possessed a distinctive old world charm, which would include kissing the hands of ladies. Though his political nemesis, David Ben-Gurion, would not even refer to him by name in the Knesset, Ben-Gurion's wife was charmed by him, Wiseman said.

The play tackles important issues from the time of Israel's founding, among them the 1948 Altalena incident, in which armed forces of the newly created State of Israel fired on the ship, which was carrying arms for the Irgun, he said.

As for Einstein's relationship with Begin, Wiseman believes "Begin and Einstein really reflected the story of the Jewish people in the 20th century.

"I find both these stories compelling, but its not like they were friends. They represented different sides of the Jewish experience in the 20th century."

Wiseman, a native of Winnipeg who lived in Toronto before making aliyah, said much of the history of the period has been "told through the eyes of Labor. So in the play, the other side comes out."

Mr. Begin was funded "on a shoestring," with the support of fellow Winnipegger Howard Rypp, who runs Nefesh Theatre. Nefesh Theatre will stage the show in South America in early 2015.

Original music for the play was composed by Wiseman's brother, Ron, who has also made aliyah. When living in Toronto, Ron was known as "king of Jewish reggae," Wiseman quipped.

Other brothers were similarly inclined to the arts. Older brother Howard is a professor of film at York University and a screenwriter while youngest brother Bob was a founding member of Blue Rodeo.

"We all got the bug," Wiseman said. "I call it a defective gene in the family." ■

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Millennials: The future of Jewish non-profits

Young volunteers for Reuth Medical Center of Tel Aviv

MARLENE LITT
JNS.ORG

In 2007, a friend reached out to me for help. Her uncle was a long-term resident at the Reuth Medical Center in Tel Aviv, and she requested that I join her on the American Friends of Reuth's Young Leadership board to raise awareness for the facility. After visiting the medical centre, I quickly fell in love with Reuth, and I have been championing their young leadership programming ever since.

As a social worker, I've been exposed to many worthwhile non-profit organizations. From what I've seen, all of these organizations have three things in common: they work tirelessly to make a difference, they always need more money (to both maintain their ongoing activities and expand their reach), and they are most successful when volunteerism is strong within the organization.

Reflecting on the latter two items, it's clear to me that the key to non-profit success is engaging younger donors and volunteers. Gone are the days when an organization could survive on "old money" alone.

I would even take it one step further, to say that the very future of social services hinges on the involvement of "Generation Y," young men and women born between 1980 and 2000, also known as "millennials." It's not just because this generation will lead the voluntary sector one day. This is about more than pragmatism.

Millennials will soon wield more power than any previous generation, because they are the most passionate and idealistic generation to ever grace the planet. As such, when fuelled by values or a cause they believe in, they are virtually unstoppable. Therefore, engaging millennials is about much more than raising money. It's about convincing young, talented, and energetic individuals that your cause is their cause, too.

While young volunteers will snub the traditional fundraising appeals executed via direct mail and cold calls, they are always looking for inspiration. And once inspired, they are happy to give everything they've got to their new cause – their creativity, time, networking abilities, social media savvy and, at times, even their money. They take ownership and become emotionally invested very quickly.

You see, you can lead a millennial to water, but he will only "drink" if you allow him to follow through on his own terms.

Millennials usually turn to social networking tools like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs to spread the word about their favourite charities. They often raise funds for the causes they are passionate about by running marathons or similar events wherein they serve as the cheerleaders and others are encouraged to give. They throw parties that raise awareness and cold hard cash, but never stale fundraisers.

What drew me to Reuth was the fact the organization, which is now celebrating its 75th anniversary, has always been powered by idealistic young volunteers. From the very beginning, a group of young women saw a gap that needed filling and stepped up to answer that call. Many years later, our young leadership division keeps that flame of commitment, passion, and creativity burning.

For example, last Passover, we chaired a unique and successful fundraiser for a diverse international crowd. We arranged a "silent disco" on the roof of the Reuth Medical Center for more than 180 young adults from seven different countries. No patients were disturbed because party attendees listened to music on headphones, and all of the attendees genuinely enjoyed the experience and latched onto their new cause as they danced to the music. The key to our success was that the attendees were able to see the facility – the place where their money was going – first hand.

It is this type of creativity and out-of-the-box thinking that millennials can bring to the table. They know the type of events that would appeal to them and inspire them to give of themselves. Therefore, it only makes sense that they should be the ones organizing and running these events.

The formula is simple: after you convince the young, talented and energetic individuals that your cause is, in fact, their own, give them the keys and let them drive.

If non-profit organizations remain hesitant to hand over the reins to Gen Y, they may very well be jeopardizing their longevity. As such, we must do everything in our power to help Jewish charities appreciate the value of big hearts, huge talent, and long-term commitment over large, one-time endowments.

The future of Jewish philanthropy depends upon it. ■

Marleen Litt is a social worker and chair of the American Friends of Reuth's Young Leadership Division. In December, Reuth (www.reuth.org), Israel's leading elder care, rehabilitation, and social welfare organization, presented her with its Young Leadership Award in recognition of her efforts on behalf of the organization.

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Guest Voice

Personalizing the Exodus from Egypt

REVEREND AMIEL BENDER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

We read these words from our Haggadah at our seder table every year: "In every generation, it is one's duty to see himself as though he has personally gone out from Egypt." In the past, it has been difficult for me to conceptualize this thought.

Here we are sitting at a beautifully dressed seder table boasting the splendour of the holiday: special plates and silverware, fine food and wine, etc. Our families are dressed in their finest clothing, and I wear my *kittel* in true festive fashion. And still, we're advised by the Haggadah to see ourselves as if we participated in the Exodus from Egypt.

We are to imagine ourselves running away from a tyrant in the middle of the night with a sack of matzah and our few possesions, embarking on a journey to the Promised Land. Is there something wrong with this equation? How do we transform our personal psyche to becoming part of and understanding the Exodus that took place so long ago under different material and arguably spiritual circumstances?

I only began to understand this recently when I heard a stunning story from one of the teens in our community who participated in the annual March of the Living trip. The story goes like this:

The young woman, Rebecca Share, after completing the march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, was standing by the railroad tracks at Birkenau, where a ceremony was taking place. Over the loudspeakers, all of those present heard the names of precious martyrs of the Holocaust, continuously read over the period of a few hours.

All of a sudden Rebecca hears the name: Rivka Share. With chills running down her spine, she realizes that she has just heard her own name! She has the privilege of sharing her name with a martyr of the Holocaust! What an emotional, meaningful and deep moment!

While Rebecca realizes that she has just personalized her Holocaust remembrance experience in the most astonishing way, she also realizes that she, unlike Rivka Share, whose name she has just heard, is able to leave Birkenau and continue her life of freedom.

When Rebecca shared her story with me, I replied that I could finally understand the words of the Hagaddah, where we are told that in every generation we should see ourselves as if we were part of the Exodus from Egypt.

When Egypt becomes a part of us, we can share in and understand the experience and the meaning of this concept. By becoming part of this experience, we are also committing this experience to a memory that we are expected to carry with us for the rest of our lives. ■

Reverend Amiel Bender serves as clergy at Congregation Beth Ora in Montreal and as music director of the Hebrew Academy of Montreal

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Peace talks 'but not at any price,' says PM

JTA
JERUSALEM

Israel is ready to continue peace talks with the Palestinians, "but not at any price," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday.

"To my regret as we reached the moment before agreeing on the continuation of the talks, the Palestinian leadership hastened to unilaterally request to accede to 14 international treaties. Thus the Palestinians substantially violated the understandings that were reached with American involvement [that neither side would take unilateral action]," Netanyahu said at the start of the regular weekly cabinet meeting.

His remarks came as the U.S. envoy to the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, Martin Indyk, was set to meet with the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators in an attempt to keep the peace talks going, at least until their April 29 scheduled end, and possibly beyond.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chairs weekly cabinet meeting. ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

> *Livni says Bennett trying to 'torpedo' peace process*

The Palestinians "will achieve a state only by direct negotiations, not by empty statements and not by unilateral moves," Netanyahu said, adding: "Unilateral steps on their part will be met with unilateral steps on our part."

Israel's chief negotiator to the peace talks, Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, in an interview on Israel's Channel 2 on Saturday, accused Naftali Bennett's Jewish Home party of trying to "torpedo" the peace process.

As negotiations hit a major impasse last week, Housing Minister Uri Ariel of the Jewish Home party announced the reissuing of tenders for the construction of more than 700 residential units in the eastern Jerusalem neighbourhood of Gilo.

Livni also blamed Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas for the failure of the talks.

Bennett responded to Livni's allegations on Sunday morning in a Facebook post: "Last night I heard that someone is blaming Bayit Yehudi (!) for the collapse of the negotiations with the Palestinians. She should remember what Rabbi Akiva said in *Pirkei Avot*: Silence is a sign of intelligence. Or as I would translate it into English: Silence is golden." ■

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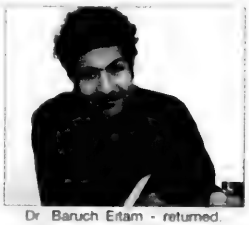
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OPINION

Being the parents of an IDF soldier

Sagi Melamed

As I left synagogue Friday evening, my friend Itzik smiled at me. He has been giving me the same smile for the last 3-1/2 months, since my oldest son went into the IDF. It was the quizzical smile of a soldier's father, a smile that said: "How are you doing now that Guy's in the army?"

Guy recently ended basic training and started the next stage of the long, gruelling path that he chose and was chosen for. Some of the changes in Guy are external (broader shoulders, determined face, chronic exhaustion). Some he tells us, and some we can only guess. But what about the changes in us, his parents?

• All plans for weekends and holidays revolve around the question, "Will Guy be coming home?" When he does come home, we're all joyful (even his three siblings). When he doesn't, a faint air of longing pervades the house. With the army, there are no guarantees. Will Guy sit at the family seder table this year? We will only know for sure once we see him walk through the door.

• Indulgences. Like most new parents, we were stricter with Guy than with his younger siblings regarding table manners, meal times, restricting candies, giving chores and so on. Now, when he comes home on leave, all the rules of the family fall by the wayside. He's excused from washing dishes or cleaning up, and in general is totally indulged. He works hard enough in the army – at home he is pampered.

• Additional expenses. Sending a child to the army does not just rend the parental heart and cause insomnia. It also empties the parental pocket. In the first few months of Guy's service, we found ourselves spending hundreds – nay, thousands – of shekels every month on our soldier. From chocolate, cakes and the like, to sticky tape, creams, ointments, bandages, flashlights, knives, notepads, insoles, thermal tops, and other accessories to ease our minds a little with the thought that "at least we did the best we could" for the comfort of the boy who overnight became a soldier.

• Prayers. Whenever the *Prayer for the Welfare of the IDF Soldiers* was read on Shabbat and holidays, I would always focus my prayer on the welfare of "the soldiers" and "the IDF" who represent us all. Now that the prayer includes my own son, it has acquired a far more personal nature and additional kavanah (purpose).

• Whose boy is this? When Guy was in school, youth movement and yeshiva, the last word was always ours. Was he allowed to participate in the annual trip when he was a bit ill? Could he miss school? Was it OK for him to stay out late and drive home after midnight? But since he was drafted, the last word – and even the first word – has been the prerogative of the army. We parents are no longer the authority. That now rests with his commanders, soldiers older than him by maybe a year or two. "Commander X said…" "Commander Y punished me…" Now our boy belongs to his commanders.

A few weeks ago, I heard Guy talking on the phone to a friend who had also just been drafted and who was facing a crisis. "Do you remember how before the army we talked about Zionism, of the importance of contributing to the country and having a meaningful military service? Let's not forget all that, even when it's hard for us in basic training, when we don't understand the reasons for all the infuriating commands, when there seems to be an unbridgeable chasm between the Zionism of our youth movement and our current daily life. Let's remember why we're here!" Guy didn't know that I was listening to this conversation, or how his motivational speech to his friend bolstered his father's spirits. ■

Sagi Melamed is vice-president of development for the Max Stern Yezreel Valley College and author of Son of My Land. *He lives in the Galilee.*

Alice Kern

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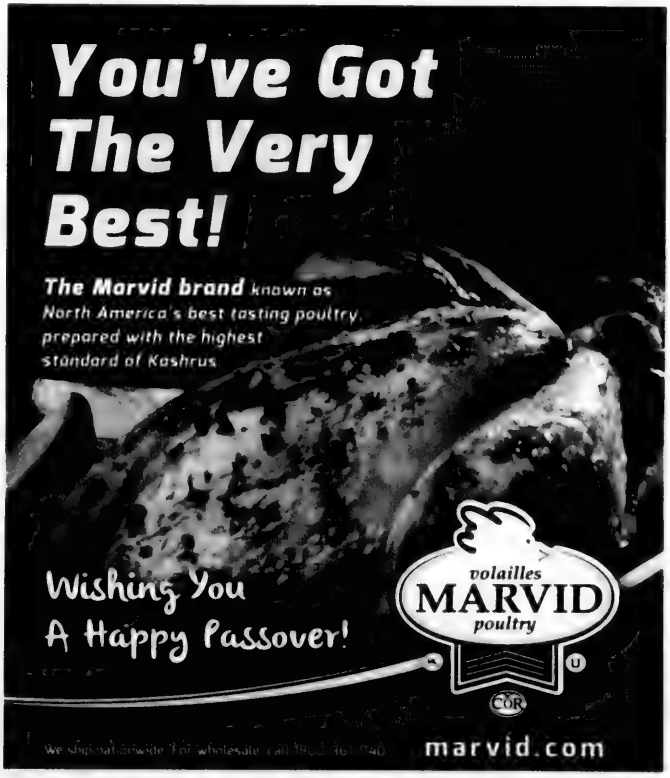
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TAU cancels lecture by convicted terrorist

Marissa Newman
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL, TEL AVIV

Amid mounting pressure from right-wing Knesset members and student unions, Tel Aviv University cancelled a scheduled lecture by convicted terrorist Mohammed Kanaane Sunday.

Kanaane was scheduled to speak at the university Monday to mark Land Day, which commemorates Arab protests against Israeli building policy.

The scheduled address drew protests outside the university Sunday and harsh condemnations from right-wing MKs.

"In light of concerns of disrupting the public order, and since the explicit request to have Mohammed Kanaane participate was only recently submitted without time for evaluation, the university does not approve his participation at the event," a statement released by the university read.

However, the statement maintained that other Land Day activities will proceed as planned.

Kanaane, an Arab-Israeli, served 4-1/2 years in prison over his involvement with Hezbollah and for receiving funds from Palestinian terror cells toward the production of weapons.

Kanaane was slated to speak at an event run by the Hadash and Balad student unions in commemoration of Land Day. ■

TimesofIsrael.com

Israeli diplomats end strike

JTA
JERUSALEM

Employees of Israel's Foreign Ministry ended their two-week strike with an agreement to increase pay for diplomats.

In a statement, the Foreign Ministry Workers Union called the deal signed April 2 with the Finance Ministry an "outline" of a collective agreement that will be signed within a month, according to Israeli news reports.

Under the collective agreement, diplomats' salaries will be adjusted according to the cost of living in the country in which they are working. Also, there will be compensation for spouses of diplomats for loss of work in their field and the Foreign Ministry will help pay for the education of foreign diplomats' children.

"We are glad that the State of Israel understands the difficulties that the fighters of the Foreign Ministry must deal with and are sorry for the unnecessary damage that was caused," said a statement released April 2 by the Foreign Ministry Workers Union. "Tomorrow the foreign fighters of Israel will return to the global front line."

The open-ended strike shut down Israel's 103 embassies, consulates and diplomatic missions around the world, and caused the postponement or cancellation of visits by several world leaders and trips by Israeli officials. ■

FLASH90 PHOTO

Animal Rights

Activists with an Israeli animal rights organization performed with a dead animal in downtown Jerusalem on April 4.

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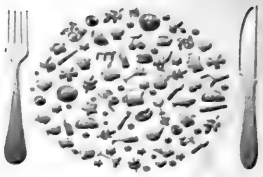

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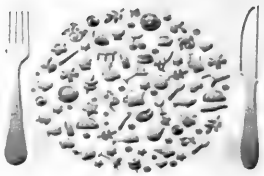

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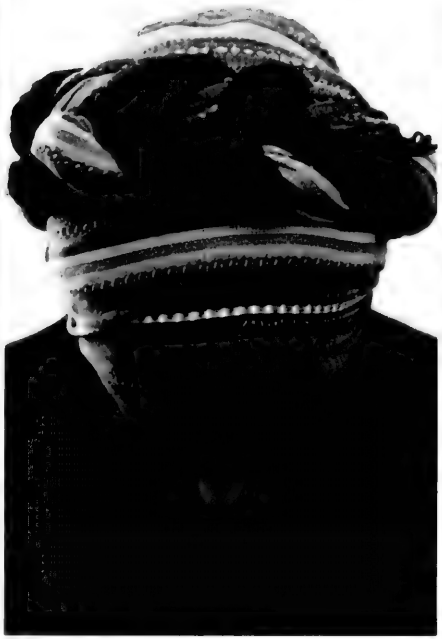
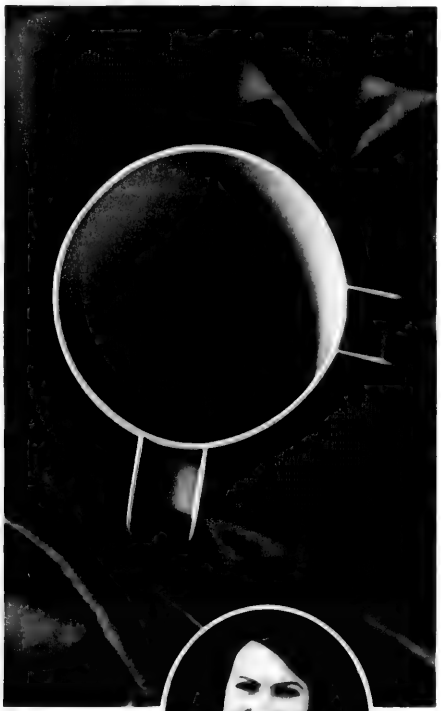
Jewish Life

Splitting the sea of chocolate in Israel. *Food*. **PAGE 66**





Margalit Slovin, inset, is showcasing her first solo exhibit, *Mikvah: A Tradition of Purity*.

Photographer spotlights mikvah in Ryerson exhibit

ILAN MESTER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Few people outside of the Jewish faith have learned about the mikvah. In fact, there are even people within the community who don't know much about this ancient ritual of purity. Canadian-American photographer Margalit Slovin is hoping to change that.

"Growing up, there were certain things that I knew about, but not necessarily in detail – the mikvah was one of them," she said. "I realized that if, as a Jewish woman, I knew very little of this ritual, there were probably many more people outside the Jewish faith who also had little knowledge."

The recent graduate of Ryerson's bachelor of fine arts in photography, is teaming up with the university to showcase her first solo exhibit, *Mikvah: A Tradition of Purity*. The exhibit, which runs through April 26 at Ryerson's I.M.A Gallery, was actually born out of Slovin's final-year thesis.

"It was definitely an interesting project to present to people," she said. "During critiques at university, I had to stress the modest nature of the subject matter."

Considering the ritual's intimate setting, Slovin admits she was pleasantly surprised that most of the subjects she approached were willing to participate in her project. "I think this was due in part to the fact that their identities are mostly hidden from the viewer," she said. "The photographs focus on their hair coverings, rather than their faces. I did this not only to show the modest nature of the women and the mikvah, but also to show the diversity of the women who partake in this ritual."

According to Slovin, she enjoyed the challenge of photographing her subjects without revealing their identities. "It actually wasn't difficult to photograph in this manner, on the contrary, I took it as a personal challenge to redefine portraiture."

The young photographer, who has interned at the Art Institute of Chicago, hopes her exhibit changes the way people view the mikvah. "When reading about the ritual, it often came across as archaic," she said. "I found a need to produce a body of work that presented the mikvah in a new light, putting it in a modern context."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 63

Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

Thoughtful stage drama *New Jerusalem* opens to the book on Spinoza's philosophy

It's been more than 350 years since the freethinking Jewish rationalist philosopher **Baruch Spinoza** was excommunicated by the Jewish community of Amsterdam, an event that's the focus of the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company's current production, *New Jerusalem: The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation, Amsterdam, July 27, 1656.*

The play, written by **David Ives** and directed by **Mitchell Cushman**, opens with a 20-minute prologue in the theatre lobby, then moves inside the theatre, which represents the interior of Amsterdam's Talmud Torah Synagogue; patrons are offered yarmulkes and lace head coverings as they enter. The excellent cast includes **Aris Athanasopolous** and **Alon Nashman**, who are outstanding as Spinoza and the chief rabbi of Amsterdam, respectively.

Spinoza's metaphysical ideas were deemed so heretical and dangerous by both the Christian and Jewish communities that they colluded in stifling him. This highly intellectualized and riveting courtroom-style drama opens the book on Spinoza's philosophical ideas, which seem so innocent today, but which could only threaten the worldview of any society predating modern notions of freedom of religion.

New Jerusalem continues at the Studio Theatre, Toronto Centre for the Arts, through April 13. hgjewishtheatre.com

Names

There are notable Canadian connections to the film *Labor Day*, which recently opened in movie theatres. The film was directed by **Jason Reitman**, a second-generation film director and the son of director **Ivan Reitman**. It's based on the novel *Labor Day* by **Joyce Maynard**, a 60-year-old American novelist and nonfiction writer who is perhaps most famous for her relationship with reclusive literary legend **J.D. Salinger** when she was 18 years old.

An article Maynard had written for the *New York Times Magazine* caught Salinger's eye, and the two exchanged 25 letters, then lived together for 10 months in his home in rural New Hampshire in 1973. Maynard rarely discussed the relationship publicly until she wrote about it in her 1998 memoir *At Home in the World*.

Jose Feliciano performs at a benefit concert for the Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind.

Maynard comes from a distinguished literary family. She was one of two daughters of **Max and Fredelle (Bruser) Maynard.** Her mother, the child of Russian-Jewish immigrants, wrote about her Saskatchewan upbringing in a bestselling memoir, *Raisins and Almonds*. She also penned a second memoir, *The Tree of Life*. Fredelle Maynard was a prolific writer of magazine articles for many top-notch publications, including *Good Housekeeping, Ladies Home Journal* and *Chatelaine*.

Joyce's sister, **Rona Maynard**, was a long-serving editor of *Chatelaine*. Rona and Joyce jointly produced another Maynard family memoir, *My Mother's Daughter*, which appeared in 2007.

A California resident, Joyce Maynard has had considerable success as a novelist. *Labor Day* is not the first of her books to be made into a film. Her 1992 novel *To Die For* also made it to the big screen. Her most recent novel, *After Her*, came out in 2013. She's the mother of three children, including American heartthrob actor **Willson Bethel**, who has had leading roles in the television soap opera *The Young and The Restless* and other series.

Arts in Brief

■ Four screenings of *The Lady in Number 6*, Academy award-winning documentary about Holocaust survivor **Alice Herz Sommer**, will feature a post-movie question-and-answer session with the producer and director. $10, tickets at the door. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday April 13, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.

■ Latin crossover artist **Jose Feliciano** appears in Toronto at a benefit concert for the Israel Guide Dog Center For the Blind. Toronto Centre for the Arts, George Weston Recital Hall, Thursday May 22, 7:30 p.m. $55, $70, $85; 855-985-2787, www.ticketmaster.ca. VIP tickets $180 include meet-and-greet dessert reception with Feliciano, and tax receipt. 416-577-3600, www.ca.israelguidedog.org. ■

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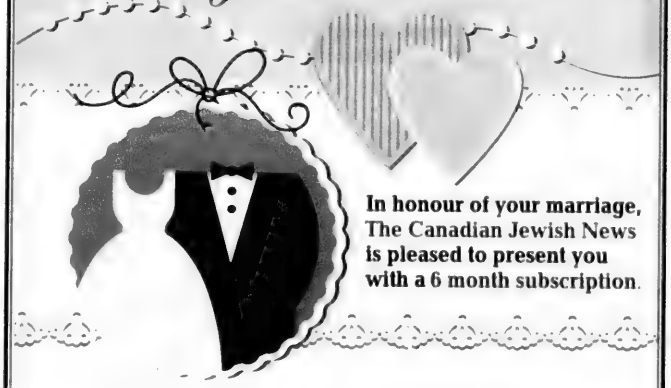

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Inspirational short debuts at Nadal JCC

MARVIN GLASSMAN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Since winning the 2014 Oscar in February as best short documentary film, *The Lady in Number Six: Music Saved My Life* has been acclaimed in its premieres over the past few months in Montreal and Atlanta.

The 38-minute film, which chronicles the life of pianist Alice Herz-Sommer, who died at 110 in February as the world's oldest Holocaust survivor, will have its Toronto premiere April 13 at the Al Green Theatre, in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

"Alice said before the cameras that music saved her life while being a concentration camp prisoner during the Holocaust. That alone would not have made the film memorable. What is memorable is Alice showing us how music is ingrained in her soul by playing Bach and Chopin with such passion and precision at age 109 and speaking eloquently on her past with an excellent memory of her achievements in life," said Frederick Bohbot, the Montreal-based filmmaker whose company, Bunbury Films, made and distributed the short.

Unlike many producers of Holocaust documentaries, Bohbot and director Malcolm Clarke wanted to create something more optimistic, and learned of Herz-Sommer through author Caroline Stoessinger's 2012 biography titled *A Century of Wisdom*.

"We did not want to do a story about hatred, pity or bitterness, but rather an optimist who would enlighten the audience about her life, and I'm grateful to Caroline for letting us know about Alice," Bohbot said.

"Truthfully, Alice lived a simple life in a London flat, not being materially rich, but rich with friends and an outlook that allowed Alice to not experience hatred even for the Nazis, despite her husband and mother being murdered by them."

Against a backdrop of vintage photographs from Herz-Sommer's 100 or so concerts at the Theresienstadt concentration camp, as well as photos from her early life at the turn of the 20th century, audiences hear Herz-Sommer's wisdom, which is reinforced through the comments of her two friends who also survived the Holocaust.

Herz-Sommer's positive comments in the film, such as "I don't hate. I even saw the good in the Nazis," may not be unanimously praised by audiences, but her honesty and positive attitude on how she survived is inspirational.

Her remark, "I was raised Jewish, but Beethoven is my religion," shows the power of music in her life.

Herz-Sommer was born in 1903 in Prague, where her parents ran a cultural salon, giving young Alice the opportunity to meet and know such towering artistic figures as Franz Kafka and Gustav Mahler.

She learned to play piano from pianist Artur Schnabel, and in the 1930s, she was getting recognition as a concert pianist, playing throughout Europe. She met and married violinist Leopold Sommer in 1931 and had a son Raphael, born in 1937.

When Czechoslovakia was invaded by the Nazis, Herz-Sommer did not flee to Palestine, as did most of her relatives. She cared for her ill mother, who eventually was murdered, as was her husband, in the Holocaust.

Because of her reputation as a concert pianist, Herz-Sommer was sent to Theresienstadt to serve as propaganda for the Nazis' claim that prisoners were well-treated there by having musicians like her play concerts in the camp. She was fortunate to be allowed to have her son stay there with her.

Following their liberation, she and Raphael emigrated to Israel in 1948. Raphael went on to become a concert cellist based in London, where Herz-Sommer immigrated in 1986. Raphael died of a heart attack in 2001.

"The bookings and popularity of the film with audiences continues to grow. The film will also be shown in Toronto in May, and I anticipate that many Jewish community centres and synagogues will book the film soon," Bohbot said.

The Lady in Number Six: Music Saved My Life will be shown four times on April 13 at the Al Green Theatre.

Both Bohbot and Clarke will host a question-and-answer session following each screening. Tickets are $10. For screening times and tickets, call 416-924-6211 or visit www.milesnadaljcc.ca. ■

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North Carolina's Queen City takes off

MICHAEL STAVSKY
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

You can almost feel the heat rising off the racetrack as you sit in the driver's seat. The roar of the engine is deafening and the thrill of competition gets the adrenaline pumping while you wait for the green light. In a few moments, you'll be driving your stock car at speeds nearing 250 km/h along the Talladega Motor Speedway or the Daytona 500 racetrack.

No, this scenario isn't really happening, nor is it a dream sequence from a movie. You're experiencing the racing simulator at the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte, N.C. One of the most realistic simulators ever designed, it's just one of the many hands-on experiences at stock car racing's Hall of Fame.

Visitors to the Hall of Fame can "race" in qualifying tracks against other visitors, join simulated pit crews changing tires and filling gas tanks like the pros, or test their knowledge of racing history. Each visitor is given a unique access card and can select their favourite NASCAR driver to guide through the museum via numerous interactive computer displays.

The skyline of Charlotte, N.C. MICHAEL STAVSKY PHOTO

The Hall of Fame guides visitors through several videos that detail the history of stock car racing and its North Carolina roots. Even non-racing fans will appreciate the dozens of championship stock cars on display, along with trophies, racing gear and apparel, as well as other NASCAR paraphernalia.

Charlotte, though, is home to more than just NASCAR. Nestled rustically near the hills of western North Carolina, Charlotte (nicknamed the Queen City), has in the last century transformed itself from a sleepy farming hamlet into one of the world's largest banking and financial centres. Home to Wells Fargo and Bank of America, Charlotte developed into the nation's second largest banking centre during the 1980s, following a series of mergers between banking powerhouses. Given its prominence within the financial world, the city was chosen as the site for last year's Democratic National Convention.

Like many other southern U.S. cities, the development of Charlotte was greatly impacted by circumstances surrounding the Civil War. Following the abolishment of slavery, many local farmers turned to commerce and established the city as a cotton and tobacco-processing centre. Several of the world's largest tobacco companies are headquartered in North Carolina. Although the industry is highly mechanized today, a number of 18th century tobacco plantations in the surrounding area have been preserved for tourists and offer daily tours.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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State's history brought to life at Museum

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Charlotte has much to offer families travelling to the region with children. In addition to the NASCAR Hall of Fame, the city is also home to the world famous Discovery Place science museum. Spread out over three floors and occupying a full city block downtown, Discovery Place's interactive exhibits and hands-on activities, as well as an aquarium and huge Omnimax theatre, make it a must-see for anyone visiting with children. Kids will also get a thrill out of the Charlotte Nature Museum, operated by Discovery Place. The museums are open seven days a week, and are certainly among the pre-eminent science centres in the southern United States.

The history of North Carolina is brought to life at the centrally located Levine Museum of the New South. Named for noted Jewish philanthropists and founders of the Family Dollar retail chain, Leon and Sandra Levine, the museum presents a comprehensive study of post-Civil War southern American society. Chronicling the reconstruction and rebuilding of the former Confederate states, the museum focuses on the development of North Carolina via numerous displays and exhibits. Visitors are treated to a timeline display of events in local history, from before the American Revolutionary War through Jim Crow segregationist laws as they were practised in North Carolina and up to the present-day "New South".

As detailed in a recent Levine Museum exhibit on the Jews of North Carolina, many of the city's Jewish men fought bravely for the Confederate army during the Civil War. Although maintaining a presence in the state since the early 19th century, the Jewish community began to flourish after the war. Using their expertise in trade and commerce, the Charlotte Jewish community, although small in number, had a tremendous impact on the dynamic economic growth the city has experienced in the last century.

Today, several synagogues service Charlotte's 12,000-strong Jewish residents. Although most of the city's Jews are non-practising, most maintain a strong Jewish identity. This sense of Jewish identity culminated in the construction of the city's 50-plus acre Shalom Park Jewish Community Center. Located in a tranquil park-like setting, Shalom Park is home to several synagogues, a massive recreation center and is the centre of Jewish life in Charlotte.

Whether as a stop on a trip further south, or as a destination on its own, take some time to visit this Queen City of North Carolina. ■

Michael Starsky acknowledges the assistance of the Charlotte Convention and Visitor's Bureau in arranging his family's trip to Charlotte.

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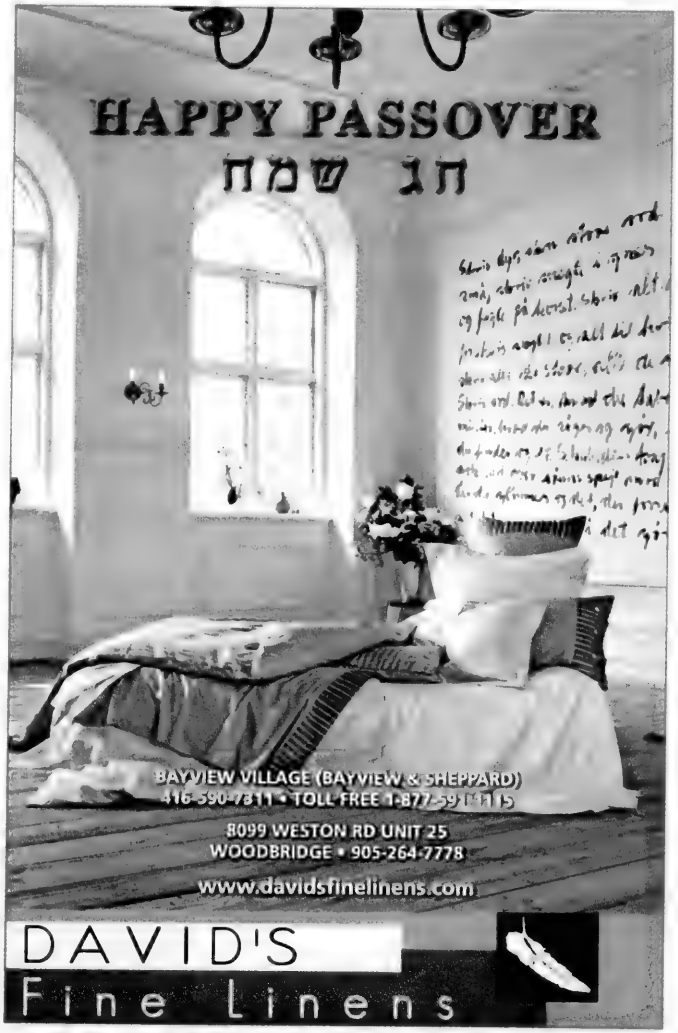


THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 10, 2014

Israeli writers recall a lost world

MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

For readers familiar with S.Y. Agnon's dazzling work, seeking an opportunity to re-experience the richly textured, ever-changing, kaleidoscopic literary immersion that is an Agnon story, or for those wishing to experience Agnon for the first time, there is cause for celebration. Agnon's *The Parable and its Lesson: A Novella* has just been published as part of the Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture.

The Parable and its Lesson has two narrators who relate events that happened in the shadow of the horrific Khmelnitsky pogroms of 1648. It features a descent by a rabbi and his shamash into Gehinnom (Hell) to help save a woman from becoming an agunah (a woman unable to re-marry).

This mysterious trip to Gehinnom, however, is only one point of departure in the story. Like so many of Agnon's works, *The Parable and its Lesson* takes the reader on an elaborate labyrinth journey. There are myriad detours: dissertations, discussions, homiletics, reflections and off-the-beaten-path side trips into a fantastical world of another time and place. We become entirely enveloped – some might say shrouded – as if in a giant, invisible tallit where the ancient is modern and the modern is an ordered jumble of tradition, fear, superstition, love, sacrifice, humility, haughtiness, cruelty and kindness. Agnon hides many of the nuggets of the story in this jumble and he does not make it easy for us to find them.

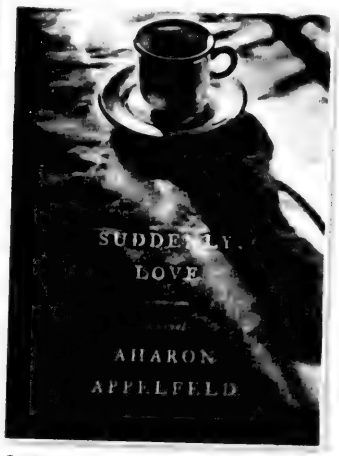
In 1966, ShmuelYosef (S.Y.) Agnon, along with the Jewish German poet Nelly Sachs, received the Nobel Prize for literature. He is the only Israeli writer, the only Hebrew-language writer, to have won that prize.

In bestowing the award upon the Andersson of the Swedish Academy made the following observation on Agnon's works: "In your writing, we meet once again the ancient unity between literature and science, as antiquity knew it. In one of your stories, you say that some will no doubt read it as they read fairy tales, others will read it for edification. Your great chronicle of the Jewish People's spirit and life has therefore a manifold message. For the historian, it is a precious source, for the philosopher an inspiration, for those who cannot live without literature it is a mine of never-failing riches... a combination of tradition and prophecy, of saga and wisdom." Andersson knew of what he spoke.

The Parable and its Lesson: A Novella
by S.Y. Agnon

Stanford University Press

Agnon died four years after receiving the award. But because of staunch Agnon enthusiasts and loyalists such as the late James S. Diamond, who translated *The Parable and its Lesson*, and Jewish Theological Seminary Prof. Alan Mintz, his work will live on. In the introduction to the book, Mintz described the story as "a truly exciting piece of literature that is unparalleled in the rest of modern Jewish writing." He also wrote an instructive essay about Agnon that makes the Stanford University publication particularly attractive.



Suddenly, Love
Aharon Appelfeld

Schocken Books

Aharon Appelfeld has not won a Nobel Prize for literature, although he is entirely worthy of the distinction. He is the recipient of many honours and awards for his work, but none yet from the Swedish Nobel Academy.

Appelfeld's volume of work is prodigious. He has written many works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, literary criticism and other commentaries. That he writes in a language – Hebrew – that he acquired only after his arrival in Mandatory Palestine in 1946 at the age of 14, adds an additional measure of remarkability to the distinctive, penetrating quality of the stunning literature that flows from him.

Suddenly, Love (translated by Jeffrey M. Green) is Appelfeld's latest instalment in what he has described as the "long saga about the Jewish people, about what happened to them during the 20th century."

Suddenly, Love is the affecting, heart-rending story of Ernst, an ailing, 70-year-old, unflinching former Communist ideologue, a native of the Carpathian Mountain region of Bukovina (now in Ukraine) and veteran of the Red Army. Ernst, living all alone in Israel and haunted by recurring dreams and thoughts of his eventful past, is counting down the days of his tumultuous but ultimately wasted life. He is a writer who can no longer write. He cannot reach into himself to find the memories and emotions that his harsh experiences have seemingly buried into locked and impenetrably dark places in his soul.

Until he meets Irena.

Irena, a single 36-year-old who lives alone in the home of her deceased survivor parents, becomes Ernst's caregiver. Shy, self-effacing, self-doubting, yet thoughtful and tender, Irena is totally – even fiercely – dedicated to healing and protecting Ernst from the ravages of his mostly self-inflicted distress. Irena's daily, tireless ministrations to Ernst become the balm that soothes his wounds and "the key" that has opened "the heavy doors" of his heart.

Appelfeld is unrivalled in his ability to create an engaging narrative with spare, unembellished, economical writing. He is unique in building gravitas and literary momentum slowly, steadily, as if in slow march, through the use of short chapters and finely honed, almost clipped language. Indeed, in an interview with Eleanor Wachtel of CBC, Appelfeld explained his signature manner of writing as stemming from his experiences hiding from the Nazis where language could betray as well as redeem.

True to Appelfeld's long-perfected purpose, *Suddenly, Love* implores the reader, despite tears, to see with clarity and empathy the world that the author left behind.

Agnon and Appelfeld were born not very far from each other in what is now Ukraine – Agnon in Buczacz, Appelfeld in Czernovitz. Jewish life in their region was in some sense the epicentre of Jewish civilization in eastern Europe before World War II. That civilization, as we know, alas, was utterly destroyed.

Agnon and Appelfeld are the two pre-eminent Israeli authors whose works are devoted to memorializing that civilization. They do so with a near sacred emphasis on preserving individual and collective memories, and a constant reverence for the vanished people who reside there. ■

SHALVA
The Association for Mentally & Physically Challenged Children in Israel

SHALVA, Israel's internationally acclaimed centre for children with special needs, is thrilled to announce Johanna Brooks as the Executive Director for Canadian Friends of SHALVA. Johanna brings a wealth of experience to this role based on her years of volunteer and work experience in the non-profit world. Her past positions include working for Hillel of Greater Toronto, UJA Federation and the Baycrest Foundation. She is currently a very involved lay person in many diverse organizations across the city.

SHALVA provides services to individuals with mental and physical disabilities, enabling them to reach their highest potential in life, while at the same time, providing shalva – peace of mind – to their family members. To learn more about SHALVA, please visit our website at www.shalva.org, contact Johanna at johanna@shalva.org and/or call (416)256-4002 ext. 386

Photographer organized exhibit from Israel

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57

She said, "within the exhibit, I have three sections of photographs: objects used for preparation; women with their head covered, and architectural interiors of the various spaces included in the mikvah building. Together, I have tried to explain the ritual as a process, rather than a singular person or space/room."

Aside from her unique photographs, what's impressive about Slovin's exhibit is that she organized most of it from overseas. The Texas-native moved to Israel to attend a seminary in 2013 – a week after she graduated from Ryerson. Within a month or so, she scored a full-time job at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

For one day each week, she worked as an image recourse and copyright associate. "It was amazing to be able to go through archives and see images being used all around the world," she said.

Slovin spent the rest of the week doing what she loves most: photographing. "This was great as I was able to use my skills as a photographer to capture other peoples' artworks," she said. "Some days I wouldn't know what I was photographing ahead of time, so it was a great surprise to see a work by an artist that I greatly admired waiting in the studio for me."

> *Some days I wouldn't know what I was photographing ahead of time, so it was a great surprise to see a work by an artist that I greatly admired waiting in the studio for me.*

Slovin has returned to Toronto for her exhibit and is happy she'll get to spend Passover with her family. However, she isn't staying in Canada for long. "I received a scholarship to go to France at the beginning of May for a couple weeks, learning with photography curators and conservators in Paris," she said. "I have never been to Europe and I'm very excited for this learning opportunity."

Following her stint in Paris, Slovin hopes to go back to school and obtain a master's degree. For now, though, she's focusing on her new exhibit. "As an alumna, I am even more thrilled to be having it at Ryerson's own Image Arts Student Gallery," she says. ■

For more information about Mikvah: A Tradition of Purity, *visit www.imagallery.ca or call 416-703-2235.*

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Jeffrey, Dayna, Jacob and Leah Switzer.

What's New

APRIL 10 - APRIL 17

Thursday 10	Friday 11	Saturday 12	Sunday 13	Monday 14
Sacred Song Am Shalom Choir performs in an interfaith concert 7:30 p.m. Barrie.		**Chocolate Seder** What if the 4 cups of wine were chocolate milk? Beth Sholom Synagogue	**Chametz Fest** Enjoy pizza and pasta while you clean your house. DANI Cafe	**Passover**

Thursday, April 10

MUSSAR PRACTICE
Alan Moranis discusses "Personal Change with the Tools of Mussar," 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

MEANINGFUL SEDERS
Learn how to make a meaningful seder for all ages with Danforth Jewish Circle, 5:15 p.m., Eastminster Church, 310 Danforth Ave. info@djctoronto.com.

SACRED SONG
Am Shalom Congregation, Barrie, sings in an interfaith celebration of culture and tradition, at 7:30 p.m., St. John Vianney Church, Barrie. $15. For tickets, call 705-792-3949.

Saturday, April 12

BOOK READING AND SIGNING
Dr. Sharon Baltman, author of *Escape From the Bedside*, signs her book 9 a.m. to noon, The Stop's Farmers Market, 601 Christie St. Book reading at 12:30 p.m.

KIDS SEDER & ADULT ED
Beth Sholom holds a chocolate seder, 10:30 a.m. $10 per family, reserve by contacting naomi@bethsholom.net or 647-873-1238.
Rachel Urowitz discusses themes in Jewish history inspired by the parshah, 9:45 a.m.

B'NAI SHALOM
B'nai Shalom, a Conservative congregation in Peel region, meets today. Email info@bnaishalom.ca or call 905-901-9889.

Deadline Reminder:
Due to Passover, deadlines will change. The deadline for the issue of May 1 was April 8. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

The Lady in Number 6

The Academy Award winning documentary about Alice Herz Sommer is being shown at the Miles Nadal JCC April 13, followed by a discussion with the producer and director. For more information, visit www.algreentheatre.ca.

Sunday, April 13

CHOCOLATE SEDER
Shaar Shalom Synagogue holds a chocolate seder today. RSVP agol@shaarshalom.ca

DANI CAFE
Enjoy chametz at the DANI Cafe, open 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Reservations not required, but encouraged. Call 905-889-3264, ext. 231 or email info@dani-toronto.com.

Upcoming Events

WOMEN AND ABUSE
The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

HOST FAMILIES NEEDED
Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel is looking for families to host an Israeli hero for two weeks in June. Call 905-695-0611, or email info@beithalochem.ca.

YIDDISH CULTURE
Explore Yiddish Culture, a 6-week session for intermediate Yiddish students. Sundays, starting **April 27**, 10 a.m., Beth David Synagogue. Register by email: bbarak@ujafed.org or 416-631-5843.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT
Bereavement support group, led by a trained group facilitator meets Sundays starting **May 4**, 10 a.m. at Beth Tikvah. Call **Rosalie**, 416-221-3433 to register.

SOCCERATHON
Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro are holding a soccerathon, **April 27** at Trio Sportsplex, 601 Cityview Blvd., Woodbridge. Email gilad.epstein@lorexcorp.com or cfobis@rogers.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
Circle of Care needs Russian, Hebrew and English-speaking volunteers to provide support to clients and family members with life-threatening conditions. Volunteers are needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2860, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

LUNCH AND LEARN
Lunch and learn starts **April 29** at Beth Tikvah Synagogue with **Robert Rotenberg** discussing the crime fiction novel. Lunch at 12:15 p.m., lecture at 12:45 p.m. Call 416-221-3433 to register.

FAMILY LAW WORKSHOP
Family law lawyer **Victoria Starr** discusses "Parental Alienation," **April 24.** For more information, call the Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women at 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

WONDERFUL WOMEN
Weizmann Canada's Women and Science Committee presents a panel of accomplished women discussing how they overcame obstacles to become frontrunners in their fields, **April 29**, 6:30 p.m. at Casa Loma. Featuring best-selling author **Jennifer Weiner**; artistic director of the National Ballet of Canada, **Karen Kain**; economist **Sherry Cooper** and award-winning scientist **Naama Geva-Zatorsky**. For tickets, call 416-733-9220 or email wonderfulwomen@weizmann.ca.

NEWTONBROOK TURNS 50
Newtonbrook Secondary School, 155 Hilda Ave., is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year with an open house **May 24** and a pub night. For tickets to the pub night, visit www.Newtonbrookturnsfiftyreunion.

PASSOVER SEDERS
- Chabad of Markham hosts a seder, **April 14**. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.
- Beth Tikvah holds a seder, **April 14**. Call 416-221-3433.
- Oraynu Congregation holds a humanist seder for adults and teens, **April 14**. Call 416-385-3910.

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- Association of Jewish Seniors and Bernard Betel Centre hold a seder, **April 15**. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 458.
- Am Shalom Congregation in Barrie holds a Passover seder, **April 15**. Call 705-792-3949.

YOM HASHOAH

- Oraynu Congregation marks Yom Hashoah, **April 27,** 7:30 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr.
- Temple Sinai marks Yom Hashoah **April 27,** 3 p.m. Featuring the story of Cantor emeritus **Severin Weingort.**
- Temple Har Zion marks Yom Hashoah **April 28,** 7 p.m.
- Beth Tikvah Synagogue marks Yom Hashoah **April 26,** 7 p.m. starting with *Mincha*, featuring a presentation by **Gerda Frieberg.**
- 71st Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising is marked **April 24,** 7:30 p.m. at Toronto Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

- Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.
- **One Family, Two Homes:** A 6-session group for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children and adults participate in separate groups. Starts April 24, 6:30 p.m.
- **Mind-Body Connection for Women:** A 7-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 29, Lebovic JCC, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

- Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mahjong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Osnat Lippa** discusses "Treasures of the Guggenheim," April 29, 1 p.m. **Jack Newman** discusses "How Jews Helped Shape Television Comedy," April 10, doors open at 1 p.m., program starts at 1:30 p.m. For all programs, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. April 11, drop-in social work clinic, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; April 17, Easy ways to get active in the spring, 1:30 p.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine April 30 (register in advance); Dance with live music, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise starts May 6; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.
- **Day Centre for Seniors** provides a friendly, secure place for seniors with dementia. Hot lunch, stimulating activities, transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.
- **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.
- **The PEP Group** is welcoming new members. First program is a talk by **Vivian Felson** about Jewish women writers, April 10, Earl Bales Community Centre. Refreshments at 12:30 p.m., program begins at 1 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

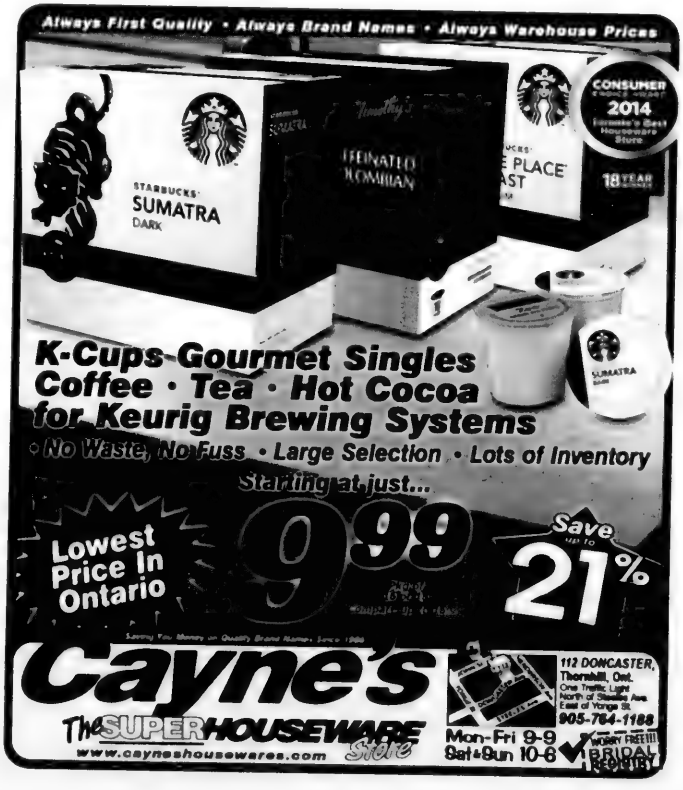
- Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.
- Musician/educator **Jordan Klapman** hosts a two-part musical journey through Jewish popular songs, April 24 and May 1, 1 p.m.
- **Iain Scott** discusses opera star Enrico Caruso, May 5, 1 p.m.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of J.M.W. Turner and David Hockney, May 13 and 20, 1 p.m.
- **Amnon Zohar** hosts "Israeli Hot Topics," Thursdays, May 1-29, 10 a.m.
- **Norene Gilletz** gives a workshop on making challah, May 4, 3 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

- 750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org
- The film *The Lady in Number 6* will be shown April 13 at 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. Tickets $10 available at the door one hour prior to the first screening. www.algreentheatre.ca.
- Community Passover Seder April 14 at 7:45 p.m. Call Midtown Chabad for tickets, 416-516-2005.
- *Young Frankenstein*, presented by the Curtain Call Players, will run at the Al Green Theatre, April 17-19 and April 23-25, 8 p.m. except 2 p.m. on April 19. For tickets, call 416-706-6181.
- Yom Hashoah Commemoration, April 27, 11 a.m.
- Register for the Joke Lab with actor **Jack Newman** and learn how to tell hilarious jokes and humorous anecdotes, April 24-May 15, 7 p.m.
- Register now for spring film studies with **Adam Nayman,** looking at the work of **David Lynch,** April 28-June 23, 7 p.m.
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition (male voices needed) July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. ext. 250.
- Harmonia, a Jewish choir for youth aged 8-18 directed by **Yonah Sienna** meets Sundays at 4 p.m. Email harmonia@mnjcc.org.
- *Duets, Portraits of Aging and the Art of Care*, photos by **Debra Friedman,** is at the gallery, until April 21.
- The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.
- Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays, until May 6, 7 p.m., Wednesdays until May 7, 11 a.m. MELT Method – hand and foot, Mondays April 7-May 12, 2:30 p.m. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays until June 18, 12:15 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

- Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821
- Zen kids art for children aged 4 to 6 starts Thursdays, May 1.
Karate club for children aged 7 to 10, Tuesdays starting April 29. To register, **Jennifer** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275.
- Vendors wanted for an Israeli market for Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration, May 6. Email **Andrea** at adaiam@srcentre.ca.
- Join the SR Centre for a trip to see *Hay Fever* May 28 in Stratford.
- Buffalo shopping trip, April 29 (register by April 24). ■



Splitting the sea of chocolate in Israel

JENNIFER TZIVIA MACLEOD
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

One year when I was a kid, my bubbie brought over some chocolate bars for us. My mother was appalled because they weren't real chocolate at all, but some waxy, chocolate-flavoured thing with a token nod to cocoa way down in the ingredients list. "Why would she buy *these*," my mother wailed, "when there's so much good chocolate at this time of year?"

This year, celebrating our first Pesach in Israel, chocolate – simple, uncomplicated chocolate – is probably going to be one of the few things that are still easy.

Back in Toronto, a majority of Jews are Ashkenazi, and the Kashruth Council of Canada took care of everything for us. No flour, of course, but also no kitniyot: canola oil, rice, beans.

Here, we're no longer in the majority. Just about everyone here in Israel can eat all those yummies that we don't – corn, peas, even falafel, if you leave out the pita bread.

While they're feasting on falafel, corn-on-the-cob (or popcorn!), pea soup, and peanut-flavoured Bamba snacks, we'll be sifting through grocery-store shelves trying to find things we can take home and eat. True, everything is labelled – in Hebrew that needs a magnifying glass to decipher. Many packages have two hechshers (kosher symbols), one for during the year and one for Pesach. Which one's which? They don't teach you how to read product hechshers in our ulpan course.

I'm told it's gotten easier for Ashkenazim here. The hechshers are less baffling, better organized. And there's Facebook, where you can network for certain treasured ingredients, finding out which local stores carry what you need before you head out on a wild goose chase.

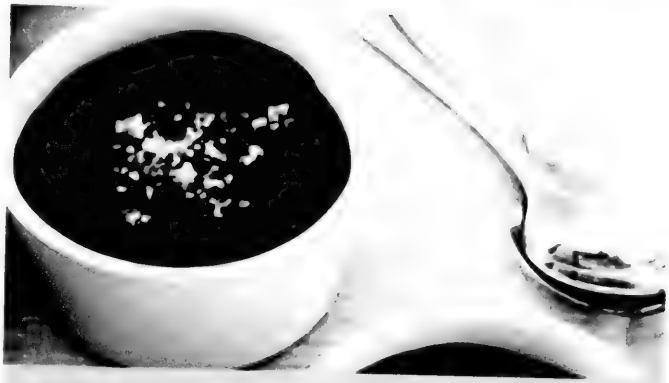
Things have also gotten more challenging in Toronto, with more kitniyot on the Pesach shelves every year. Not only for Sephardim, but also for Conservative Jews and others, who rely on rabbinic rulings that they're fine for Passover use.

Here in Israel, at Purim, I noticed a bag of chips proudly proclaiming it was kosher for Pesach and kitniyot-free. So there's one more thing we can eat. Chips – and chocolate. Since the very best chocolate has the fewest additives, particularly those troublesome kitniyot oils (like soy) that make up those waxy fake-chocolate bars, I can look forward to the best.

Kosher celebrity chef Jamie Geller feels the same way since making aliyah from the United States in 2012. Her new cookbook, Joy of Kosher: Fast, Fresh Family Recipes, which features over 100 fast and kosher recipes, includes many just for Pesach, especially her Olive Oil Dark Chocolate Mousse.

Turns out the chocolate's not masking anything. Both chocolate and olive oil play together deliciously in this recipe, with the olive oil providing a rich, silky texture, good-quality chocolate bringing its own distinctive flavour, and egg whites providing their heavenly fluff.

Is it safe to use raw egg whites? The Egg Farmers of Canada recommend proper food handling. Use only clean, uncracked eggs, wash hands before and after preparation, and keep this mousse well-chilled until serving. Very few salmonella cases have been traced to eggs in Canada, but seniors and those with weakened immune systems should avoid uncooked eggs and many other high-risk foods. Geller says that "you can use pasteurized eggs without affecting the results." ■



Olive oil dark chocolate mousse

JAMIE GELLER

From Joy of Kosher: Fast, Fresh Family Recipes

- ❑ 0 oz. high-quality (72 per cent cacao) bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped, or chocolate chips
- ❑ 8 large eggs, separated, at room temperature
- ❑ 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- ❑ 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ❑ 1 tsp. instant coffee granules dissolved in 2 tbsp. boiling water
- ❑ grated zest of 1 small orange (optional)
- ❑ 1/4 tsp. kosher salt

Place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl and melt in a microwave, stirring after each 10-second increment, until smooth, about 1 1/2 minutes. Let cool slightly.

Place the egg yolks and 1/2 cup sugar in a medium bowl and whisk until pale yellow. Whisk in the olive oil, coffee, zest (if using), and salt until combined.

Add the melted chocolate and whisk until smooth.

Beat the egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer or with a hand mixer until soft peaks form. Gradually sprinkle in the remaining 1/4 cup sugar and beat just until stiff peaks form. Add a generous spoonful of the egg white mixture to the chocolate mixture. Stir firmly until completely incorporated. Pour the chocolate mixture into the bowl of egg whites. Gently fold with a large spoon or rubber spatula until completely combined.

Divide the mousse into six 6-oz. ramekins and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate overnight.

Dress it up (Olive Oil Dark Chocolate Mousse Shots)

Serve the mousse with various toppings in individual shot glasses on a vintage silver tray. Top with whipped cream, orange zest curls, coarse flake sea salt, fresh berries, or crushed nuts. Geller recommends Salted Nut Powder "for something really special." Pulse 3 tbsp. shelled pistachios and 1 tsp. coarse sea salt by hand or in a mini food processor or coffee grinder until ground and slightly powdery but still with some rough chunks. Sprinkle on top of mousse before serving. (Serves 6)

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Music once with us is always there

Michael Gordon

There has been a lot written about music recently, especially with the focus on its benefits for mood, behaviour and social interaction in people living with dementia.

The Music and Memory iPod project supported by the Alzheimer Society of Toronto and the release of the documentary that followed the short YouTube clip of *Henry-Alive Inside* have assisted those who support and promote music as an intervention that can help individuals living with dementia to connect to the music they loved in the past, and enable them to still do so given the right stimulus.

There are many studies from the neurosciences, neuropsychology and neuro-imaging (such as with what is called a functional MRI) that support the premise that music affects brain pathways that release chemicals responsible for the experience of pleasure, as well as promoting a calming, soothing or pleasurable albeit exciting effect.

With this background, I can relate one of those wonderful experiences that individuals who attend live concerts often experience when it all seems to "come together" in an exhilarating musical and emotional live musical experience.

I recently unexpectedly attended a concert alone at the Toronto Symphony. I was excited to know that Angel Hewitt, one of Canada's foremost concert pianists, was to perform Beethoven's 5th piano concerto, and the Finnish conductor Hannu Lintu was also to conduct Sibelius' 5th symphony. I looked forward to both performances because of the associations each had in my own musical history.

At the age of 14, when I was an eager classical music fan and still taking piano lessons, I received a 33-1/3 rpm record gift from one of my special aunts. That was the state of the art of music recording in those days: the 45 rpm had already existed for many years, but the 33-1/3 rpm with stereo and other enhancements was considered the hallmark of recording power. With even a modestly priced amplifier, turntable and speakers, the sound was quite remarkable.

My components were separately chosen and bought using money saved from babysitting and other odd jobs, and I was very proud of it. I often spent hours on Saturdays roaming the section of Manhattan that had equipment outlets and marvellous record stores within a few square blocks. My favourite was the iconic Record Hunter, which unfortunately closed its doors in 1992, having opened in 1945 – just after World War II. I was always attracted to the bargain bins, where, even if it took an hour of searching, I would find a very credible performance of a piece I loved, at a price that was within my very limited music budget.

My aunt's present was a new release of Beethoven's 5th piano concert performed by the renowned French pianist Robert Casadesus, which was released in 1955 with Dimitri Mitropolous conducting and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra performing. I was 14 years old. I was so thrilled that I literally listened to it over and over again until it became embedded in my musical memory and what I call my musical soul. It is that musical soul that I believe the personal music program evokes in those living with even late-stage dementia, and this is why it is so powerful.

The monument for Sibelius in Helsinki

The Sibelius symphony aroused my recollections of a visit to Finland as a medical student, where I was hosted by a fellow Finnish medical student I had met on an exchange program to Warsaw, Poland. My visit to his home included a weekend at his cottage at a remote lake, a *real* sauna experience including the leap from the heated sauna into the icy-cold, small nearby lake, and the thrashing of each other with leafed branches. The haunting beauty of Finland exudes from Sibelius' 5th Symphony, and the conductor's joyous and ever light-footed movements despite its considerable height, made for another spectacular associative musical experience for me.

Music, once with us, is always there. We must not forget it and should include it as part of our lives during every stage and every condition – for many of us, it provides a connection to a world of beauty and internal sensuality. ■

Family Moments

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov!

Sharlene Milgram, Sheldon Bergson & brother Shane announce the birth of Shayla Isabel Milgram Bergson, Feb. 27. Grandparents, Stephanie & Mark Milgram, Betty & Sam Bergson

Congratulations to David Paris & Debbie Osiel on their engagement. Proud parents: Bertha & Joe Osiel, Linda & Scott Paris. Grandparents: Naomi & Gerald Goldenberg

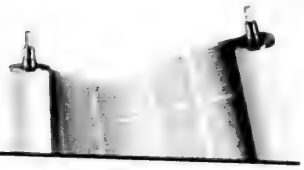
Wishing Leora & Justin Wise a huge mazal tov on your recent marriage. Much love from the Koral and Wise families

Mazal tov to Aaron & Shirley Rotman Horwitz on their 64th wedding anniversary! Love Dana, Larry, Harriet, Peter and all the grandchildren

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on "**Family Moments**"

Parshah

Acharei Mot | Leviticus 16.1 - 18.30



Yacov Fruchter examines Aaron's reaction to the death of his two sons
Rabbi Shalom Spira says respect for nature and the Torah is our joint clarion call
Rachael Turkienicz offers a formula for the multiple stages of healing

Yacov Fruchter

After the sudden, traumatic deaths of Aaron's two sons, Nadav and Avihu, Moses is commanded to share with his people the laws pertaining to boundaries, including sexual and ritual. This parshah is traditionally read two weeks after Shmini, the portion in which the deaths are originally recounted. What's the connection with the laws taught in this week's parshah?

I've always been unsatisfied by the rabbis' interpretation of Aaron's response to the death of his sons – "Vayidom Aharon." Aaron was silent. Rashi praises his silence and says he was rewarded for accepting God's will. I find this reading unfathomable, sterile and devoid of humanity.

In contrast, the Ramban says Aaron initially let out a loud public sob. Then, after hearing Moses' comforting words, he became silent. We each respond to tragedy in our own way, but I want to believe that Aaron, spiritual leader of his generation, first high priest and a father, would react with raw, unbridled emotion. However, after taking time to grieve, Aaron and the community need to move on. The only way is to establish laws and rituals that ensure others don't suffer the same fate as Nadav and Avihu, who crossed an unspecified boundary and died.

During the Pesach seder, when we recount the 10 plagues, we spill a drop of wine for each to teach that even though the Egyptians enslaved us, we recall the suffering of those who were also created in God's image. In contrast, when the Israelites saw their captors dead on the seashore, they responded with singing and music. Could anyone blame them? Today, we can't help but feel a little sorry for the Egyptians.

May we all be honest enough to let our true emotions show, and when the moment passes, find the power to create rather than destroy. Such true freedom is worth celebrating. ■

Yacov Fruchter is spiritual leader of Toronto's Annex Shul.

Rabbi Shalom Spira

"And any person from the children of Israel and from the convert who dwells among them who will hunt wild animals or birds that are eaten – and he shall spill its blood and cover it with dust" (Leviticus 17:3). This verse teaches us two types of respect.

First, from the "hunt" reference, the Talmud (Chulin 84a) derives the etiquette that one is advised to limit his consumption of meat to special occasions (e.g., the Sabbath and festivals), just as one only periodically embarks on hunting adventures. Rashi explains that the purpose of this advisory is to avoid poverty. Rabbi J. David Bleich (Tradition 46:4) suggests that the poverty in question actually reflects the ecological cost of raising surplus livestock. If so, the Torah is encouraging us to respect the natural environment.

Second, from the "spill its blood" reference, the Talmud (Shabbat 22a) infers that just as the slaughtering is orchestrated by hand, so, too, must the covering of the blood. It would certainly be more thermodynamically convenient for the slaughterer to cover the blood by kicking dirt with his or her feet. Nevertheless, the slaughterer is required to invest effort to cover the blood by hand, so that he or she will not insult the mitzvah. From this we learn an umbrella principle to respect every mitzvah. [See Encyclopedia Talmudit, under bizui mitzvah, for a list of applications.]

Indeed, these dual respects appear to be reflected in the Rambam's exposition of how to fulfil the commandment of ahavat HaShem, love of God. In Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 2:2, the Rambam rules that one loves the Creator by studying nature. In Sefer Hamitzvot, the Rambam directs that one loves the Giver of the Torah by studying His mitzvot. Respect for nature and respect for mitzvot is our joint clarion call. ■

Rabbi Spira is a research assistant at the McGill AIDS Centre in Montreal.

Rachael Turkienicz

This week's Torah portion, Acharei Mot (After the Death), discusses what happens after the sudden and tragic death of two of Aaron's sons. There seems to be no instruction on how Aaron is to recover, but the Torah immediately proceeds to business as usual.

Yet the name of the portion is the most striking of all the information, because it speaks to the dilemma when we lose someone we love. Is there a world for us after a death? How do we function when everything is different?

Interestingly, the Torah seems to be saying it's business as usual, but within the sequence of Torah readings lies a formula for healing.

The first reading presents Aaron's role in the technical ritual for Yom Kippur. The second and third readings follow with details of sacrificial ritual. It's all very dry and technical, but that's the starting point of healing. We re-enter our lives through the dry and the technical. There's no search for meaning, because there's no meaning to be had. We head for the routine, the step-by-step automatic sequence of our day.

The fourth reading speaks of the Holiness Code. It's one of the most spiritually elevating portions of the Torah, explaining how we can elevate the mundane to the holy. In other words, after a death, we regain our footing through the technical, but the next step is to elevate our routine to the spiritual and ultimately to the holy. Step two of healing after a death is to begin to feel again.

The Torah then discusses the prohibition against eating blood, because it's the life force of the animal. The symbol of combining the physical with the spiritual is step three after a death.

Finally, the Torah concludes by defining limitations of intimate relationships. The last step of healing is to re-enter our relationships with others.

Acharei Mot seems dry at first, technical and unfeeling, but the message of healing within speaks universally to us all. ■

Rachael Turkienicz is executive director of Rachael's Centre in Toronto.

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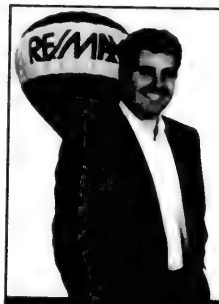

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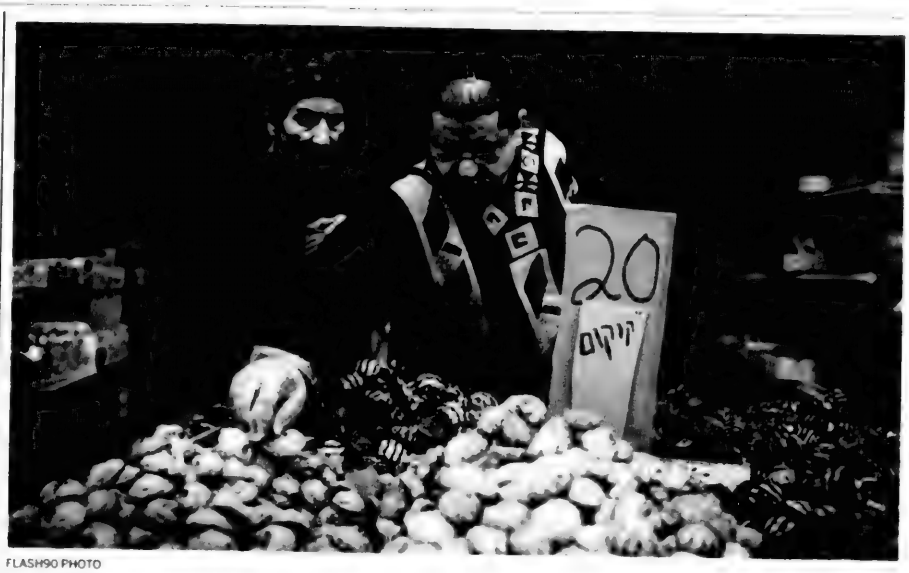

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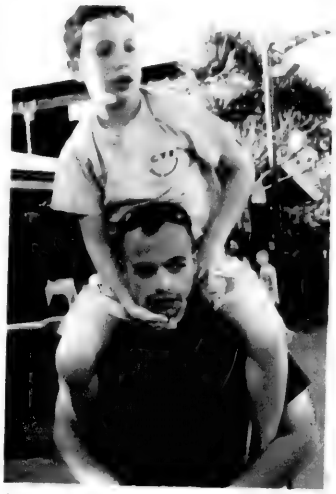
THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 10, 2014

Ari Mandel: Leaving ultra-Orthodoxy is possible

CARA STERN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Ari Mandel was raised in an ultra-Orthodox chassidic community in Monsey, N.Y. He married at 18 and had his first child a year later. When he was 22, he became an atheist. Now, he's a student at New York University, and he works with the It Gets Besser project to teach like-minded individuals that you can live a happy, fulfilling life outside of the community. His message: it may seem difficult – even impossible – but it is possible to leave that lifestyle, and after people make the break, it gets better.



Ari Mandel and his son Jake

What is It Gets Besser?

It's a play on the Dan Savage project called It Gets Better for gay kids and teens who are bullied and are going through a rough time. He got people to record a video saying, "It gets better, don't give up."
Our idea was to do essentially the same thing for people who have left the ultra-Orthodox community to live life as they see fit outside of that world.

For many of us, it's a very rough transition, so it was essentially the same message: it is hard but it's not the end of the world. We've all been through it, and you can do it. It gets better. The Yiddish word for "better" is *besser*.

Since the project started a few years ago, our video got 50,000 or 60,000 hits. Since then, we made a website where we host individual videos of people talking for a few minutes. Recently we did this third iteration, which is longer, and the new idea was people going about their current everyday lives, but at the same time, listening to music that is literally from their past or reminiscent of it, and still connects them to that world.

In my case, I was studying and in the background, I'm playing music that comes from the ultra-Orthodox world. It shows everybody going about their day and doing their thing.

You can leave that world but you don't have to abandon everything. You can take the things you find enjoyable and meaningful and cobble together a happy existence.

How would you describe life as an ultra-Orthodox Jew?

In my case, as ultra-Orthodox lives go, I had a very normal life. I believed in everything they stood for. I agreed with it and I was fine with that life.

The problems arose when I started to find holes in the veneer. The more research I did to plug up those holes, the bigger those holes got. I came to realize that it wasn't quite as cut and dry as they had led me to believe. Ultimately, I decided to leave.

> *Try getting a job even at McDonald's when you don't have a high school diploma and can't do basic arithmetic.*

Growing up in that world, you don't go to libraries, you don't read books other than what they approve of, written for and by them.

What made you decide to leave that life behind?

I got married at 18, which is normal in that world. Once you're married, you have a little more freedom and autonomy, so I could go to the local public library for the first time. I was just reading for the fun of it. I wasn't looking for trouble, I wasn't looking for anything in particular, but just reading material that wasn't so heavily censored, introduced me to ideas I never knew about before. I just kept following the leads, and it completely shattered my worldview.

By the time I was 24, I had been trying for a couple of years to reconcile what I was thinking and what I was doing. Eventually, I couldn't do it anymore. At 24 I left.

I ended up joining the U.S. Army, did that for five years, and got out at the end of 2011.

Now, I'm not religious by any standard. I'm culturally Jewish. I'm more than happy with that. That's exactly who I am. But what Jewish used to mean to me and what it means now are very different things.

Growing up in that world, it's all encompassing. It's your entire world. It's all your friends, everything you know and everything you've ever read. You're Jewish first, human second and American third. Now, I'm human first, American second and I happen to be Jewish, so I appreciate the cultural things that come with that, but it no longer defines every moment of my life or every drop of who I am and of my day.

How prevalent is that idea that people who leave ultra-Orthodox Judaism can't have happy and healthy lives?

Within the community, that is the predominant view. You're either here with us and your life is perfect and happy, or you leave and you're miserable and end up as a drug addict in an alleyway somewhere. That is the prevailing view.

How difficult is it for people to leave Orthodox Judaism?

It's very difficult. Everyone has their own story and their own past. It's harder for some people than it is for others, but across the board, it's difficult.

I happen to be able to speak English, but there are many of my peers who sound like they just got off the plane or boat from eastern Europe. We have virtually no secular education. Try getting a job even at McDonald's when you don't have a high school diploma and can't do basic arithmetic.

There's family pressure, community pressure, there's all sorts of scare tactics that they employ against us.

What was the biggest challenge in leaving the community?

It was definitely the emotional stuff, not wanting to hurt my family and friends, not wanting to disappoint my parents. The emotional boundaries were the hardest.

What is your relationship like with your family these days?

It was difficult at first, but we now get along wonderfully, almost as if nothing ever happened. We play a game of don't ask don't tell. They know I don't live their lifestyle anymore, but I'm respectful enough.

Regarding my wife, what happened was, we didn't end up staying married, but she did end up following me out of the community. We get along as friends, so we're not fighting each other.

I don't have many of the issues many of my peers have.

What advice would you give to people whose families don't accept their decision to leave?

It's really tough. There are court battles, child custody battles. It gets dragged on forever, and it gets really ugly. The community will gang up against the person leaving. It's not pretty, and it's not easy. I do not envy those people. I'm very involved in these issues as an activist, so I'm aware of it happening.

Mostly, "It Gets Besser" shows that others have done it and the world didn't come to an end and they're living happy and normal lives. That's the biggest message we want to point out with the video, but aside from that, yes, there is a growing community of people who have left, whether it's online or real life. It's a growing community, with organization and get-togethers and everything you can think of, with all sorts of people. That has made it easier to leave.

What's the most important thing ultra-Orthodox Jews should know about those who choose to leave?

All of those stereotypes they like to say about us are just not true. We're just like you.

It's not about sex drugs and rock 'n' roll. If you would just play nice instead of fighting us, we wouldn't be fighting back. It wouldn't be a standoff. We would have a lot more to gain from each other if we played nice, if we stopped fighting.

They often complain we badmouth them or make them look bad, but for the most part, all we're doing is saying we don't like that lifestyle and are leaving it

If we could all stop fighting each other, things would be better for everyone.

Our slogan is, "We're not saying you should. We're not saying you would. We're saying you could."

People ask me, 'Should I leave?' I'm not saying you should leave. I'm not saying it's the default right answer, but just know it's a possibility, that it's doable.

If you want to badly enough, you can do it. It's not the end of the world

Thousands of others have done it, and we're a living testament to the fact that you can do it and be happy. ■

A lesson from Maimonides

Backstory

RABBI YIRMIYA MILEVSKY

Jewish people living under oppressive rule have always been part of the Diaspora experience, and at times, the religion practised by the emperor, czar or sultan was forced upon the Jews.

One such incident occurred in the 12th century. At that time, the Almohad caliphate, an Islamic Berber dynasty from Morocco, controlled North Africa, and presented the Jews (and other non-Muslims) with a choice – conversion to Islam or death.

Numerous Jews refused to convert to Islam and were killed by the Almohads. Others, wishing to save their lives, proclaimed a belief in the Prophet Muhammad. Yet privately, they carried on with Jewish traditions. Thus, they worshipped in mosques but secretly recited their own prayers. These crypto-Jews lived with fear on the outside and guilt (part of the tradition perhaps) within.

Around 1160, a rabbinic judicial opinion was circulated, claiming that: "Whoever attests the mission of Muhammad thereby renounces the Lord God of Israel. One should rather be killed than profess." The author claimed that observing Jewish law secretly, while acknowledging Islam externally, is futile. If the law is not followed publicly, it is worthless! He added that turning to God in prayer after proclaiming belief in Muhammad, is in itself a sinful act.

A young scholar in the city of Fez, Morocco, named Moshe, recognized the danger in this widely circulating responsum. He was quite concerned about the unnecessary martyrdom and superfluous shame and guilt that would be caused by the mistaken author of the rabbinic opinion. So the young Moshe went on the offensive, and wrote his own epistle.

Moshe's Epistle on Forced Conversion was written in Arabic, the language used by the masses, yet today we only have a Hebrew translation of the letter. Scholars believe that the original may be lost because Jews tried to conceal it from Muslim officials.

Several significant points are made by the author of the epistle. Among them, he condoned conversion to Islam for the sake of saving lives, discouraged martyrdom and recommended migration, despite the danger of the journey.

Moshe noted that the author of the circulating responsum failed to differentiate between accepting Islam voluntarily and doing so only under compulsion. "Even ones who worship idols, if done under coercion, are not barred from the world to come," he noted. Moshe used harsh words ("even brainless people would not say such things") toward the author who failed to make a distinction between acts done willingly and acts done under constraint.

The author of the rabbinic opinion's claim that the prayer of a crypto-Jew is meaningless and even a misdeed, was sharply criticized by Moshe. He proved from numerous rabbinic sources that even the prayers of an actual sinner are treasured by God. "How much more so regarding individuals who are only making statements due to duress?" he noted.

Moshe added that throughout the biblical narrative, individuals, even great ones like Moses, Isaiah and Elijah, who were critical of the People of Israel were rebuked or punished by God. Thus, Moshe wrote: "How can the author of the response allow his tongue to talk negatively on the community of Israel and call them sinners and evil doers and heretics? One can only wonder how great will be his punishment for castigating those who made choices to avoid the sword." Moshe added that despite their public proclamations, the people are not sinners and God has not abandoned them.

The value of Klal Yisrael, the People of Israel, is the essence of this paragraph, and perhaps of the whole letter. The young author, who grew up in a home of scholarship and leadership, understood the value of the Children of Israel. When one values the nation, the message and spirit of every conversation or written communication will carry a different tone.

This message is quite as relevant today as it was centuries ago. Any issue that relates to the Jewish People, Torah or the State of Israel will generate a wide range of viewpoints, opinions and philosophical perspective. What is crucial for the welfare and unity of our nation, is to appreciate the value of the Nation of Israel. If we adopt the outlook of the young Moshe of Fez – known to all of us today as Moshe ben Maimon, Maimonides – respect and tolerance will come naturally.

The sad reality is that when our enemies fire rockets at us from Gaza or Lebanon, they do not differentiate between secular and religious, Sephardi and Ashkenazi. To them a Jew is a Jew. Perhaps it is time we take the same approach toward ourselves. ■

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky is the spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Torah in Toronto.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Feldman, Rivka	March 21/14	Private
Block, Kevin	March 21/14	19 Green Bush Cres
Zolty, Rena	March 22/14	116 Barse St
Kupinsky, Vladimir	March 22/14	Private
Singer, Morris	March 23/14	Private
Moss, Esther	March 24/14	546 Steeles Ave. W
Mostovoy, Azriel	March 23/14	163 Brickstone Circle
Shubinsky, Tillie	March 24/14	29 Pining Rd
Tator, Ray	March 25/14	7460 Bathurst St
Tylo, Genya	March 25/14	Private
Khan, Jonathan	March 19/14	50 Cambridge Av
Brock, Alfred	March 26/14	Private
Barmherzig, Alex	March 27/14	4005 Bayview Ave
Keslassy, Haim	March 28/14	1101 Steeels Ave. W
Carman, Sarah Leah	March 28/14	168 Lisa Cres
Kates, Ruth	March 28/14	137 Simonston Blvd
Rodan, Emery	March 29/14	5444 Yonge St
Zelewicz, Isaac	March 30/14	78 Acton Ave
Kadoch, Amram	March 30/14	69 Reiner Rd
Graham, Sara	March 29/14	3560 Bathurst St
Wagman, Sollie	March 26/14	3560 Bathurst St

HEBREW BASIC

Myra Cohen	Mar 20/14	6 Bobwhite Crescent
Sarah Sandie Simon	Mar 20/14	10 Trench Street

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Izzie (Jack) Kowal	Mar 14/14	67 King's Cross Avenue
Selma Silver	Mar 13/14	3600 Yonge Street
Tom Solomon	Mar 13/14	515 Chaplin Crescent
Solly Lewis	Mar 7/14	745 New Westminster Drive
Arnold Sheydwasser	Mar 13/14	145 Marlee Avenue
Martin Mendelow	Mar 14/14	14 Swansdown Drive
Sylvia Shawn	Mar 15/14	44 Charles St. West
Esther Wolfond	Mar 15/14	240 Heath Street West
Allen Feldman	Mar 16/14	4 Pearwood Crescent
Anette Rosenbluth	Mar 17/14	3560 Bathurst Street
Lillian Harris	Mar 17/14	400 Walmer Road
Morris Flicht	Mar 18/14	10 Barclay Road
Bertha Rosengarten	Mar 19/14	1 Glen Park Avenue
Annette Ross	Mar 21/14	7 Menin Road
Abe Wigoda	Mar 21/14	166 Chelmsford Avenue
Rita Taylor	Mar 22/14	2121 Bathurst St., Apt. 616
Bessie Coopersmith	Mar 21/14	560 Cranbrooke Avenue
Amos Baram	Mar 22/14	199 West Hampton Drive
Gerald Hurwitz	Mar 22/14	154 Rosedale Heights Drive
Max Brown	Mar 23/14	110 Promenade Cir., # 1404
Denis Dean	Mar 23/14	31 Hopperton Drive
Evelyn Goldberg	Mar 22/14	225 St. George Street
Trudy Steinhart	Mar 23/14	17 Hadden Crescent
Alfie Caplan	Mar 21/14	3800 Yonge Street, # 411
Lauretta Cohen	Mar 24/14	2 Forest Hill Drive
Connie Davis	Mar 25/14	355 St. Clair Ave. W., # 507
Ettie Lubin	Mar 24/14	337 Hillhurst Blvd.
Rosalie Davidson	Mar 25/14	22 Norfinch Drive
Edith Sefton	Mar 26/14	155 Marlee Avenue, # 2311
Sid Gottlieb	Mar 27/14	255 The Donway W., # 425
Louis Pont	Mar 26/14	156 Hetherington Crescent
Molly Marcus	Mar 26/14	73 Cadillac Avenue
Lila Halpern	Mar 27/14	3560 Bathurst Street

On March 22, 2014, Robert "Bob" Gottlieb ז"ל (78) passed away, beloved husband of Judith, father to Michael and step son Yoav Rappaport; also grandchildren, in Scottsdale, AZ. Bob worked as the public relations director at UJA from 1981-1990, where he led major fundraising campaigns to benefit his beloved Israel (where he lived for 4 years and met his wife) and the Toronto Jewish community. Bob brought his Hollywood sitcom writer experience and creativity to the position. Bob enjoyed spending time with his dog, Jamie, reading books and the CJN, and listening to NPR.

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Obituaries
Unveilings
Cards of Thanks
Memorials/Yahrzeit
Shiva Catering

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS

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PASSOVER GREETINGS 2014

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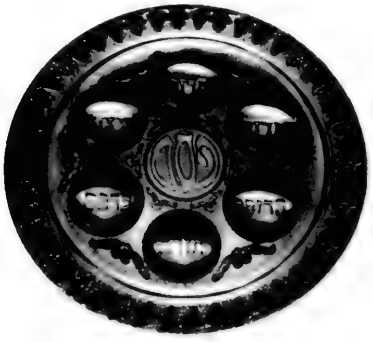

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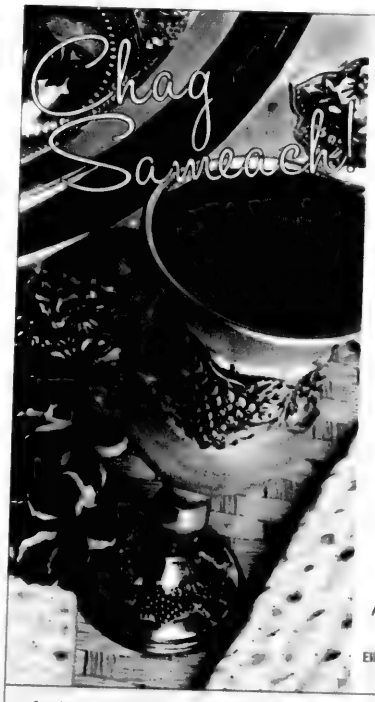

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Essay

The People of the Books

PAUL SOCKEN

Jews are known as the People of the Book but we are also the People of the Books. Jews are incurable readers and writers, perhaps because books are portable creations for a portable people.

I devoted my professional life to teaching and writing about literature and, just before retirement, began a project that became a book, *The Edge of the Precipice: Why Read Literature in the Digital Age*, published last September by McGill-Queen's University Press.

Shortly before my retirement, I asked my students how many of them read a newspaper in print or online: hardly any. I asked how many of them read literary texts, such as novels, poetry or short stories: very few. I asked how many read history or any other non-fiction: again, few.

It became increasingly apparent that some fundamental change was taking place. Perhaps the change to a much vaunted visual society, a return to an oral culture supplemented by images on a screen, was well underway, as Marshall McLuhan had foreseen.

> *There is no Jewish society without literature, whether sacred or secular*

In *The Edge of the Precipice*, I wanted to start a discussion about the role of literature in a society which is clearly concerned about jobs and advocating for immediate, concrete, results-oriented education. My conviction throughout my career was that I was providing my students, by teaching them language and literature, important tools to assist them as educated citizens and which would be ultimately useful to them in whatever work they undertook.

If literature is about concentrating the mind, plumbing the depths and the search for meaning, it is not surprising that Jews have been engaged in the enterprise from "the beginning". Torah is as much narrative as it is law.

The same rabbis who discuss law in the Talmud, recount elaborate and sophisticated stories that explore the laws under discussion and help yield their meaning, importance and application. Midrash is a gloss on the Jewish tradition that "fills in the gaps" of Torah in an imaginative and highly literary format while maintaining the sacred nature of the text.

There is no Jewish society without literature, whether sacred or secular. Europe had Sholem Aleichem and many other Yiddish and Hebrew writers to "tell our story", to paraphrase Hamlet. American Jewish writers are legendary and constitute an integral part of the American literary landscape. Canadian Mordechai Richler is as well known as any writer in our country. And Israel's literary scene is as vibrant as the country that gives birth to it.

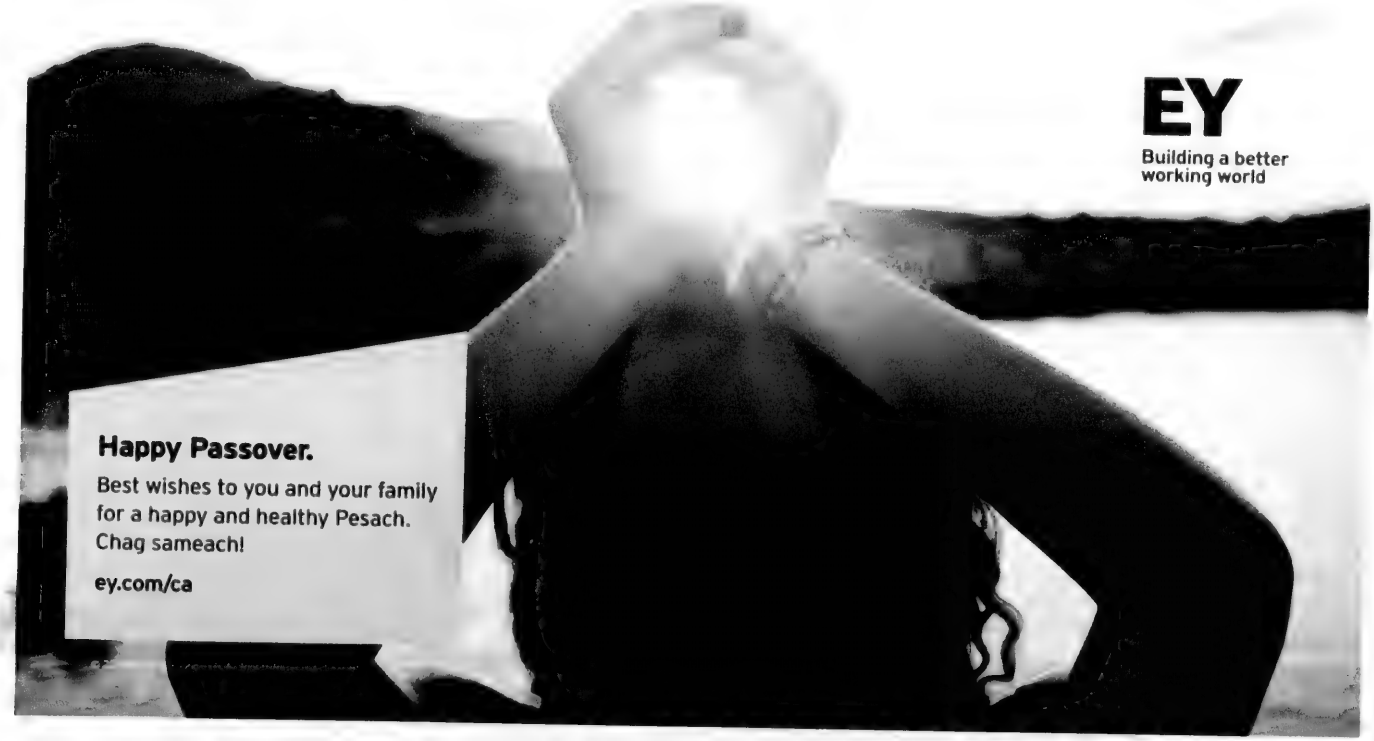
As Sven Birkerts, one of the authors in my collection, writes, "the purpose of literature is less to communicate themes or major recognitions and more to engage the mind, the sensibility, in a process that... bears upon our living as an ignition toward inwardness, which has no larger end, which is the end in itself. Enhancement. Deepening. Priming the engines of conjecture."

Jews are, indeed, the People of the Book and the People of the Books. In the struggle to remain fully human in a robotic world of technology and practical materialism, I hope Jews will be leaders, not just of a Start Up Nation, but as thinkers, writers, communicators of a vision of a Brave Old World, one of values, depth and meaning. ■

Paul Socken is distinguished professor emeritus of the University of Waterloo.

On the cover

Cover concept and illustration by veteran Israeli artist Avi Katz. *www.avikatz.ca*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The Jewish Side of the Poem

I.B. ISKOV

Like a love song,
unfurled and loose
I am surprised
by the wide frame of words
uncontrollably happy.

The composition is gathered
like freshly cut flowers;
a bouquet too pretty
admired only a short time
bewitching before wilting.

I press dried phrases of pink and beige
between the stanzas
to make the poem flat:
punctuation must be clean and germane.

I clip solitary thoughts,
pinch thorns without fragrance.
Sometimes the words tumble,
mock their own arrangement
and mouth the vase.

It's a human-interest thing.
In the rush of the poem,
I pluck the burgeoning words,
arrange brittle petals in pots,
display my Jewish side.

Schav

I.B. ISKOV

I smell schav from thoughts,
ramble in that other language
without reason.
I imagine words
naked in their truths.

My shadow drags my whispers
with high authority.
A lot of chutzpah
fades a little each day.

Bent by a notion,
I'm lying on my back as light
falls across the bed like a tallis.
I scrutinize the sanctity of the spread.

The moment jumps to life,
where a lump of schav
disappears into my mouth
like the thoughts of a silent chorus.

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The Tarnogrod Jewish Cemetery

PEARL ADLER SABAN

I've not been there. Yet.

But therein lie the Jewish townsfolk who were graced with graves.

The ones who were buried with a proper Kaddish, when mourners gathered to pray. And cry. And throw earth atop the plain wooden boxes. And visit. Always visit.

And the headstones – black or grey – with their ancient Hebrew letters remembering the adult. Or the child.

And embedded symbols: A pair of candlesticks. A lamb. A tree trunk. Outstretched hands and fingers of a Kohen. A pitcher for a Levite to pour.

The circle of life ended here for many…

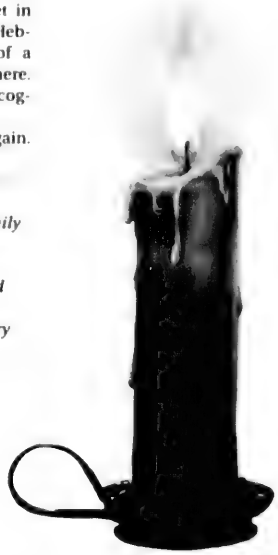
Years went by. Headstones toppled, destroyed by nature and by man. Stolen to use as blocks for building roadways and pathways. And a stable floor. The cemetery became a cemetery. Nobody remained. Identities were lost. People forgotten.

Until a survivor understood that to rebuild a cemetery was a way to sanctify life. And death.

And a wall of remaining headstones – mainly fragments of headstones – was created. Floating Hebrew letters set in cement. Half a name here. Or a Hebrew birth date there. A snatch of a *pasuk* here, an embedded symbol there. Kaddish was recited. Lives were recognized…and remembered.

And the cemetery was visited. Again. And again. ■

Dedicated to the Jews of Tarnogrod, Poland, including members of my family – the Adlers – who lived, loved and perished in Tarnogrod, and to Joseph Schorer, z"l, my late father's friend and "landsman" who made great efforts to bring the Tarnogrod Jewish Cemetery "back to life."

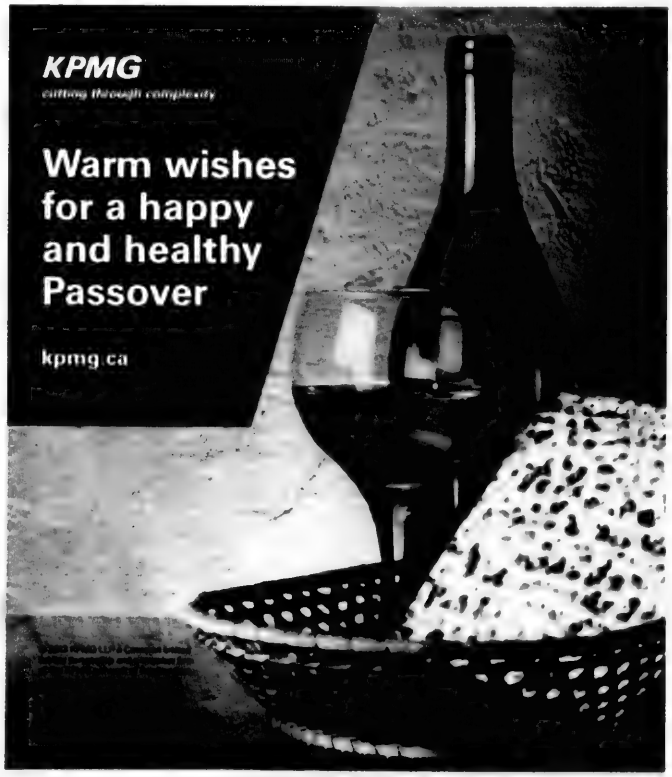


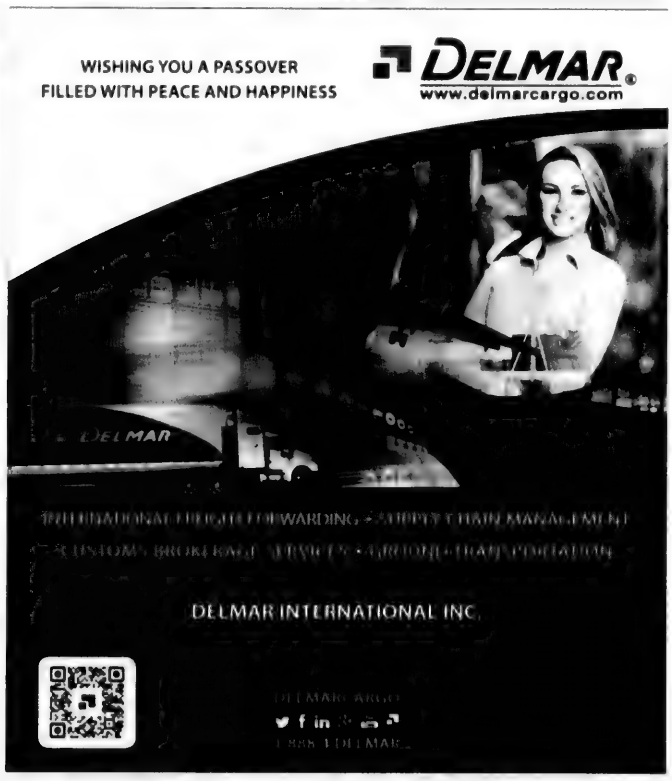
Our Heritage

MAX SKUY

A people once were we
Our heads were made of clay
When the Lord said listen
We turned the other way.
Still the Ten Commandments
Were handed down to us
Then we could have heeded
We should have made a fuss.

So we were made to wander
Across the many seas
A stranger 'midst the nations
Unanswered went our pleas
Now we return once again
And thousands of years have gone by
Back to the ancient land of our fathers
No further more to fly.





shhhhh....

SOPHIE SOIL

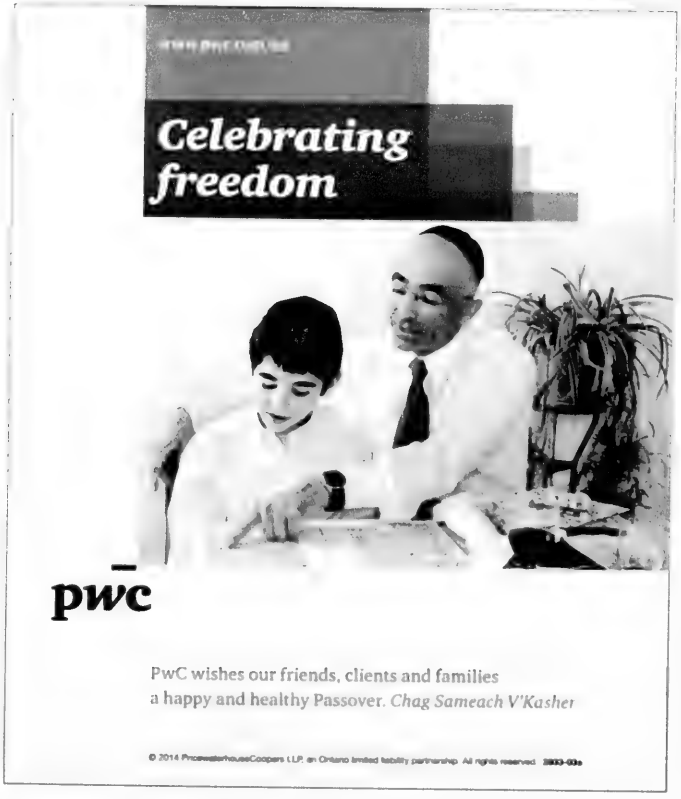
thousands died here on this cursed piece of
heartless earth: a Jew every 45 minutes turned to
smoke – the SS boasted of it – 45 minutes train to
gas chamber/train to cinder; 12,000 a day, hundreds
of thousands, millions in all, from whips to ashes... no
one left alive here. later, only empty trains departed...
everyone knew, the world knew, and no one cared...
no one cares now....

thousands died here, as they bled and burned and
yearned for mercy; blood mopped up with
scarlet-tarnished shovels scooping globs of clots into
the fresh-dug hollows by tainted spades that witnessed
raw flesh oozing rusty-crimson on aborted grounds;
voiceless shadows straddling on the pulse of hate; rows
and rows of names on endless lists; the wasted with
numbers etched on wasting arms; starved, raped,
bullet-riddled to the wall; cursed, confused, used, abused,
till sweat and tears and blood beaded down
their emaciated see-through cheeks;

hunched over, squatting low or leaning into barbed wire,
fire-charged current seeking flesh to sear, they prayed;
oh how they prayed; asked their ancient God what to do;
what it was that they had done – in the same voice
they used to praise Him;

but the total silence screamed back a hollowness; a
response of broken vows; and all they saw was bright-red
pigment on a blackened earth, and teeth and hair and
bones melted into ash;

and they took their place in line....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a happy and healthy Passover. Chag Sameach V'Kasher
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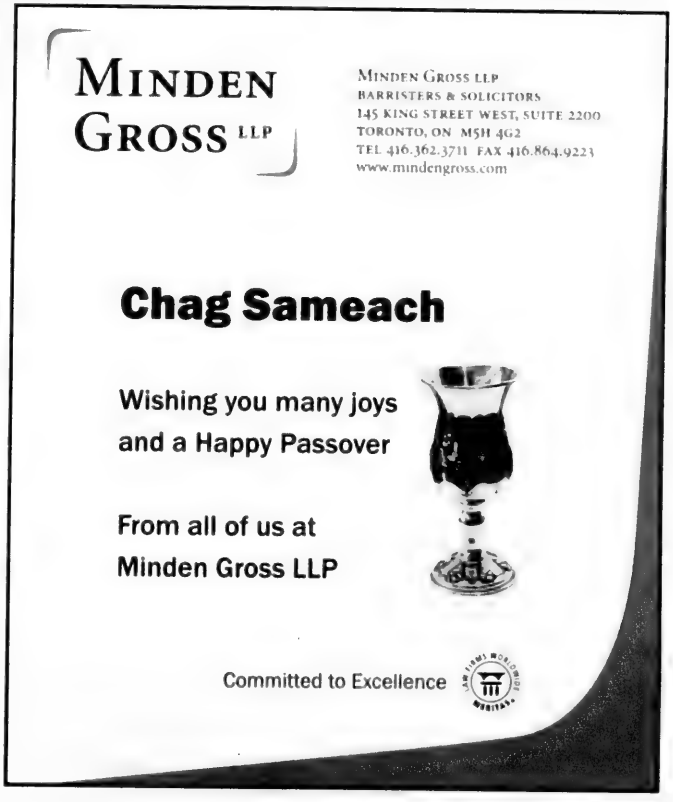

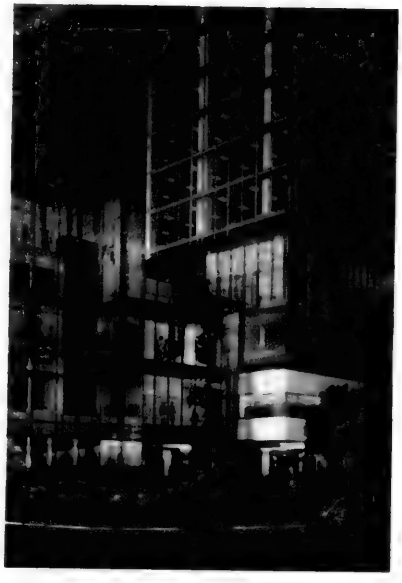

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Ghosts

KENNETH SHERMAN

Poland is overrun
with the ghosts of murdered Jews.

They are in the churches
hovering above thin white candles.
They are in the homes, in the steam
rising from barley soup.

Their faces look out from the fireplaces
lovers sit before,
from the clear lakes and rivers
men fish in.

In the city of Warsaw
their disembodied voices
still bicker in the markets
laugh in old theatres.

What is the life expectancy
of a ghost?

In Spain, where the ghosts
are 500 years old
their faces are less definable
their screams fainter

and by the ruins of the Second Temple
they are simply light
upon stone.

The Yellow Flower

MUGUETTE MYERS

It was a beautiful spring in France that year.

Maman when she went shopping, always brought home flowers for our table. I loved flowers.

That day she brought back a yellow flower with a black heart. To my 5-year-old eyes, it was the most beautiful that Maman ever brought home.

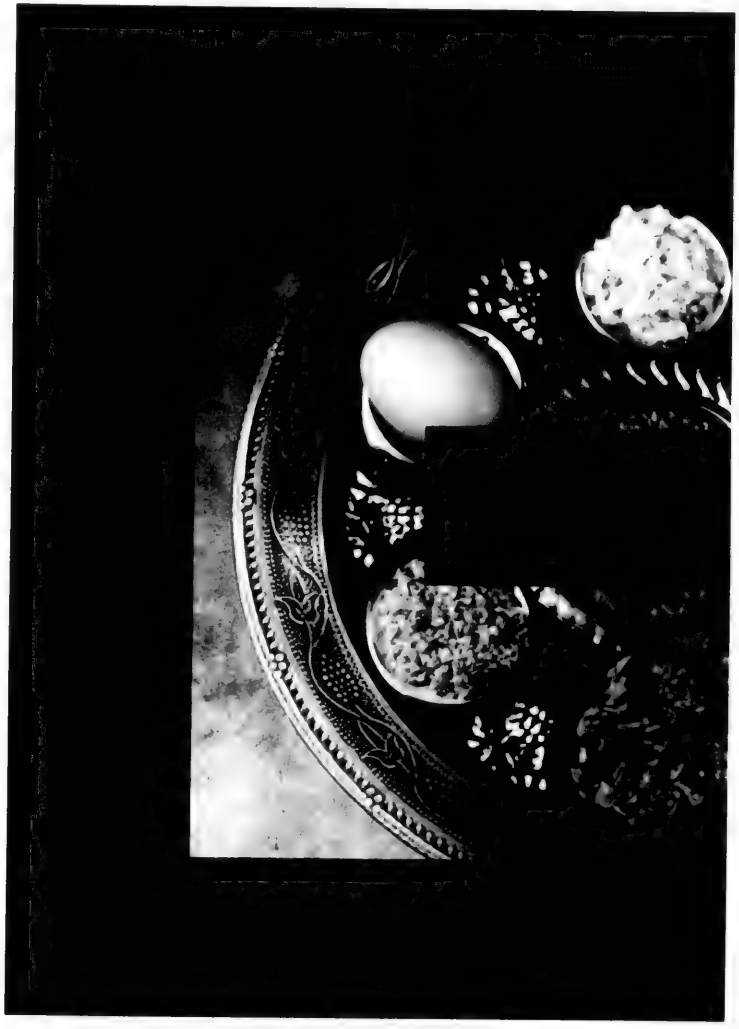
She gave it to me and told me to have it with me always. In order for me not to lose it, she sewed it on my coat. I was very proud and I pitied the other girls in my class who did not have one.

When I was walking in the streets I sometimes saw some young men looking at me and sneering. I figured out the reason they did so: They were jealous of my beautiful flower!

Then, one day, Maman told me that I could not have the beautiful flower any longer and she took it off my coat.

That happened many years ago.

Today my yellow flower rests in my Bible. It has the shape of a 6-pointed star – the Star of David – with the word: JUIF (Jew), stamped in its heart. ■



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Mezuzah For Mama

AVIVA RAVEL

When Elsie moved into her new flat she removed the mezuzah from the doorpost of the front door. The ancient case had broken into shards as she dislodged the nails and pried loose the metal container. A piece of parchment containing Hebrew script fell out of the case; brittle and yellow with age it crumpled in her hand. She gathered the fragments of metal and parchment, stored them in a paper bag, and placed it in her sewing basket which contained a myriad of odds and ends such as balls of wool, knitting needles, and threads of many colours. Then she set about cleaning her new kitchen.

Shel nodded in approval at the empty space that had been occupied by the mezuzah. He had had a hard day at the knitting mill and looked forward to his hot cup of tea. "So you did it," her husband said, stirred sugar into his cup, and turned to the editorial pages of the evening newspaper.

"I said I would," came the reply.

"What will your mother say?"

"It's my home. She won't say anything."

Elsie was right. When Mrs. Klein visited her daughter's new home, holding in her arms toys for her 4- year-old granddaughter, a new tablecloth, and dishtowels, she noticed immediately the blank oblong space once occupied by the mezuzah. To prevent herself from commenting, she bit hard on her lip, then summoned Lori to receive her Chanukah presents: a red-haired doll that came with a pretty dress and miniature dishes. "Thank you, Bubbie, thank you," the little girl squealed.

Two years before, Mrs. Klein's daughter and son-in-law had joined the Party. She bit on her lip then too. She knew what this entailed: her daughter would refrain from lighting Shabbos candles, neither would she light candles on the Chanukah menorah, and attending shul was out of the question. Although Mrs. Klein had raised her daughter in an observant home she now feared that the rituals she had so carefully maintained, would be lost on the next generation.

Elsie noticed the pained look on her mother's face and declared fervently, "We are against religion. Religion is the opiate of the people. We are atheists. We don't believe in myths and miracles. You have to understand that."

Of course Mrs. Klein understood. She was up-to-date on current events since a day didn't go by without her having read *Der Tog* as well as the daily English *Star* from cover to cover. "Has everyone in your organization renounced their religion?" she asked in Yiddish.

"Yes, of course. None of my gentile comrades go to church."

"But you're having a Christmas party in a few weeks. I see the notice on the refrigerator."

"Christmas is a national holiday. It's not religious. Everyone has a party."

Although Mama was deeply wounded, she brushed a grey strand of hair away and maintained a stubborn silence. She was generally not a cheerful person. She had experienced hunger, war, loss of family and friends, while a bout with typhus in Romania left her frail for the rest of her life. However, she never grumbled and attended to her household duties with the diligence and care associated with devoted Jewish mothers.

"Look Mama, I know you don't agree with the principles of the Party. But what we want is equality for all people, no matter their race, colour, and nationality. Justice for all. One day we'll have one beautiful world, no separate countries, no borders, no racism. Religion and nationalism separate people."

Continued on next page

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Mezuzah For Mama

Continued from previous page

"The Hindus will also be part of the new world?"

"Sure, why not?"

"So what are they going to do with all their temples?" Mama's attempt at a joke was lost on Elsie.

"Ma, you're missing the point."

"I know. I'm old fashioned. But, my daughter, I love you, I love our Lori, and I will never tell you what to do and what not to do. It says in the Torah, the most important thing is *sholom bais* – peace in the house. And for your information, we also believe in justice. *Tsedek, tsedek tirdof.* Didn't you learn that in Jewish school?" Elsie looked at her mother with the impatience you reserve for a disobedient child and passed her a plate of homemade strudel.

At least, Mrs. Klein thought, they come to me for Shabbat and the seder and the Rosh Hashanah meal. Moreover, Mrs. Klein never refused to babysit Lori. Elsie and Shel attended frequent clandestine meetings. "But please," Elsie pleaded, "don't fill Lori's head with ridiculous stories."

"Like what?" Her mother asked, knowing full well what her daughter had in mind.

"Like the waters of a sea opening up and people walking across on dry land. Yesterday she asked me if God would open the lake in the country so she could walk across to the other side to play with the children there."

But Mrs. Klein continued to tell her stories, and Lori listened, her dark eyes wide open in awe and concentration.

Years passed and Mrs. Klein succumbed to old age ailments. Elsie sat at her mother's bedside in the hospital until the old woman took her last breath. For the sake of propriety, and out of respect for the observant members of the family, Elsie sat shivah with her brothers, sister, and aunts.

The day after the shivah, and all the visitors and mourners had gone, Elsie drove to the local Judaica shop and purchased a finely decorated mezuzah made in Israel. She hammered nails into both ends of the mezuzah and affixed it to the doorpost, meticulously following the instructions – the upper end pointing inward, the lower one outward. A prominent *shin* in gold lettering graced the upper end of the case. Elsie looked at her handiwork and was pleased.

"What on earth are you doing?" Shel asked, perplexed.

"I put a mezuzah on the door. Inside a Hebrew inscription is written on special parchment. Two passages from the Book of Deuteronomy: One is the *Shema.*"

"But why?"

"Simple." Elsie faced him and spoke without a hint of uncertainty in her voice. "When Mama's soul visits us from heaven to say a blessing, there has to be a mezuzah on the door, or she won't find us." ■

The Tallit Whisperer

ANNA GERSMAN

Knives twist in my back and heart. I sit with Ariel in shul on Rosh Hashanah – the first without you. Thank God we're a little late and the service has started. We don't have to greet anyone with sad faces, understanding eyes and warm hugs. Taking a deep breath, I open my tallit bag. It's the deep blue velvet one that was yours, a gold Star of David is embroidered on one side. Standing, I hold it up over my eyes, say the blessing, and kiss the fringed corners. Only recently could I do this. Before I sat in my seat and did it unobtrusively hoping no one was watching me. Lately, since you're gone. I force myself to take my place as a Jew.

I stand and whisper the blessing to myself and wrap the tallit around my shoulders. I feel you in its soft folds.

"Does your husband have a tallit?" The funeral director asked.

"Yes." I said.

"Well you don't have to, but if you want, you can bring it. We will bury him in it. If not, then we will provide a tallit. In Jewish tradition, Jews come into this world as they leave the world-naked."

"We want to keep his tallit," I tell him. "My daughters want it."

"I agree with that, people are using tallitot now in different ways. As chupahs for weddings, as baby naming shawls," he says.

We can't part with either of your tallitot or your father's. You are imprinted on them. We can't let them go. Now Ariel has it wrapped around her, your hugeness holding her tight.

Closing my eyes I sit down and hum along. It's 16 years since I converted. The tunes are part of me now. You were happy when I decided to convert. Thrilled to sit in shul again and let prayers and melodies from your childhood wash over us. Powerful rekindled feelings you pass on to our children.

Continued on page B50

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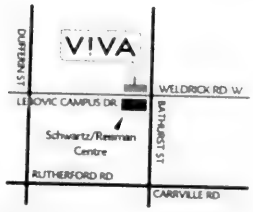

Memories of Rachel Market in Montreal

BARRY ROSEN

It was back in Montreal, in the 1950s, when I was a young boychick.

Shortly before Passover, my mother would do her shopping in order to get ready for the holiday. My mother was always very enthusiastic about preparing for the Jewish holidays. It wasn't just the holidays that inspired her enthusiasm – it was knowing how much joy our family derived from her special Jewish cooking. Despite the amount of work she had to do, Passover was her favourite time of year.

On this particular day, I was sleeping soundly, and my mother tried to wake me. "Barry," she said quietly. I didn't wake up. She repeated herself in a louder voice. "Barry it's time to get up." I opened one eye. I was half asleep. My mother repeated herself, this time using my Yiddish name. "Beryl – you have to wake up. We are going shopping today at Rachel Market!"

Because she said the magic words "Rachel Market." I bolted out of bed. To a young boy, the words "Rachel Market" conjured up a real adventure. Of course it wasn't the shopping that I enjoyed. No kid enjoys shopping, unless it's shopping for toys. The exciting part for me was taking the bus and streetcar to get there. To a young boy, Rachel Market seemed so far away, but of course it was not.

When we got to Rachel Market, the sights and sounds were overwhelming. It was noisy, chaotic, and crowded. It was as if every Jewish housewife in Montreal was shopping there for Passover. There was an endless dance between the sellers and the customers – and there was an abundance of both. Over the din, vendors would shout to each passerby, knowing that a potential customer was close at hand: "Hey Mrs., look at my fresh fruits and vegetables – nothing but the best!"

At the market, my mother always met other women who were also shopping for Passover with their little boys or girls. These women always said the same thing to my mother when they saw us. They would smile as they stared at me, and then say: "Dine zun? A shaynem boychick – vie alt is er?" ("Is this your son? He's a beautiful boy - how old is he?") It was as if they were already sizing me up as a potential husband for their five-year-old daughters! It was never too early to arrange for a *shidduch*!

But the most fascinating part of shopping at Rachel Market was visiting the chicken seller's stall. His name was Mr. Greenspoon, and he not only sold chickens but he was also a *shoichet*. Today, shoichets still exist but work behind the scenes. In those days he was a much more visible figure. He wore an apron that was splattered with blood, and despite his gruesome job he was friendly and pleasant.

When you went to buy your chicken from the *shoichet* you didn't need to ask if the chickens were fresh! The chickens were right there in front of you, live, in cages stacked on top of one another. They were noisy, and of course not the tidiest or cleanest creatures on earth. The smells were memorable, and did not encourage you to linger. There were feathers everywhere.

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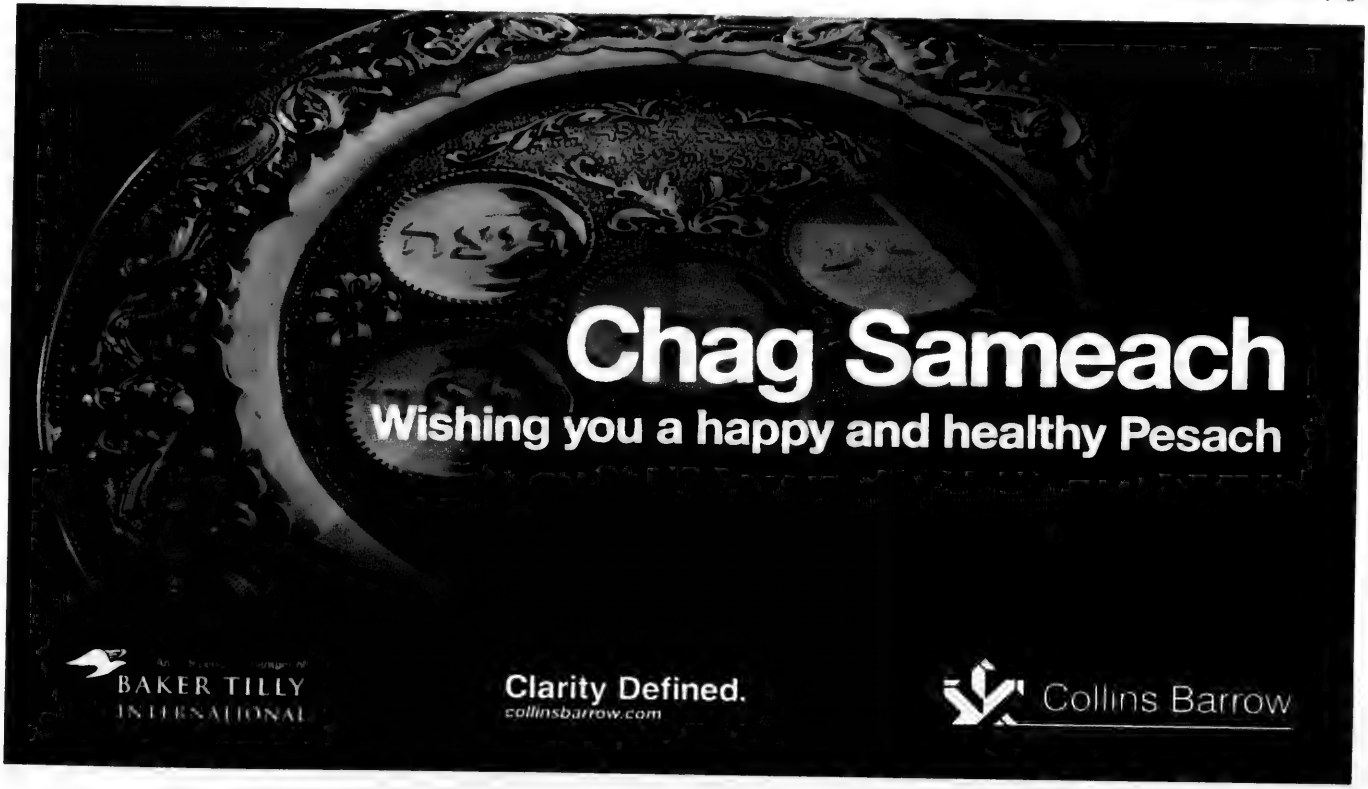

> *She did not agree with this logic, nor did she see it as divine.*

Continued from previous page

When I accompanied my mother to the *shoichet*, things would always follow the same pattern, and today was no exception. My mother greeted Mr. Greenspoon and he greeted her. She asked Mr. Greenspoon to select a chicken. The *shoichet* stuck his hand in a cage. All the other chickens squawked. My mother, having high standards, looked the chicken over carefully – "too small," she said, rejecting the bird. The *shoichet* took out a second chicken. This one my mother also rejected as being inadequate. It was only the third chicken that my mother deemed acceptable for our Passover table.

Mr. Greenspoon took the chicken to the back of his stall. There he slaughtered it with a sharp knife in the required kosher manner. He returned with the deceased chicken neatly wrapped up in brown paper tied up with string. My mother asked me to hold the package while she paid Mr. Greenspoon. As I held the package I noticed that it was warm, as if the chicken was still alive. I suddenly felt sorry for the poor bird.

My mother paid for the chicken, and took the package from me. She had heard from a friend earlier that day that Mr. Greenspoon was looking unwell, and she herself thought that he looked pale. "Are you sure you're okay Mr. Greenspoon?" she asked.

"I'm fine, Mrs. Just fine" he responded. She thanked Mr. Greenspoon, and wished him and his family a nice Pesach. He wished her the same, and promptly turned his attention to his next waiting customer.

We then made our way home and I could hardly wait for the adventure of our next shopping trip to Rachel Market.

What my mother and I didn't know was that something disturbing had happened to Mr. Greenspoon.

He had arrived for work early that morning. He brought his caged chickens with him. He opened his stall and placed his chickens on display.

Suddenly, he heard a strange voice. He heard it more than once. The voice said: "Hey you!" He looked around, wondering where the voice came from.

He heard it again: "Hey Greenspoon!" The voice then said: "Avrum Greenspoon, prepare yourself, your life is about to end!" He thought for sure it was *Malach HaMoves*, the Angel of Death, and he was terrified.

Summoning his courage, he looked around and said bravely "Show yourself!" And who comes out of hiding? Not *Malach HaMoves*, but rather… one of his chickens! "A talking chicken? That is impossible!" said Mr. Greenspoon. But there it was – in the flesh, feathers and all. A real live talking chicken!

The *shoichet* and the chicken ended up having a heated confrontation. The *shoichet* tried to calm the chicken down. He explained that God, each for its own purpose, created everything. Humans were born to eat chickens. Chickens were born to be eaten. And he, the *shoichet*, was born to slaughter chickens. It was simple, and all parties had to agree to this "divine arrangement."

"Some arrangement!" the chicken retorted. She did not agree with this logic, nor did she see it as divine. Especially the part about chickens being born to be eaten!

The chicken became angrier, and as she grew angrier she grew larger. She soon became as tall as the *shoichet!* She grabbed a knife from his drawer – the same knife that he used to do his work. There was a terrible scuffle, and the giant chicken ended up straddling the *shoichet*. This chicken meant business! She was about to cut the *shoichet's* throat when Mr. Greenspoon, more than a little terrified, started to scream. "Don't kill me! Don't kill me!"

Just then the *shoichet* heard another voice calling his name, first faintly and then loudly. "Avrum, Avrum." He felt a gentle nudge on his shoulder. "Wake up Avrum; you're having a bad dream!" It was his wife! He woke up.

"Avrum," she said. "You were having a nightmare!"

"Oy Esther," said the *shoichet*, "it was horrible!" He then explained to his wife what the dream was all about.

His wife comforted him. "OK Avrum, relax, calm down. The nightmare is over. Please try to get some sleep. It's 3 o'clock in the morning, and it will soon be time for you to get up and get ready for work."

But the dream felt so real that Avrum couldn't fall back to sleep. And yet, with so little rest, he still managed to get out of bed at 4 a.m. and open his stall by 6 that day, as usual. No wonder he looked so unwell to my mother as we shopped together for Passover.

But as the old expression goes, everyone (except for the chicken) lived happily ever after, and we all had a great Pesach back in Montreal when I was a young boychick. ■

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Shabbat Shalom

FIONA GOLD KROLL

The market is buzzing with people. I stop for a moment gazing at pickled cucumbers floating in wooden barrels filled with brine. Sellers beckon customers to their stalls overflowing with plump red tomatoes, onions and mushrooms. "Sixpence a pound," they yell. Mom shops at her favourite greengrocer and packs paper bags bursting with fruits and vegetables in her mesh shopping bag. I feel my mother's warm hand searching for mine and together we walk hand in hand through Ridley Road.

The butcher's shop is down the street and I run along the sidewalk until I reach the door. Mom's friend is already there and they hug as soon as they see each other. Then Esther makes a beeline for me and I cringe when she plants a large wet kiss on my cheek. The shop is humming as shoppers examine chickens and meat, grumbling about the price to whomever will listen. Then in a quiet voice, Esther speaks to my mother in Yiddish assuming I don't understand what she is saying, but I do. I've been listening to the same words as far back as I can remember. This one's getting a divorce, and that one's moving to Australia. I'm bored with the conversation and begin scraping sawdust into neat piles with the edge of my shoe.

I was born at the Bearsted Memorial Hospital in London, England, across the road from Hampton Court Palace. The hospital was an outgrowth of the Jewish Maternity Hospital in Whitechapel where my parents were born and raised. At the turn of the 20th century, the East End of London became home to thousands of poor Jewish immigrants fleeing the pogroms of Eastern Europe. Some went on to America but many stayed in Britain including my Orthodox grandparents.

I am two when my parents move to suburban London, and I spend the next eight years of my life living in what I consider sublime paradise. The house is large with three levels of gardens at the back and I play outside for hours, immersed in my imaginary world of witches, fairies and goblins.

Every Shabbat, my family attends services at our local shul. I sit beside my father braiding the fringes on his tallit while dad dozes through the sermon. We walk home after kiddush and the aroma of soup and roasted chicken welcomes me as I run up the path towards our house. The pièce de résistance will be lokshen pudding for dessert.

My father passes his driving test and purchases his first car, a used three-wheel enclosed bakers van. My brother and I sit on a blanket in the back, our eyes wide open in wonder and fear as we hold on to each side for dear life. "Lean in everyone!" my father shouts, hoping the van won't tip over when we go around street corners. Within a few months mom presents dad with one of two options: the bakers van or divorce. The van is immediately replaced with a four-wheel car.

During the summer, Saturday afternoons are spent in the garden with family and friends. Adults sit on canvas chairs drinking tea between muffled conversations and fits of laughter. The children play hide and seek behind our large fruit trees with branches heavy with ripening plums and pears. Later in the day, we visit my grandfather. I sniff his silver spice box before he lifts me up on a chair. Then, with his calloused fingers wrapped around mine, we light the braided havdalah candle. My grandfather makes the blessings and blows out the candle. Shabbat is over.

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

Mom spends the entire month before Pesach cleaning our house. Drapes are removed, washed and rehung; floors and silver are polished. The chimney sweep cleans fireplaces that are not used again until the following winter. Kitchen cupboards are emptied and scrubbed; dad carries musty cardboard boxes containing Passover dishes into the house. Pots and pans are washed and placed on paper-lined shelves for the next eight days. Then "The Order" arrives; large boxes brimming with matzot, dozens of eggs, and an assortment of Passover foods including pickled cucumbers. Dad moves the living room sofa making room for the extended dining room table that mom covers with a fresh white cloth. With borrowed chairs, we somehow squeeze 25 people around a table meant for 12. But, what seders we have, and no one cares about the mismatched plates and cutlery; after all it's Pesach.

My perfect childhood unravels the year before my brother's bar mitzvah. He has a serious accident and doctors are uncertain if he will walk again let alone stand at the bimah singing his parashah. He does, albeit on crutches and yes, he walks again. My grandfather dies soon after and I'm old enough to feel the loss of his warm smile and comforting hugs. Then my uncle dies and I feel the emotional safety net of our tight knit family slipping away sooner than it should. All I can remember is my father saying *Kaddish* over the next few months. There is no music in our house for almost a year and my parents' pain is palpable.

We move to the other side of London the following year and join a new shul. It is Shabbat as usual. I am 12 and no longer play in the garden; my imaginary games turn into mere memories. My friends are now in walking distance and we listen to pop music at one another's houses, dancing to *The Twist* by Chubby Checker. My 13th birthday party is exciting in more ways than one. Boys and girls dance the evening away under the watchful eyes of my parents. I'm allowed to wear stockings and kitten heel shoes for the very first time.

Five years later, my father announces we are immigrating to Canada. Actually my parents are also considering America. My father's eldest brother lives in Los Angeles and for me it is a no- brainer; we should go to California. But it's 1966, the war in Vietnam is in full swing and my parents aren't willing to risk my brother being drafted into the U.S. army. I help my mother pack up our personal effects. The Pesach dishes are stored with my uncle in London and never make it to Canada.

> *All I can remember is my father saying Kaddish over the next few months*

We spend the first winter in Montreal and move to Toronto within a few months. My mother continues to make Pesach with new mismatched dishes. Her shining candlesticks are still placed on the dining room table, though some of the luster is gone. The table is much smaller and family and friends who once sat with us at seders in London are now ghosts from the past.

I reach for my mother's hand; it's not there. Dad, grandpa, where are you? They're all gone now. Am I dreaming?

It's Friday night. I throw a fresh white tablecloth over the dining room table, shaking it once or twice until the cloth settles down. Finally, I run my hand across the top until every last wrinkle is gone. I set the table and call out to my children and grandchildren, "come, help me light the candles."

Shabbat Shalom. ■

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A Dialogue On Justice

APRIL LAUFER

"Between you and me..." the words catch in her throat.

He waits.

She tries again. "House arrest. What is that?" A tremor in her voice.

"Well," keeping his voice even, "it means that he has to stay in his house."

She looks at him. "You mean," swallowing a quiver, "he gets to stay in his home."

"Well, it isn't that he 'gets' to stay home," sighing, "but that he is not allowed to leave."

She snorts, "And that is what? Some kind of punishment?"

"It's called house arrest," he says, a shrug in his voice.

"It is nothing."

Silence.

"In today's paper," she continues with a brief glance at him, "they call him an alleged war criminal," shaking her head, her voice bereaved. And then with force, "Alleged? Are you kidding?"

"And what did this war criminal do?"

"Excuse me," she takes a breath. "This 'alleged' war criminal...What did he do?" She pauses; her mind drifting through stories that will never be told. "Does it matter?" A pause, a gulp of air. "He isn't well enough to stand trial."

He has to think of what to say. She is expecting a discussion. Some argument about what should happen. He has nothing.

He grasps at words to fill the emptiness. "Yes, well, I'm sure it would be hard to find witnesses who are still around."

"There are pictures," her voice raised again. "Yes. Of course," he nods. He admires her strength. Her desire for justice. Her desire for a world where there is order and sense.

"All those stories—the video projects, the recordings. And what has come of them? A record for what? What good has come of it?"

"For those who wanted the truth," thinking of his own truth, his own testimony.

"And to what end? To another 'alleged' war criminal?" she lets her anger swell until it fills the room.

"Perhaps, this is all we can do," knowing that his words are empty of meaning.

"There won't be a trial," her voice a whisper now.

"There won't be a trial," he echoes, his voice quiet, hiding his own trembling.

"Do you know they say that unless he gets his trial this 'elderly war crimes suspect' do you know that they argue – presumption of innocence." She shakes her head.

"Justice requires following the law." He answers mechanically.

"For them? " She looks at him. "For them," she says," for *them* we follow the law?"

"For everyone," he replies.

"So now, when the guy is practically dead, they offer to prosecute him and we are supposed to be satisfied." She was not asking.

"We live in a civilized society."

"Civilized. That he got to live; that my parents were shot?" Tears slipping down her cheeks.

"And what would you do? Take him out and have him shot?"

She is quiet. What would she do? Shoot him? Make him dig his own grave?

In her silence he seems to know what she is thinking. "So the rules of law do not apply to war criminals?"

"Why should they?"

"Because we are civilized." It is the only sane argument.

"Hah," she scoffs. Shoot him? Could I pull the trigger? .....Yes.

"So war criminals don't deserve a trial," he says this as a statement.

"Again? The same testimony. Again."

"The real truth must contain the entire truth," he quotes the remembered text.

"Who said that?" she eyes him suspiciously. "Are you defending this farce?

Wearily rubbing his face with his hands, he asks, "What would justice be?"

"He lived," she replies. "He got to live his life. That can't be justice. "

"No. You are right. It is not justice."

"*Tzedek tzedek tirdof.* You know," she looks at him, "If a man schemes against another and kills him," she quotes the passage perfectly in the Hebrew, "he is to be put to death."

"'Justice, justice you shall pursue.' But still a trial is required..."

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

"Oh yes. Yes. But this..." she leaves the sentence hanging in the air.

"Yes?" he wants her to finish. He wants her to make sense of this nowhere argument.

"This is...," she looks at him," this is nothing. To claim that you care about justice! To claim you tried to bring this war criminal to trial but the guy is just too damn old!"

Disappointment sinks into the room.

She looks at him and reaches for his hand.

He looks wonderingly at her, stroking the soft skin of her hand with his fingers. With sadness he asks her, "Should they have done nothing?"

She moves away from him pacing. "That is the point. To think that this is something? 'Elderly' war criminals. As if elderly allows us some sense of compassion because maybe they are old and frail or even in poor health. Who cares? I don't care." She forces her voice louder. "Do you hear me? I don't care."

Silence. Silence.

"If you could face him?" he asks feeling quite lost, "If you could be his judge...?"

"I would spit in his face." I would shoot him she thinks as she massages her liver spotted hands.

"That's it? Nothing more." He says it kindly.

I could pull the trigger she thinks to herself. Out loud she says, "They have waited so long. Waited until almost everyone is gone."

"Yes, you're right. God knows the guy himself could drop dead any moment." He actually laughs at his own words and is surprised that in this small laugh there is a feeling of such heartache.

"And this is justice?" she asks him, quieter now.

"No," he replies. "This is not justice. But....," he hesitates, "Is justice possible?"

She looks at him. It is a trick of his, this questioning. She is afraid of answering, afraid of not answering.

Seeing her pained expression, her hands kneading her arms in a confusion of feelings, he tries to find a way through this black hole.

"Sometimes," he offers in his Talmudic voice, "sometimes all we can do is pursue justice and we must...we must do it in a just manner."

She shakes her head. "What, so some prosecutor or some country can say they did something?" she says with contempt.

"We live in a world where things are not fair." She hears the rhythmic repetition.

If only there was sense to it all. "This doesn't make what they are doing alright," she counters.

"What are they doing?"

"You think people didn't know about this guy for the last 60 years? You think people didn't know where he was living and what he was doing?" Her hurt sits in the air and brings him into her ache, her predicament.

"So, what are you saying?" he tries, "Since we did nothing in the past, we should do nothing now?"

"No. But to pretend that this is justice is wrong." She forces scorn in her voice. The same argument again and again. How is it that justice remains so elusive? How can it be that even in their old age...

She states the obvious. "This 97 year old got to live. He got dressed each morning, got to drink his coffee and eat his breakfast. He never worried that someone would find him."

"They did though."

"Hah. At 97 suddenly they realize he is living next door?" she harrumphs. "The world has waited 75 years to pretend to do justice, and now...," she says.

"Because if you wait until everyone is gone...Who will protest?" he feels so tired but seeing her tears he must keep up with the discussion. He must try. "What would you do to this 97 year old," faltering over the next words, "What would justice look like?"

He waits to hear her answer.

"Torture," she doesn't hesitate.

"You would torture a 97 year old man?" he is surprised by how this makes him feel.

A pause before she answers, "That is a bit of a problem. ...."

"So you wouldn't." A statement.

Only silence in the room. Silence. Tears.

Watching her pain, his hands shake and he wipes at his own tears.

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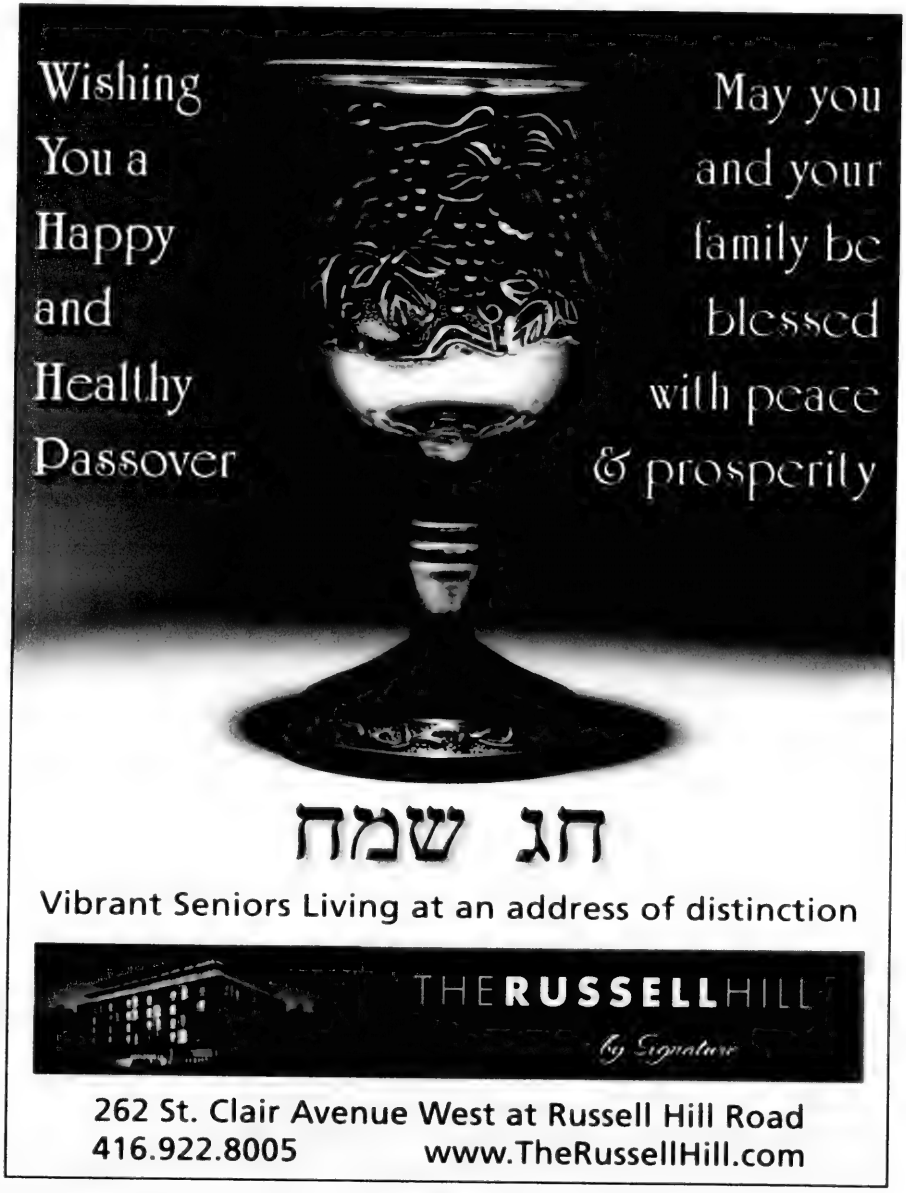

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"I want justice for my parents, and my brothers," the words tangled up in her emotion come out hesitantly." She tries again. "I want justice."

Looking at her, remembering her stories, how she cradled her sister as she died in the camps. All those stories. All those horrors. Justice.

"If I could..." he whispers,

"If you could..." asking him to finish his thought.

"I want justice too..." He is afraid. To contemplate this abyss.

"You know," she says looking at him. "You know, age doesn't matter. I do not have to feel pity for him because he is old. He got to live out his years!"

Silence.

Silence.

"He had a full life, didn't he?" and at these words he chokes back a sob.

She touches him gently on his shoulder. Her own tears forgotten in his.

"Well, I hope he is in pain," her voice strong.

"I am sure he has pills," just a thing a person says.

"What? I can't even hope that he is in pain?"

"Does it help?" he asks now feeling a bit ashamed for tossing out platitudes.

"Doesn't it? Doesn't it help a little? To know that he might be suffering?"

"Maybe. I don't know." Then with an anxiety that catches him by surprise. "Is that what justice would look like? If you knew that he was in pain? That he was suffering?"

"You know," she answers carefully. "I don't care if he is in pain. It isn't his physical condition that means anything. Not his age, not his frailties. I want him to feel torment for the things he did. I want him to feel the anguish of those he committed to mass graves. That is the torture I want."

He thinks about this. He thinks of all the discussions they have had. He thinks of the last few survivors. "If we brought together everyone we know, other survivors," pausing to think who is left. "If we were the final tribunal for this man, what would we do?"

She looks at him. "Who is left for this tribunal? You. Me. A handful. Less." She thinks and sighs, sits down beside him. "I think we wouldn't do anything. We're

not young anymore." A smile, soft tears. "It was... a long time ago," saying words that do not come from her heart. "It's just sad....to pretend that this is justice."

He rests his head against her shoulder, leaning lightly against her. "You know, there is no measure of justice that could ever make atonement."

With a sigh, "So, there is no justice."

"Bringing a 97 year old to account is something, isn't it?" he suggests as he brings his head up, and sits up straight in his chair.

"How?" she asks. "We agreed nothing is going to happen."

"Because for there to be a sense of righteousness in the world, we must try. Pursuing justice, even after three generations, proves there is a reckoning."

"A little too late. A little too little," she shrugs.

"Yes, yes," he agrees. "Still....since we..." Here he pauses with a glance in her direction gauging how to say the words he does not quite believe. "Still, since justice is not easily defined and, perhaps in this case, it is not even possible..."

She waits.

"Pursuing justice--pursuing truth for the sake of an individual," he continues, " for the sake of society—perhaps that is all that can happen."

Her eyes are seeing another time and place. I could she thinks. He looks at her and takes her hand. ■

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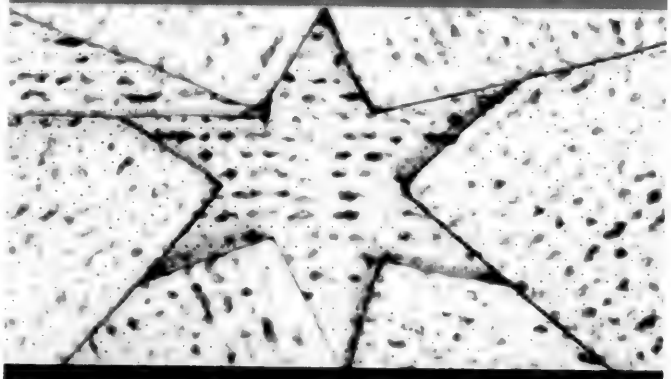

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The Free Concert

RUTH FRANKEL-GRANER

The August heat has not kept everyone at home this evening. In Walter Randolph Park, the rhythm of the klezmer band— five young men in jeans and corduroys—is so compelling that the audience sitting outside in the turquoise bleachers can't resist tapping their feet and clapping hands. But only Estherelke dances. She must be over 80.

The musicians play on a small wooden stage, with a backdrop of real pine trees and dark green maples that will soon turn red. Estherelke performs on the concrete walk in front of them. The audience watches. She wears lime-coloured capris, a matching tank top, and striped lime and white socks pulled up to her knees, and sandals. She opens her black purse and takes out one very long strand of lime crystal beads and slowly winds them around her neck. They hang almost to her waist. Then, Estherelke *tanzt* (dances.) When the audience applauds to thank the musicians, she bows and blows kisses back to the spectators.

She repeats the same dance over and over again. Tiny shuffling steps, her arms held above her head, swaying from side to side, dancing every song except the experimental ones— the modern klezmer music. The audience doesn't like the new music either. Estherelke dances only to those klezmer rhythms that has the audience pounding its hands and feet.

When four children—two girls in pale summer dresses and two small boys come down the aisle, and step on to the stage , she waves to them coaxing them to join her. She takes their hands, but one by one, each child slips away. Then the little girls dance together. They raise their arms, and move their feet a little. The boys watch them. Then, the four children create a game. Whenever Estherelke dances near them, they skitter away. Then they slip closer and closer to her, and repeat their fun.

Through it all, Estherelke dances, her swaying, shuffling, arms-up dance. Arms that are uncovered and anyone can see the dark numbers tattooed on her arm. "These?" she answered a neighbour's daughter. "That's my old phone number."

Does she remember a wedding in some far-off time and place, when her hair was long and black, when she lived in a town like my mother's, a shtetl that no longer exists, its inhabitants gone in a single day. Was she the bride? Did she, does she, have children?

The young men in the band play on as though unaware of her presence, her movement, as she dances, alone. Is this what saved her life? Obliterating? Persevering? Dancing? Being for a few moments somewhere else, someplace outside your body. The audience applauding, the musicians held in the moment. Dancing, whirling across the floor, flounced skirt of yellow and red flying, lifted upwards by her partner, the whole troupe moving so rapidly, no one out of step, faster and faster, the stage unable to contain their joy, the irresistible rhythm, the pure rapture of dance.

Dance, Estherelke, dance!

The alternative might be, to cry. ■

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BARBIE DUKES

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amniotic warm,
skin surrounded

here, reborn.
liquid mirror
holy vessel,
tearful whispers
pain unwrestled.

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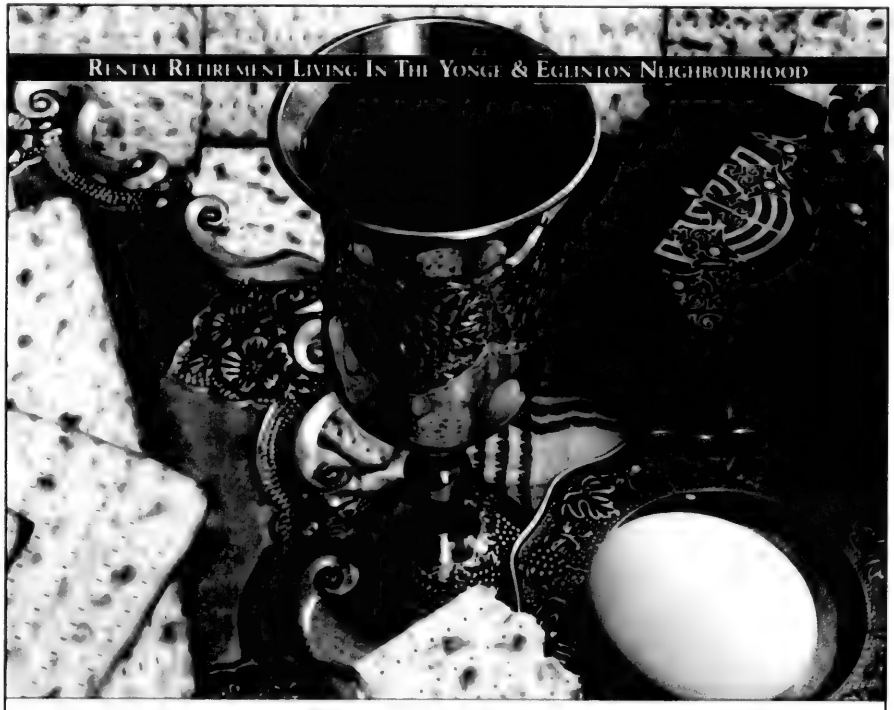
ripened anew,

arc complete
emunah that's true.
from deep I know,
enduring chain
future links



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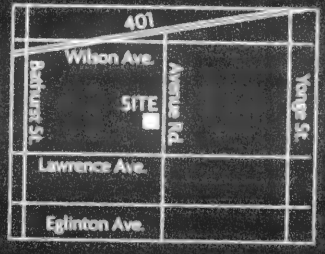

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Studio Visit, 1943 Felix Nussbaum

ANITA LEREK

"I can't be killed – because of my poetry. I have to live on in order to write it.
So I kept thinking of lines of poetry
I loved the . . . line. It was keeping me alive."
Kenneth Koch, "To World War Two"

"I started working again, drew and painted a lot. I am resisting and I will not tire. It's OK."
Felix Nussbaum

• • •

Felix Nussbaum, painter: Osnabruck, Germany 1904 – 1944, Auschwitz, Poland

• • •

Welcome, my friend, to the studio of hunted criminal, Nussbaum. My crime is being Jewish. For this I must pay dearly by giving away my paintings and likely, losing my life. Ah, thank you for the art supplies. They keep me alive.

Landscape with Balloon (Country Road With Felix Nussbaum Painting), 1928
Artist gave to Dr. Grosfils
You are so lucky, they all said. The comfort, the support, the rich paints, canvases, outings with your
father, the painter. Anything you could imagine was yours. Like father, like son. No, no. So hard to say
no to papa. He ruled everything with his shiny automobile, fancy suits and strong opinions. He owned
my easel, owned my brushes, owned the paths and the trees. Squeeze in more colour, brighter, more,
more, stop, that's perfect. But then I moved to Berlin. Yes, he still supported me, but from a distance.
I am less afraid to go further, to create messy bogs of colour, tilting trees, and Christian churches. I turn his back to the viewer, and stick myself in the centre. I trap him in a corridor. He can't escape into his auto or his factory. He stands there, alone, swallowed up by my strokes, gazing at me, his heart
swelling with pride.

• • •

"Painting is perhaps the most important thing to me." My religion was the Berlin Academy of Fine Art;
the Prussian Academy of Art in Rome,
Villa Massimo; the Caspar and Wertheim Galleries, the
Berlin Secession, my own studio in Berlin. Out of love for my parents I have kept the Jewish holidays.
"[Is] the closeness between me and my parents . . . God?," I wonder. Papa told me about the vandalism
and anti-Semitic defacement of the Osnabruck Jewish cemetery and the new synagogue.

• • •

***Self-Portrait with Mask*, 1928**
Gifted to artist's cousin
My hand moves in Cerulean Blue. I paint all I see. I paint my mask, my very own creation, sun trapped,
unmoved by the outside world, mouth open, at rest. I am a painted object. Prefer my created face to
the real. There's freedom even in ugliness. A clown, a demon – better than a Jewish face.

Need to pull my mask down – dead eyes. Paint, pose, easel mirror, paint,

Continued on next page

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Roy Y. - Brampton

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J. C. - North York

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Studio Visit, 1943 Felix Nussbaum

Continued from previous page

pose, there's nothing more.
Take a good look at myself. Here I am – all smeared in pigment mixes of yellows, reds, and blues. A
painter, that's all. My eyes see and penetrate everything. By looking at things deeply I bring them to life.
By looking at me deeply, you can see my life, dear friend.

• • •

Destruction (1), 1933
Left behind in artist's studio when arrested in 1944
My Berlin studio burned down, 150 works, destroyed. Soon after, the Nazis came to power. My world
was falling apart. My Rome art school fellowship was cancelled. Felka and I had to leave our artists'
paradise. The boycott. My parents fled to Switzerland. I grabbed ink and cardboard, fingers flying,
brushing in lost lines, wavy lines, toppling lines, howling lines, strangling lines. We can't go home.

No roof, no path, all ruins. Are we dead? I finished, and signed the lower right. Felt better.

• • •

Rapallo (Park in Rapallo), 1934
Left behind in artist's studio when arrested in 1944
Felka and I settled on the Italian Riviera; with funds from papa, as always. The sunlight awakened my
hands. I stroked boats and buildings into pure zinc white. Then on to the fishing village of Rapallo,
finally, with Mutti and papa – as if we were holidaying, as if the perfect angle of the sun was our only
care, as if, as if. I smudge and enlarge the path – what a pleasure to make it curve and escape into the
mountain range. I leave the forms behind, lined up, pot and plant, shrub, tree, and building. Trapped
luminosity, their colours reach up to leaves bearing witness in emerald green.

• • •

Events outside were getting worse. The Nuremberg Laws in 1935. In 1938, Kristallnacht and the deportation of Osnabruck men to Buchenwald. In 1939, over 4,000 works of art, mainly Jewish, were burned outside the Berlin Fire Department; and then the war was declared.

Wanderer – yes; Jew – yes, by exile not by choice. In 1935, Felka and I were allowed into Belgium.
Thank God. Every six months, we had to tear everything down and move in order to renew our
resident alien permits. My family fanned out before the sealing of borders to us Jews, criminals. My
older brother, Justus, with his family fled to Amsterdam. Mutti and papa, ran from Switzerland to Italy
to Cologne, to Amsterdam.

External events kill my hope. In my art cell,

I re-construct events as I choose, and I create hope.

On May 10, 1940, the very same day that the Germans invaded Belgium, I was deported to St. Cyprien, the internment

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

camp in the Pyrenees. After 3 months, I escaped repatriation to Germany, and came back here as a fugitive.

•••

Self-Portrait with Key, 1941
Artist gave to Dr. Grosfils

St Cyprien was a beach and sand
hell
locked between ocean and electrified
barbed wire. My face is on fire all day. No
escape from the
sun. Something is rising in my throat. I
chortle, scratch, can't get it out. I paint
the tension.
Robbed of sky, barbed wire horizon. It
takes hours to paint the wire, twist by
twist. My titanium-zinc

white gives it a heavenly glow. Crave to
touch it and be blessed. But my medieval
Jew's hat is in
the way. We are flattened figures fused
into the cage. And there's the key to get
us out. To release the
key I must undo all the barbed wire. Easy
to do in my studio, just paint over and
adjust. My choice, to
paint or not to paint. So much power,
so little. But for me, my world is lemon
yellow. I feel my throat
relaxing, clearing. The noises continue,
louder, higher, my breathing strengthens.
Life is rising in me. My
fists curl – inward. My art screams out.
You will notice, my friend, the painting on the other side of this plywood is an early Italian landscape from my art school days in Rome so long ago. [Pause] Supply is so difficult now, that I hope you'll pardon my doubling up. But the Italian plywood is the best.

•••

Organ Grinder, June 1942- July 1943
Left behind in artist's studio when arrested in 1944

The end is here. The Gestapo is
everywhere. They're sending
us in trainloads to Auschwitz. My
parents have been deported,
doesn't really matter what I do now, my

painting is hopeless,
just have to calm my nerves. I need to
paint. Seeing bones
everywhere. I make a square. No cafes or
people strolling.
The silence scrapes away at my
imagination. I used to amuse
people with my art. Now, only skeletons
come out.

•••

Once upon a time in *The Singing Bone* fairly tale, when an evil brother killed the rightful

hero, my wise German forefathers, the Brothers Grimm, made this prophecy:

"... nothing remains hidden from God, and this evil deed [is] bound to come to light."

Later an innocent shepherd, falling upon a precious little white bone, carved it

into a mouthpiece for his horn, which, then of its own accord, sang out the truth.

Dear friend, witness the bones around me. Make the prophecy come true. You are our only hope.

"... do not let my pictures die ...."

Continued on next page

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Studio Visit, 1943 Felix Nussbaum

Continued from previous page

...

Denounced, Felix and Felka were arrested in July 1944, and sent to the Malines transit camp. They were murdered upon arrival in Auschwitz on August 3, just one month before the liberation of Brussels. Felix's parents, and his brother and family perished as well.

Notes

Grateful acknowledgment to:

* *Art and Exile*, Felix Nussbaum - 1904 – 1944, Emily D Bileski, Museum Catalogue. New York: The Jewish Museum, 1985.
* Felix Nussbaum, Werkverzeichnis, Catalogue Raisonne, ed., Anne Sibylle Schwetter. The Felix Nussbaum Foundation.
* *The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, tr., Jack Zipes. New York: Bantam Books, 3rd edition, 2003.

Friday Night Services

KENNETH SHERMAN

Walking home down Main Street,
I catch my reflection
in the window of the tavern
where the local toughs

drink and dance.
I am startled to see
that I have forgotten
to remove my skullcap.

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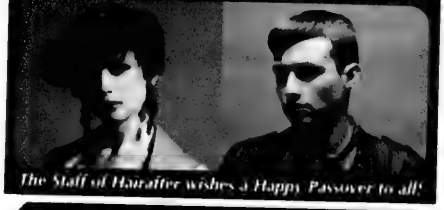
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Forgotten Childhood

JUDY WEINRYB

Strolling idly
on a hot summer's day
I am surprised to find my feet
carrying me back in time

Intoxicated
by the sounds and smells
of Kensington Market
in all its bravado
I have discovered a place
that no longer exists

A breath away
from the fruit markets
and trendy sidewalk cafes
I turn onto a square
that feels exquisitely serene

Where tall stately trees
and aging Victorian houses
are frozen in time

I envision children
from long ago
enjoying Shabbat Kiddush
at the Kiever Shul
then running through the park

To play hopscotch
in colourful frocks
and well-worn knickers
as they scream with delight

Serenaded by the sounds
of the knife sharpener
shouting for business
they run to greet him
pet his horse
enjoy the candies
he pulls from his satchel

Most days, after school is out
and evening descends upon the park
the scent of home cooking
wafts gently through the air
beckoning home the hungry flock
to their parents' welcoming arms

Soon the sun has set
as mothers sing lullabies
to their weary offspring
and watch them drift
into peaceful slumber

Overwhelmed by the vision
of an imagined past
I reflect on the lure
of what may have been
but is no more

To all our friends, family and the entire Jewish community, we extend our warmest wishes for a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful Passover!

Sobeys Kosher Market
Clark & Hilda

Dear God

SOPHIE SOIL

how many died? how many murdered? how many cremated? those shot at? knifed or strangled? those enslaved and vanquished? the brave who were shot in rows of thousands? how many children who dreamt of being born murdered in the womb? ten?..a thousand?..a million?..more?

how about the babies experiencing that constant war? the uncaring flames? how may hurled their last cry as they lay dying?..only one?..a hundred?..or a thousand? lying in the reddish-purple like a flowing river? how many Abrahams and Jacobs and Rebeccas must have perished, dissected of their life-rich dreams? how many made their way to you?

and oh yes, the bombed-on civilians? the slain masses going about their tasks? the innocents? the wronged persons? did you see any of those? how many Jews, clueless of their fate, shot in pogroms? starved in ghettos?

or perhaps the martyrs, the Warsaw Ghetto uprisers, the rabbis, the women? the teens? can you tell us, dear G-d: if you can be in two places at the same time, were you there when they were gassed, their smoke spewed into your heavens like a lost generation? and did you see them laugh as they turned your children into ashes? how many made it to your pearly gates?

really, six million is a lot...you must have met some of them up there, dear God...

(from ashes left to linger: a poetic search for closure—*no longer in publication)*

Head of the Year

MARK GORDON

Rosh in Hebrew means head.
An image rises from the sea of images,
this year with the head of a goat,
the head of a bull perhaps, or Janus
gazing back, way back, and to the
future,
white as the sands of a Greek isle.

I gaze back to warm September days,
when I walked to the synagogue
with my grandfather, like boys I saw
today,
eager and reluctant. Their eyes swivel
to the world, then inward to the pouch
that hides the silken prayer shawl.

Back then no policemen stood guard
seeming embarrassed to look too
closely
at the men in skull caps hunched in
their task,
the women in knee-high boots,
perfumed
to the roots, their laughter full of
lipstick,
their capped teeth challenging the sun.

I resist the temptation to say the Lord's
not here, recalling the Lord is
everywhere
like one of Ezekiel's whirling wheels
that touches the edge of each human
planet.
Its emerald fire wakens dead eyes
to the shimmering elm trees aimed at
the sky.

And so another head of the year passes,
my grandfather long since dead.
He died in the middle of his morning
walk,
as abruptly as a shriek from the shofar.
His eighty-six-year-old heart folded
in the bright Miami sun, as a plane
high in the sky with a trailing banner
invited one and all to Joe's Oyster
Heaven.

Mark Gordon has had numerous poems published in literary journals and anthologies in Canada and the United States, and has two novels published by Groundhog Press, The Kanner Aliyah *and* Head of the Harbour.

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There's Always Next Year

GRANT WALDMAN

Year after year, that's what I've heard:
Next Year in Jerusalem!
What about now? What about:
Right now in Jerusalem?
I am not referring to the physical Jerusalem.
I am talking about the metaphysical Jerusalem.
The Jerusalem of peace.
The Jerusalem of promise.
The Jerusalem of hope.
Hope for understanding.
Hope that all peoples can sit around the seder table
And be compassionate with one another.
Hope that we really try to walk in each other's shoes.
A promise for calmer days ahead.
Days filled with
Stories about each other so that we can learn
From one another.
A promise of a Jerusalem for everyone to gather.
A Jerusalem for everyone to return to.
Peace that embraces all peoples of all faiths.
Peace that truly exists in the hearts and minds of all people.
May this come to pass so that our children and their children
Can say "Next Year in Jerusalem" and know that it will be a
Jerusalem of hope, promise and peace.
Amen!

The Day of Atonement

MAX SKUY

The time has come I'm glad to say
When Jews congregate, fast, and pray on this Yom Kippur Day
We beg for forgiveness 'cos we did stray
Please inscribe us in the book of life on this last day
We promise this year to mend our way
Give us this chance our life on Earth to stay

Dayeinu

ROSE ROMBERG

As we reach life's autumn season
we are reminded by those much
wiser among us to live in the present
To live the gift of each new day.
"The quiet moments"
It is the time of reflection
The time of loneliness that
memories almost frozen in time
invade our thoughts... like a
soft breeze floating through the
heart and soul.
Causing a deep sigh... perhaps
a tear or two and yes even a smile.
To relive welcome cherished moments
of a time well spent; away
from the "Here and the Now"
For if we become too frail, and
the present should fade away...
It is our memories that sustain
us and become the Present!
"Dayeinu"

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Happy Pesach

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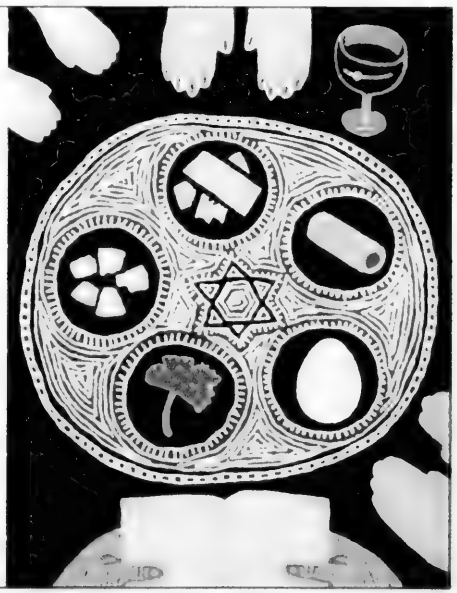
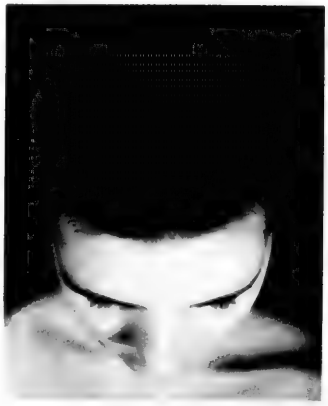


Exposed Shame

EVA GOLDFINGER



All that beautiful flying hair
in the shampoo commercials.

Even plain faces look beautiful
with beautiful hair.

Round scalp,
fragile skin,
veins seen through it,
exposed, vulnerable, shamed,
bereft of beauty
of our pride
of our power.

She wanted it.
I cried as I shaved her head.

You Reside Within My Heart

GAIL BERMAN

My dear Father, who I so adored,
You were Called Home by GOD, The Lord.
It was all too soon, far too premature,
But this was the powerful Call of Nature.

I was a little girl,you were my young and vibrant Dad,
What countless memories there were to be had.
You taught me how to play tennis, how to ride a bike,
And many other things which I really did like.

At home, and on vacations, what nice things we did,
Throughout the years, since I was a kid.

Whenever I was sad or sick, you were there with help and a smile,
All of which went far beyond a country mile.

Dear Father, although you may be gone,
Fond memories do I hold, that can never be wrong.
Many things remind me of you,
in generous part,
Because forever, you reside within my Heart.

Wish all our families, friends & clients a very happy, healthy, peaceful and sweet Passover

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Three Poems

BRANDON MARLON

Timna Hymn

Along the copper road,
through canyons white and pink,
I sought out Solomon's Pillars,
Hathor's ruined shrine,
and ancient mines marked by shaft and pickaxe.

Accompanied only by white-crowned wheaters
and rumours of nocturnal wolves hunting in packs,
I ventured deep into endless landscape
where the patient acacia raddiana reigns.

Summiting the flat heights of Mount Timna,
I surveyed panoramic vistas,
scanning horizons for ancestral traces,
skimming lofty ranges and dry riverbeds
for remnant footprints of Hebraic forebears.

Beyond Egyptian inscriptions and the Roman cave,
my callused feet conveyed me through great arches,
past stone monuments shaped as mushrooms,
and within close proximity to twining Spiral Hill.
In the end, I rendered Timna twin soles of old boots;
in return, Timna restored a single soul.

Night with the Goddess

Dusk sets in and soon I am beguiled
by the horned diadem of Hathor,
whose kohl-rimmed eyes entice
a dazed wanderer dangerously low on water.

Wind carries gentle whispers to my ears,
sweet-nothings from a honey-tongued deity
adored by pagans who enslaved my ancestors
and lashed their backs with leather whips.

Yes, I am seduced, though I surrender nothing
to the heathen queen of myth and lore;
tonight, in my weakness and under her spell,
I may well love her in my dreams, body and heart.

But come dawn I'll disavow her charms,
even the warmth of her soft mouth,
the rich scent of her thick tresses,
and the delicate caress of her silken limbs…

The Copper Kingdom

Yearning spirit, bring your weariness
into a sublime realm of wonders
russet and red,
of sandstone sculpted by erosion
and curvaceous valleys shaped by winds.
Stir your senses in the natural embrace
of rock formations and sand dunes,
where the ibex roams and smelting camps linger,
where Kenite and Midianite moiled under blazing sun
for precious metal ore and ingot,
and cliff walls seduce with hues and musculature.
Come with your longing and troubles
into a welcoming oasis of silence and peace;
the ghosts of miners and slaves will greet you
amid the expanse of a burgundy-brown heaven.
Here will stale sorrows elapse, and fresh memories
enliven.

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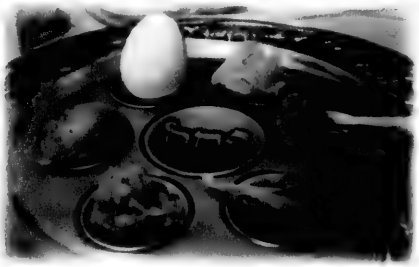
for a happy and healthy Passover.



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Aboard the 82

ADINA SIPERMAN

There are millions of buses, subways, trams and trains the world over, chugging along their routes as you read this. They all possess their own eccentricities to let you know which metropolis you are in. Israel's population count may pale in comparison to other cities' tens of millions. Its unique national religion may cause you to overlook it as homogeneous. And yet, despite these factors that may prompt you to discount the Israeli metro system, the six-shekel-and-sixty-agurot fare buys you a firsthand look at the beauty, anxiety and diversity that make up the State of Israel.

Take the 82 route that is currently driving from Tel Aviv to Petah Tikvah. The bus driver, though he has adorned his 45-hour-a-week corner in pictures of his grandchildren, would sooner bite your head off than let you hold up the line. The elderly Hungarian woman, decorated in jewels that she has been wearing since she smuggled them out of Budapest and into Palestine as a young girl, boards and is given a seat by the brooding, punk teenager, his eyes lined in black and his hair dyed purple.

There are the religious women – recently graduated, newly married and already with life in their wombs – who whisper the ancient psalms on their lips from station to station. The black-hatted, wool-swaddled rabbis edge to the back of the bus, fearful of grazing the provocatively dressed woman who they observe has been surgically enhanced.

The bus idles at Kikar Rabin to pick up university students with algorithms and equations running through their heads. Their cell phones ring with calls from friends who they met in India, offering ideas of startups and exit strategies. The bus stops at the Arlozorov Terminal to let on young soldiers, barely rid of their baby fat and unable to grow a full beard. They board the bus with overnight bags strapped to their backs, machine guns hanging at their sides and bags of chocolate milk dangling from their mouths. Though they just finished a two-week operation, witnessing the horrors of war, all they long for is a fresh pair of socks.

ROSTISLAV GLINSKY / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

The Eritreans get off at the corner store, ready to start a shift selling cucumbers and cigarettes. The Sudanese don their kitchen coats, preparing to roll sushi at an upscale restaurant on Rothschild Boulevard. The Filipinos wipe cottage cheese from the aged mouths of their elderly patients. All of them send money home and count the days on the calendar as their work visas quickly expire.

And entangled within this seemingly unrelated, motley crew of commuters is a single, common fear. No matter how engrossed the women are in their psalms and the teenagers in their iPhones and the students in their textbooks, they all keep their eyes on the door. They are looking for that man whose eyes are a little too black, beard a little too long and jacket bulging from beneath. When that type boards, everyone reaches for the button to get off at the next stop. ■

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After the Beginning of the End of Times

ADINA SIPERMAN

Chava Kedem straightened her sheitel and clasped her hands in her lap. She smoothed out her long corduroy skirt and tugged her sleeves to cover her wrists. The scrap of paper on which the number '3' had been printed was damp from her moist hands.

The waiting room was filled with people pacing up and down the linoleum floor, flipping through outdated magazines and tapping their feet against the chair legs. Careful not to appear rude, Chava refrained from staring at the others and instead, sat quietly and prayed.

The number on the electronic counter moved forward. Chava stood up and walked towards the frosted glass paneled, unmarked door. She entered the office wallpapered in file cabinets. Stacks of manila folders sat on windowsills, chairs and shelves. Behind the desk sat a balding man in a buttoned, beige shirt. His tie was loosened, his sleeves rolled up and his shirt's armpits stained with yellow moisture.

"Hello," she said quietly.

He looked up to find Chava waiting in the doorway.

"Please," looking down at the name on the file opened in front of him. "Chava. Come in, come in. Sit down,"he said with a smile, pointing to a chair upholstered in forest green, nubbly fabric.

He reached for his reading glasses that hung from a cord around his neck. For several minutes he scanned the pages, flipping back and forth and mmmhhhmmm-ing every so often.

"Alright. I see." He peered at her over the bifocals resting on the tip of his nose. "An interesting life you've lived, Chava. Full of virtue, piety and reverence for Hashem, blessed be His name." He flipped forward some pages. "You upheld the sanctity of marriage, and that of 'be fruitful and multiply,' bearing 10 Jewish children.

"Hmm, there seem to be some discrepancies in your file."

Chava sat straighter in her chair.

"According to my notes, you owned a sweater that was a blend of linen and wool, violating the law of shatnez as dictated in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Chava, I believe that you should have known better. That garment should have been taken to your Rebbe for inspection."

Chava's cheeks turned a rosy hue. She whispered, "Oh, sir. I can't even imagine which sweater…"

Not seeming to hear her, he made some notes in the file and flipped back several pages. "Ahhh, I see. When you were 26, you went on a trip with your husband to Croatia. When your car broke down, you spent one Shabbat in the town of Zlatar. That town was not surrounded by a piece of string or wire, as dictated by the law of Eruv, clearly outlined in the Gemara Tractate Eruvin. You carried a piece of tissue in your pocket, thus violating the aforementioned law."

Chava shifted in her seat and fidgeted with the scrap of paper she still held in her hand. "I assure you that had I known, I never would have done something so foolish," she said.

He peered over at her through his glasses and nodded. "Lastly, there were multiple violations of the fourth commandment, 'Remember the Shabbat day, to keep it holy' as decreed in the Book of Exodus. You unknowingly transgressed through a number of actions that are considered to be work. The lightbulb in your refrigerator was kept screwed in. Hence, you lit

There seem to be some discrepancies in your life

a flame every time you opened the door from sundown to sundown. As well, the slotted spoon that you designated for cholent violated the Shabbat commandment. The openings in the spoon make it a special utensil, constituting work."

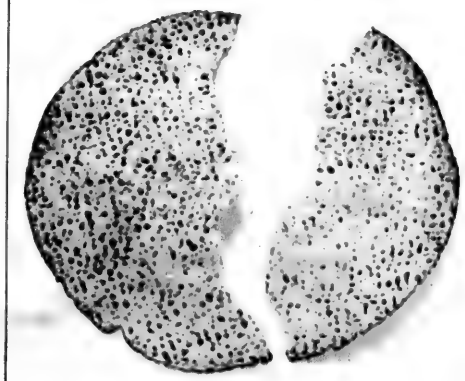
He flipped back to the front of the folder and turned towards an accounting calculator on his desk. As he clicked on the keys, the roll of paper fed through the slot and lengthened. "If we take your charity into account…oh and the time that you hosted the underprivileged orphans in your home…carry the one – "

"Sir, with all due respect," Chava said. "I don't mean to dispute the law or discredit Hashem's judgment, blessed be His –"

"One moment, please. You wouldn't want me to miscalculate," he said. He looked up at her with a smile. "Chava, don't look so worried. I'm just pulling your leg. Truth be told, it's policy to see that you live with the fear of Hashem, blessed be His name, in your heart." He laughed a hearty laugh and pointed at her. "I can see from the look on your face that you get a full pass for that one."

He leaned towards her and said in a hushed voice, "Between you and me, none of those 613 made the slightest bit of difference. You didn't need that sheitel, the separate plates or the rain water." He pointed upward. "He doesn't need rules to determine the purity of one's soul." His hand swatted the air, as if to disregard the foolery. "You were in before you were even born."

He stamped the front page of Chava's file with a large green stamp that read, "Pass." Pointing to a frosted glass paneled, unmarked door to his right, he said, "Chava, it was a pleasure to have met you. Just through that door. NEXT." ■



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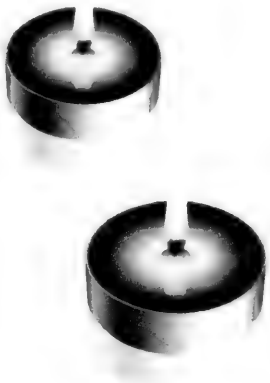
Regarding the pain of others

KENNETH SHERMAN



The sight of suffering
sews shut my lips.

I am like the donkey
that carried Isaac.

I feel the heat, the sharp stones,
the weight of wood and axe.

I know the knife's intent
and it leaves me speechless.

I hear the rustling of the ram,
his horns caught in the devious bush

and I think of God's partial angel
who does everything to help Abraham,

and does nothing
for the ram.

So near and yet so far

BENA SINGER

He was in the hospital.
Directly across the road
I would turn on the light
To show him where I was

How he wished he could
Share the summer breeze
To be beside me
And be caressed by the leaves

He is in another dimension
But his remains are here
I look at his stone
A tribute oh so dear

Today, a new born
Now has his name
When the rabbi called it out
I could see him smiling again

Life is a perpetual circle
An inextinguished candle
With angels hovering about
To lighten our sadness

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חג שמח!

Passover Memories

DOROTHY GOLDWATER

At the tender age of four I welcomed Elijah at our door
That act had a magic appeal making it seem very real.
When I reached the age of nine I drank four cups of wine
Which made me fall asleep- the seder became too deep.
When I reached my teens I knew what Passover really means
More than tasty victuals and strictly followed rituals.
Freedom as a birthright won through a nation's might
Wholly dedicated to one God symbolized by Moses' rod.
Unity and freedom achieved by a nation not aggrieved
By disbelief or disunity but a strong caring community.
Our truly miraculous rebirth fills us with joyful mirth
A nation in our own homeland is an achievement very grand.
Yet there is an ominous cloud and thunderclap so loud
Blocking the bright sunshine, threatening our land so fine
Again we must defend our name and survive the enemy's game
Of hatred and suppression and constant libelous denigration.
The words repeated each year recalling the suffering and fear
When the Egyptians were our foes and made us suffer woes
Until God came to our relief and gave us constant belief.
This must ring loudly in our ears quelling all our fears
With faith in our history and trust in its deep mystery
Yearly in all corners of the earth Jews sing out with mirth.
No matter how many seders I attend a magic aura they lend
To the guests who are there in the spirit of freedom we share.

Yom Kippur Day

MAX SKUY

'Tis Yom Kippur Day
'Tis a Holy Day
'Tis a day to pray
'Tis Yom Kippur Day

Jews know 'tis Yom Kippur Day
Jews know 'tis a Holy Day
Jews know 'tis a day to pray
Jews know 'tis Yom Kippur Day

Their sins upon the water they did cast
This judgment day they will fast
At *yizkor* they will shed a tear
This judgment day that they do fear

This evening service is over at last
The time has come to break the fast
Will they call a spade a spade
And stick to promises that they made

Regretfully as it may be
We will be barking up the wrong tree
To think that they will change their way
'Twill be the same next Yom Kippur Day

We wish you peace and joy at Passover.

Torkin Manes

Happy Passover

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Hosanna Johanna Hosanna to Scarlett Johannson, in adoration

JOSEPH CURRY

(And with due apologies to the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, chivalrous Prime Minister of Canada, to whom panegyrics are due for his peerless fealty to Zion. Given the graces of my Muse, however, I trust he will – if not countenance – at the very least bemusedly suffer my dalliance.)

'Some moralist or mythological poet
Compares the solitary soul to a swan;
I am satisfied with that ...'
William Butler Yeats, Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen.

'... O but how tautological of me!
Why even broach her brain?
Like the man said:
"There ain't nothin' like a dame!'"

'To you he comes, Ladies and Gentlemen!
Live! From Paradiso with swing!
Yes, him:
The Lean Lark, the Boney Baritone,
The Voice!

'... And if implored to opine on her design,
Tota dilecta would do!
That's Latin don'tcha' know!
Means "all lovely", from tresses to toes;
(Polished orange per chance ... to dream?)
And how might I sing of that smile?!
Of that face?! – Nay, pardon moi: "visage"!
So utterly Botticelli.

'Now let us recall, kind Cats and Dolls,
My erstwhile predilection for carnalogical ruptures;
My venal – albeit ever svelte – underbelly;
Say that single year of heathen
Tumultuousness, married to Miss Abyss!
Insufferable was I.
But this is one joint, Jack, 'xpects more of its troubadours!

Of her heart I thereby sing!
Of her lioness heart!
Of Scarlett cœur de lionne!
Of Scarlett of the Scarlet Letter Z –
Emblazoned with aplomb!

'Hosanna Johanna Hosanna!
Hosanna Johanna Hosanna!

A shot heard round the Heavens that was!
Right round, then down;
Right down, then twixt;
Right betwixt the eyes!
Take that Oxsham! ...
Travesty International! ...
Human Rights Schlock! ...
And so on ad ... Palestineam!

'Armada Loca beware! There's a new Vestal Fair!

'Now it's likely they'll set out – flanked, no doubt,
By the trolls of Tinsel Town,
And the tramps:
"To the brocades, girlfriends, to the brocades"!
(Is it any wonder I went with The Gipper?!)

'But naught will come of this demimonde;
De ces tristes demimondistes
S' engager pour les damnés de
La terreur!
(Say! Not bad for a boy from Hoboken, huh?)
They've a run in their fatigues,
They do, this Nip 'n Tuck Brigade;
Each fanny reconfigured, a portrait of Che.

Of her heart I thereby sing!
Of her lioness heart!
Of Scarlett cœur de lionne!
Of Scarlett of the Scarlet Letter Z –
Emblazoned with aplomb!
'Hosanna Johanna Hosanna!
Hosanna Johanna Hosanna!

Sanguine were our songs
When America was young.
But then,
Mine was the Greatest Generation;
And McCarthyites were on the Right;
And even college boys knew right from wrong;
Yes, sanguine were our songs –
Sanguine our Songbook!
(Many a Chosen were its authors after all).

'Zev's boys at Emma's harbour did alight,
To herald the winsome news: "Jews
Fight for the Right to Fight"!
And we did rally to that flag,
To that flag as gorgeous as Ol' Glory!

'Then the man who would be Cyrus,
Saul he seemed!
True, for only a lark –
By dint of Muslim treachery;
And the Arabistry, of Foggy-Bottom.
But enough to stay the Righteous Hand Davidian,
Raised o'er Hagar's hydra.
Yet we did praise HASHEM and help pass the ammunition!

Yes, sanguine were our songs.

But never so sanguine as Scarlett;
Never so scarlet as Scarlett –
As scarlet as Scarlett who stands alone!

'Of her heart I thereby sing!
Of her lioness heart!
Of Scarlett cœur de lionne!
Of Scarlett of the Scarlet Letter Z –
Emblazoned with aplomb!

'Hosanna Johanna Hosanna!
Hosanna Johanna Hosanna'!

And lo! The crescendo,
Ere the record doth spin to a close!
And all the Heavenly Hosts applaud –
Yea! Unto him a soaring ovation:

'Beloved Rake!
Immortal Troubadour!
Sing forever more'!

And behold! Unto her a firmament afire!
And all the Heavenly Hosts, lilting, align
To compose the Ultimate Letter.
The Ultimate Letter to honour this beauteous creature!
Truly, so fair; truly, truly, so rare.

As rare as the blackest swan –
The sinuous bridal-black Swan of Swans,
Whom the azure waters of Eden leave lithe
Upon their gentle ripples.
Lithe and impervious,
To far yon Acheron's nether mouth, whence spews the ultimata.

Now hark! Unto her the lasting exultation,
In cadence d'Oc:
'Lustrous Lady! Incarnate Song!
Forever your cœur de lionne'!

Now hush! The Voice, off stage (cadence Yankee-doodley-fun):
'Say Bartender!
If you please ... A Whiskey-SodaStream ...
I mean,
What's a boy-singer gotta do to get a drink around here anyhows'?!

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The Lonely God Of Faith

HAROLD PUPKO

A mischievous student once tried to tie the Potzker Rebbe up in mental knots.

"Rebbe, can you explain everything with one word?" he asked.

"Everything?" replied the Rebbe, scratching his chin quizzically.

Sensing that he had the Rebbe on the ropes, the student smugly replied with the Hebrew word for everything: "*Hakol*."

"*Havel*," responded the Rebbe with a compassionate grin. "You recite the answer to your question every morning in your prayers."

Deflated by an awareness of the impertinence that permeated his impermanence, the student humbly sought redemption in the Rebbe's eyes.

"I see," replied the student. "You are saying that everything is *havel*, or vanity, as taught in the second verse of Ecclesiastes, 'Vanity upon vanities, everything is vanity.'"

The Rebbe responded: "I prefer to translate the word *havel* as breath, so the teaching of Ecclesiastes is: 'Unappreciated breath in, upon unnoticed breath out, everything can be understood through the metaphor of breath.'

"But, to fully comprehend the lesson that you seek, turn to the book of Genesis. There, you will find an answer to your question in the story of Havel, or Abel as he is known in English literature.

"Come, meet me in the text."

And so, the Potzker began his teaching:

Adam acquired intimate knowledge of Eve, his wife, and together, they conceived the future. Nine months later, Eve gave birth to a boy.

And Eve exclaimed: "I have acquired a little man, a god for me." And so she named him Cain, a play on the word canaa, to acquire, for up until that point, she had owned nothing beyond her own skin.

Immediately following Cain's birth, Eve delivered another son. During that difficult and painful process, Eve feared that she might never again own another breath, so she named that son Breath, or Abel, to remind herself never to procreate again.

Cain became a farmer and Abel became a shepherd.

One day, when her children had reached the age of bar mitzvah and she thought that they were old enough to understand, Eve taught her sons about the Creator of All, and how He had exiled their parents from Paradise because of a simple misunderstanding.

Cain and Abel were frightened by the tale, so, that very day, they sought to appease the Creator. Cain presented before Him an offering of the finest vegan treats he could find, while Abel presented the fattest of his lambs.

And a lightning bolt from the heavens struck the lambs. And even Cain the vegan was entranced by the delightful smell of roasted lamb.

And Cain and Abel waited for the heavens to send down a lightning bolt to roast the vegetables.

And they waited.

And waited.

And waited.

And Cain's face fell, and was further contorted by sadness and anger. Abel, being attuned to his brother's emotions in the manner that only twins are capable of, gave Cain a reassuring brotherly hug, and silently returned to the fields to tend to his flock.

And the Creator revealed Himself to Cain and said:

"Why so serious? Do you really think that you can control Me with vegetables? I understand your hope that, through prayers and sacrifices, I will agree to grant your wishes. But I have the right to refuse to accept those requests, and sometimes, if you search within those moments that disappoint, you will find valuable lessons. *Shema*, pay attention, for the answers to your prayers may come from you listening to yourself. Today's lesson is that you are created in My image. We both have the capacity for freedom of choice. If your choice is good, your spirit will be lifted up.

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

But beware, time judges choices, for what may initially appear to be good choices may ultimately miss their mark. The consequences of mistakes are like predators, lying in wait for an opening, ready to pounce at you. But I, Creator of All, have faith that, should your mistakes come back to bite you, that you can prevail. You have my word, for I am God."

Cain, somewhat confused by the Creator's muddled teachings, focussed on His closing words. Cain believed that He was God, just as his mother had taught him, so he went out to the fields to seek reassurance from his brother.

"Who is God?" Cain asked Abel.

Abel's understanding of God's essence was gained through the warm silence that he experienced while tending to his flock while out in the green pastures. Abel tried to convey that understanding to his brother by silently mouthing the letter Aleph.

Silence collided with fury.

"What is the name of God?" pressed Cain angrily.

Abel, knowing that his brother enjoyed

riddles, replied: "If you say His name, He disappears."

The only thing that disappeared was Cain's self-control. He grabbed Abel by the throat, hoping to extract the name. All Cain managed to do was to squeeze the last breath out of his brother. Abel lay motionless at Cain's feet, which only infuriated Cain further.

"First you play the riddler, and now the joker? Enough!" he screamed at Abel.

God reappeared to Cain, and asked: "Where is the breath of your brother?"

At that moment, Cain became aware that Abel had ceased breathing, and was not just feigning sleep. Cain was struck by the cold silence of his brother's body.

"How should I know where his breath is? I am just a kid," replied Cain. "Mother taught us that You breathed the breath of life into our father and into each of us, so You are the keeper of breath. Or are you saying that I am the keeper of Abel's breath? Am I my brother's keeper?"

Panicking over that possibility, Cain grabbed Abel's staff and poked at his brother repeatedly, hoping to restore breath to Abel, and thereby avoid angering the temperamental God that his mother had warned him about. He poked and he poked, more forcefully each time, with strength that he did not know he had, until blood poured forth.

God's face fell.

Shattered by His failure to protect the only human being with whom He had found the beginnings of true companionship, God struggled to regain His bearings. Contemplating His own reflection in the waters of the oceans, God saw, within His own eyes, an expression that He had only previously seen in humans: the look of shame.

God thought to Himself, "No man can see this face and live."

Turning to Cain, He struggled to find words to express his distress.

"What have you done? The Earth cries, having tasted the blood of your brother. You have cursed yourself, for she will no longer share her strength with you because of your weakness. As for us, I must hide My face from you. You are on your own now. Go to the land of Nod and accept your fate as an exiled son descended from exiled parents, a stranger, forever wandering among the others."

Cain could not believe his ears.

"The others? The only humans left in the world are my parents and I. What are you talking about?"

God explained.

Continued on next page

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The Lonely God of Faith

Continued from previous page

"When I decided to create humanity, I said to Earth, come, let us marry, and let us create offspring. Come, let us make man. You provide the materials, and I will provide the spirit, and through humanity, we shall fulfill our potential for good. For I am a king without servants, and you are a queen without subjects.

"Earth was reluctant at first, but I prevailed in persuading her to share My vision, and we joyously created the rainbow as a symbolic reminder of that moment. She provided the water, and I, the light. We then proceeded to create preliminary versions of hominins, such as the Neanderthals, ironing out the kinks along the way. We eventually created your family, with the hope that you people would be different than the others and demonstrate a capacity to rejoice in life with both Myself and Earth. But only Abel developed that ability, and now, he no longer connects me to Earth. Perhaps Earth was right all along. Perhaps creating mankind was a mistake. Perhaps I should destroy humanity now."

Cain, now fully aware of his own mortality, found himself caught between the possibility of meeting his end through an act of despair by the Creator of Destruction, and the possibility of potentially becoming the victim of a bloodthirsty xenophobic mob in Nod.

A sickly dread gave way to a revelation.

Cain chose to reflect God's earlier lesson back to Him in order to save his own neck.

"My punishment in being unable to comfort You in Your pain is more than I can bear. But was it not You who taught me that, when mistakes come back to bite, one can prevail? Humans will eventually turn out as You designed them, and choose to live up to their potential for good. You have to have faith in freedom of choice. You have no choice."

God found a temporary refuge from His shame in Cain's words, but could not reverse Cain's destiny as a wanderer. Realizing that Cain's life was vulnerable to predation by the inhabitants of Nod, the Creator of All decided to protect Cain.

First, He provided Cain with a canine companion, the world's first service dog, tasked with the job of protecting its master. Understanding that those who hate look through their victims until all they see are objects, God took light left over from the first day of Creation and concentrated that light to rest within a twinkle in the eyes of Cain and his dog. In doing so, He hoped that whoever would look into those eyes with a cold-hearted intent to harm would feel the warmth of the divine, and have no choice but to exercise self-restraint.

And so, Cain and his dog Levi spent their days melting hearts in the land of Nod, spectacularly surviving through the protective powers of specular highlights.

Many years passed, and God saw that mankind continued to deviate from the path that He had planned for it. He maintained His faith in man's potential to freely choose the path of moral evolution, but that faith was eroded daily by the forces of reality.

Nevertheless, God patiently waited.

And waited.

And waited.

And waited.

And just as He, in the depths of despair, was ready to wash the planet of all earthly inhabitants, God noticed Noah, an individual who stood out from all the others.

And God said to Noah: "For every outside, there is an inside. You are alone in the world, and so am I. Come, let us be on the inside together, and let us repair the world, for every inside requires an outside. Are you on board with me?"

Noah found himself lost in the shadow of God's tower of babble.

Confused and humbled by God's revelation, Noah responded with the profound power of simplicity.

"To life" he replied, raising a glass of wine skyward.

And so, God, desperate to reboot His vision of a unified humanity, put his faith in Noah and his family.

However, Noah's descendants, devoid of compassion for God and His utopian vision, found comfort in their own passions.

And, through the ensuing loneliness, God awakened to mankind's limitations in appreciating the unity of His Oneness and His Noneness.

But He never lost His faith.

Continued on page 44

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Downsizing

MARGIE GOLICK

At my time of life it isn't surprising-
A theme that's recurrent-the need for downsizing
The meaning was once one to which I relate
It meant slimming and trading Size 12 for Size 8
But now it's a question of giving up greed
Letting go of those treasures I really don't need

While watching a DVD I suddenly pause it
To reflect on the garments that hang in my closet.
The closet is packed with trousers and skirts
And blouses and belts and all kinds of shirts:

Cotton, acrylic, polyester and knits
They're faded and worn but I love them to bits.
I know perfectly well there is way too much stuff
But what to get rid of...you've got to be tough!

Out with the out of style, forego the fads
Farewell fur collars and big shoulder pads
And T-shirts with logos. So long to the trends
But wait! You can't turn your back on old friends

Here's a gown to give away.
It's looking pretty shabby
But that dress looked great on Maggie Smith -
Last night on *Downton Abbey*

I fondly remember my grandson's bar mitzvah
And cherished the outfit I wore
I'm saving it still for another occasion
And now he just turned 24

There are too many glasses and goblets and mugs
And sandals and sneakers and three pairs of Uggs
And catalogues, magazines piled on the floor
And on every spare surface - tchotchkes galore

From the very first moment I get out of bed
A continuous dialogue speaks in my head
There's my good self who strives for a life without clutter
And the bad guy who hoards stuff like some kind of nutter

"Forty-two scarves - I really don't need them"
"They're doing no harm - you don't have to feed them"
"Twenty-three house plants. Why do I breed them?"
"They aren't any bother. You don't have to weed them"
"Hundreds of books. It's time that I freed them"
"They look nice on the shelf and you don't have to read them"

Soon I'll be mad as Hamlet's Ophelia
All cause of too many memorabilia

Margie Golick, Ph.D. is the author of The Life and Rhymes of a Jewish Mother, *and* Let There Be Light Verse (Stories from Genesis in Rhyme).

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Leah's Yellow Dress

JULIE BERGMAN

"My dress!" Leah cried. "What are you doing with my dress?"

Leah's mother placed the folded dress into a box. "This dress is too small for you," she said. "It's time to give it away."

Leah grabbed the dress and hugged it to her chest. "But it's my favourite dress!" she exclaimed. "Auntie Molly gave it to me for my birthday."

Leah's dress was bright yellow. Tiny white polka dots decorated the fabric. A lace sash tied around the waist. It was beautiful with a sparkly, heart-shaped pin on the collar. Leah had placed the pin there herself.

"Our synagogue is collecting clothing and toys for Jewish families in our community," Leah's mother explained.

"Why?" asked Leah.

"Because there are lots of families who do not have as much as we do," her mother replied. "Helping others is called charity. In Hebrew, we say tzedakah."

"Tzedakah," Leah repeated.

"Don't you think it would be nice to give tzedakah and share your dress with another little Jewish girl?" Her mother asked. "A girl who isn't as lucky as you to have such nice clothes?"

Leah nodded. She handed the dress back to her mother.

The next day, Leah and her mother delivered the boxes. The synagogue was full of activity.

Leah spotted Sophia from across the room. Sophia was a new girl in her class. She moved from Russia a few weeks ago. Sophia was small and quiet. She spoke little English.

"Sophia," Leah shouted.

Sophia looked at Leah. Her eyes widened and she quickly turned away.

Leah frowned. "I guess she didn't hear me," she said.

A few days later, Leah arrived early to school. She played in the playground while waiting for the morning bell to ring. From the top of the slide, Leah saw Sophia skip into the yard. She looked so happy.

I wonder why Sophia's smile is so big today, thought Leah.

Then Leah noticed.

Sophia wore a bright yellow dress. Tiny white polka dots decorated the fabric. A lace sash tied around the waist. It was beautiful with a sparkly, heart-shaped pin on the collar.

"My dress," Leah mumbled. "She's wearing my dress. Sophia wasn't at the synagogue to give tzedakah; Sophia was there to get tzedakah."

Leah watched as Sophia held the bottom of the dress and twirled around and around. She held her head high and danced like a graceful ballerina. Leah felt proud. She knew that her dress made Sophia feel wonderful.

That evening, Auntie Molly came to visit. As usual, she brought Leah a present - a soft, cuddly stuffed bear.

"Auntie Molly?" Leah asked. "Why do you always do such nice things for me?"

"Because I love you," Auntie Molly answered. "You're my family. Don't you do nice things for your family?"

"I help Mommy set the table for Shabbat," Leah said.

"That's a nice thing to do," Auntie Molly answered. "Don't you feel good when you do nice things for other people too?"

Leah thought about Sophia. "Like giving tzedakah?" she asked. "Like helping another Jewish girl who doesn't have as much as me?"

"Exactly," Auntie Molly said. "Jews all over the world are like one big family. You already know that loving your family makes you feel special. Well, caring for Jews everywhere makes you feel extra special."

Leah smiled. Auntie Molly was right. Today, she did feel extra special.

Leah went to her room and gathered a box full of stuffed animals and games. The next day, she and her mother delivered the toys to the synagogue. Auntie Molly said it was OK for Leah to donate her new bear, but Leah had other plans for that toy.

A few days later, Leah arrived early to school. She played in the playground while waiting for the morning bell to ring. From the top of the slide, Leah saw Sophia. She swooped down and ran over to her.

"Hi Sophia," Leah said, holding out the soft, cuddly stuffed bear. "I have a present for you."

"For me?" Sophia asked. "Why?"

"Because this bear needs a new home," Leah said. "You just moved to this country. You now have a new home! Besides, you and I are like family. Don't you do nice things for your family?"

"Thank you," Sophia said, hugging the bear. "In Russian, we say spasiba."

"*Spasiba*," Leah repeated.

Leah smiled. Sophia smiled too. Today, they both felt extra special. ■

The Timeless Bond *A tribute to my mother*

DORIS WALSH

My grandmother's heavy brass candlesticks take me back in time to the very early 1900s. Somewhere in Eastern Russia the houses resemble wooden shacks lining the unpaved roads

It is winter and snow covers the surrounding grounds .

The Sabbath is approaching.

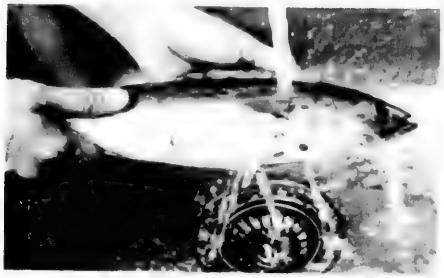
It has been a long hard day but the evening will be warm inside the larger dining area.The table is covered over by a spotless white tablecloth. A large pot of flowers brought in by a traveling florist brightens the room. On the table sits a braided bread, a salt shaker, an empty wine cup and three large heavy candlesticks supporting three yellow candles. In my mind's eye she is young, perhaps newly wed. She is wearing a simple white blouse and a colourful blue skirt. Her beloved returns earlier than usual to join her.

The sun is just nestling into its resting place for the evening and its silvery companion is ready to show her luminous face. Time is passing and the movement beneath her feet is imperceptible. The ritual of lighting the candles begins as she dons her headscarf .

Fast forward to 2014.

The surroundings are utterly different but the candlesticks are the same ones carried over many miles to sit on my Sabbath table in Montreal. They have been arranged side by side with loving hands, I await sunset. I cover my head, light the candles and shield my eyes from the rising flames. These are sacred seconds when I have the ear of the Almighty to express gratitude or plead for assistance. The window of spiritual moments brings me extreme peace and bestows empowerment as a new Sabbath is ushered in .

Amen. ■



Cleaning fish

KENNETH SHERMAN

Mrs. Ellis, survivor, the blue numerals
stitched on your forearm,
drawing my eyes
to where they shouldn't stare.

You'd sit at the cedar picnic table
with your nephew's morning catch
the corrugated shears to clip fins,
the thin blade

you ran along white bellies,
the gentle lessons
you provided
on anatomy.

"This, the liver. This,
the heart." Green and red
they tumbled out
like gleaming jewels.

I recall your hand
cradling a diaphanous
sack
of pinkish pearls.

"The mamma's eggs," you said
holding them to the raw August light.
Squinting,
you let out a shrill laugh.

Were you mad,
I sometimes wondered,
thinking of where
you had been.

In the grey galvanized
pail
the floating scales
and fillets

the astonished bass heads
gaping
on newspaper
that had yellowed.

Ner tamid

**"A lamp from the Lord
is the soul of man"
-Proverbs 20:27-**

GEORGE BERNSTEIN

**Neshamah, the soul's
eternal light, divine
spark of the Shchinah
flaming our holiness
Neshamah, the body's borrowed Kedushah
As the Celestial Gates
of Neilah slowly close
Neshamah sends a messenger
to plead
before the Heavenly Tribunal
Neshamah planted at
birth, the seed
blossoming into our
first cry
With
the
sigh
of a
spent leaf
Spirals
down
with our
last
breath
Ascending
through
the galaxies
to
Him
Returning
as the Mashiach's
finger touches
the
Olive Mount
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eternal
as
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Photo of a Woman in the Prague Jewish Museum

DOROTHY GLICK

It is you who brings me now
beyond the surface of pages
to what is no longer a story.

There you are bedded
in this case of wood and glass,
your face fervent and full

with the same passion for life –
to be, to love, to give over, to embrace
that stirs in every one

eager to speak the everyday cares
(cradling, cleaning, cooking) in a language
no more extraordinary than "tomorrow."

I wish there was an answer to give you –
something that makes sense while waiting
for those no longer expected.

It has been decades now
since you were restored
to this place, to another life

and who will not stay– not long enough
to bury those monstrous deeds
deep in the turnings of memories.

A Bel Air Rabbi's '70s Lament

RONALD CHARLES EPSTEIN

An old Bel Air rabbi named Gayn
wailed "My congregation's a pain!
They're all nouveau riche!
One son of a biche
Just asked me to bless his cocaine!"

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Operation Passover 1985

MASHA RUTITSKY

There are extraordinary events in our lives that stay with us forever and you remember the details as if they happened yesterday. It so happens that the events of Passover 1985 are still quite vivid and I remember them very well.

The weather in Toronto that spring was still mostly cool, with some sunny days. But the news from the Soviet Union started hinting that the political thaw began: Mikhail Gorbachev came to power.

My family and I had not seen my elder sister for about 15 years. I was lucky to leave Lithuania for Israel in 1973, then Canada in 1977, but my sister lived with her family in the city of Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, so far away from us.

Rare phonecalls and letters, screened by the KGB, were the only ways of communication between us. Imagine how much we were missing each other, but the opportunities to reunite were quite slim, they had no chance to emigrate.

In my wildest dreams I could not predict what kind of adventure was waiting for me at that time of the year, a real Passover miracle.

Passover was fast approaching. Jews around the world were getting ready to celebrate this very special and meaningful holiday. Little did I know that instead of sitting at the seder table with my family and friends in Toronto, my aging mother and I, would be walking the streets of Bucharest and Budapest, searching for the tour group from USSR (Alma-Ata), hopefully with my sister in it. Both East European countries were Soviet satellites then, run and controlled by KGB.

It all started with the telegram that we received from my sister, which included only the date of the group's arrival to Bucharest and some number. First of all, her arrival was due in less than a week, and second of all, what was the number for? Being familiar with the Russian conspiracy, we assumed that it meant the tourist group number.

We both needed new passports, as ours had expired. It takes a week or more to make new ones, so our travel seemed unlikely. I was determined to make it happen for my mother and me. I took the telegram, our documents and went downtown to the office to get new passports. They said the telegram worked only in extreme situations, not ours. I explained the whole situation and told them if they refuse, it would be like a death verdict, never to see our relative again. It worked! They promised to make passports ready for pick-up on the day we were going to the airport. We expressed our deepest appreciation.

With the help of our friends we booked our flight with Lufthansa via Frankfurt, to Bucharest. The price was astronomical, because we were flying in two days! We had no idea or information about the city, or country, or hotel; nothing.

People at my work were also supportive in everything, even financially, and gave good advice to take with us a few cartons of American cigarettes, like Camel, from

the duty free, as a "currency." These were real miracle makers for us there, perfect door openers for needed information!

We had just one day for packing our own clothes and various gifts for my sister. The American dollars and Visa credit card were our valuables, added to precious Canadian passports. We left my eight-year-old daughter with my twin sister.

And so, as the Jewish people were sitting at the seder tables, we were sitting in our seats on a transatlantic flight to Europe, dreaming about our long awaited meeting with my sister. It was so unpredictable what was waiting for us there. And we were absolutely right to fear all kinds of unusual situations, KGB scrutiny and threats.

We endured both flights pretty well, and finally arrived at the International Hotel in Bucharest in the evening. We needed a good rest, as we had no idea what to expect the next day.

The girls at reception could speak English, but were not allowed to give any information to us. I asked what hotels Russian groups were likely to stay at but to no avail. Ah, here I remembered about the cigarettes in my purse, so I offered one pack of Camels to the girl, she smiled and told me the name of the hotel, but no address; another pack was used for that. Encouraged, we started our journey in this unknown city.

Continued on page 48

Mazel Tov to the new and exciting CJN. We wish all of our friends, family and community a Happy Passover.

Julia and Henry Koschitzky

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The Lonely God Of Faith

Continued from page B38

The Rebbe paused, and the student noticed a film of salty tears covering the spots of light that guarded the pupils of his teacher's eyes, pupils that served as portals to the Rebbe's inner space.

And within the blackness of those pupils, the student caught a glimpse of the darkness of outer space.

And within that darkness, for the briefest of moments, the student could have sworn that he saw the face of God.

It seemed like an eternity before his next breath proved him wrong.

And the student understood.

Hakol havel. ■

The Guest

JAN CSILLAG

The light seeps in unannounced
under the edge of the blind
like a sliver of fire or
the glint off a sword.
Just a tiny glimmer of morning.

The light arrives uninvited
through the bevel of the window
like an unruly guest
all drunken with joy.
Just a small shimmer of hope for the day.

The Shabbos candlelight crashes
into the room
unabashed and boldly
like thunderous applause at a concert.
Just a little brilliance arriving this way.

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Remember me

NORMA BARKIN

I am the face of innocence defiled,
By criminal design a chosen child,
That Satan's messengers condemned to flame,
Before I learned to sing or write my name.

Delivered through their diabolic door,
I was but one. There were a million more.
Then from that well of promise think to mourn
The millions who will ever be unborn.

When history's grim numbers you recall,
Do not forget the saddest count of all,
Each pure and shining heart, each budding mind,
Abandoned by inhuman humankind.

My life unmarked, my story left untold,
Denied the gifts of love and growing old,
Abruptly severed from the world, unblessed,
I cannot sleep.
I was not laid to rest.

A life redeemed

HOWARD KURLANDSKI

Blithely skipping amongst the trees,
A child caresses the morning breeze.
Blissfully enveloping the joys of life
Sheltered from the darkness of ill-fated strife.

These innocent times, I do recall
Of skipping stones and bouncing ball
But then times turn -a child grows to man
Life streaming onward, not according to plan.
An unexpected loss tears out a moanful moan
Sagging under the undulating weight of that groanful groan.

But belief in God gives a second chance
A brand new start, a new romance
I remember the old, but embrace the new
A life reborn, I cannot eschew.
Like slaves in Egypt, brought from darkness to light
Redeemed and salvaged from their perilous plight.
Statuesque, smiling eyes, sweet like a dove
Sustains that innocence of an enduring love.

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The Doll

RUTH SHEPS

She tried to shoo me away from the front door, or more to the point, from the 40 below (but dry) air outside. I wouldn't be shooed though. I stuck like an appendage to my mother as she carried the delivery briskly through the spartan, glacial living room and into the toasty kitchen. The return address on the box said that it was mailed by my uncle in Israel on Oct. 28, 1952, which was at that time a wild and lawless frontier where he, my aunt and my cousin ended up. And here it was on our kitchen table in Winnipeg, a mere three months later.

The heavy grey haze of haunting memories and pain that hovered always in our home lifted for the moment, held in suspended animation while anticipation danced in the air.

The box was wrapped in thin brown paper that my mother carefully removed while I waited an eternity, breathless and wide-eyed. Finally the lid came up and away to reveal a hard molded plastic doll. She had moveable arms and legs and her hard molded plastic hair was the same honey brown colour as the rest of her naked body. My mother handed her to me, my first and only doll, and I took her and cradled her in my arms, my mouth frozen in an expression of open amazement.

> *My mother handed her to me, my first and only doll*

I was stoic about the long, wide crack in her head. After all she had just journeyed from a war zone so I knew she was lucky to be alive at all.

Just as I knew, and could never forget, that my mother and father were lucky to be alive at all. "There, but for the grace of God go I," was a resounding refrain inside my four-year-old head. I was, for one surreal moment, unreservedly thrilled, feeling the happiness of childhood and noticing at the same time the novelty of that feeling, knowing that it didn't belong entirely to me, that just as the doll was a gift to me, my delight was a gift to my mother. She could no more feel her own joy in the wake of her freakish encounter with cruelty than my doll could feel the crack in her head.

I swaddled my doll in blankets and covered her head with a knit cap. When spring arrived I put her in a doll carriage that somehow materialized, wore my best dress with the box pleats, my white Mary Janes with white knee socks, and accessorized tastefully with a satin bow in my hair and trademark Band-Aid on my left knee. How proud I felt parading down Selkirk Avenue pushing my doll in her carriage, she with a cap over her fractured skull and I with a Band-Aid over my imaginary scratch. Together we were the picture of the walking wounded. ■

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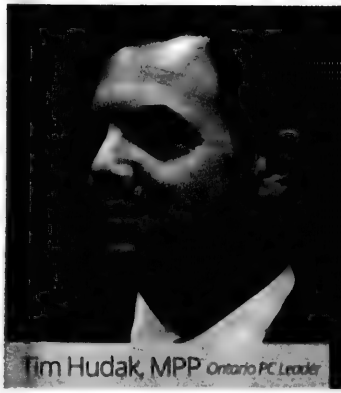

On Behalf of the Ontario PC Caucus,
Please Accept My Best Wishes
for a Blessed Passover.

חג כשר ושמח

Tim Hudak, MPP Ontario PC Leader

Above & Below:

The post-shabbat clean-up

BARBIE DUKES

In the hot sink
her gloved fingers
massaged yesterday's
cholent pot

while the liturgical music
from her youth
massaged yesterday's
crusted tears.

And the notes arched
her back,
eyes close
splashing fresh tears
into the murky water.

Haunting chants
chaotic chorus
spherical songs
ancestral *shoresh*.

Notes descend
deep into pain,
transforms, then climbs
now, here, sublime.

Singing soul
music, faith
soaring spirit
integrate.

Creation sings
to its Creator,
melodies map
both worlds embrace her.

Dream of Place

watching the demolition of what was a synagogue

DOROTHY GLICK

Seeming unmoved
yet complicit,
their fingers locked in grooves of the wire fence
surrounding the demolition,
they watch their history crushed again
into failing memories;
with forced indifference they shrug,
"that's life"

Someone has made a deal.

There are other landmarks to keep.

Every day
tractors with long-necked, thick-toothed heads
scavenge the lot, digging and spilling,
reckless and hungry to devour
any resemblance, any sentiment

reduce everything to gravel and sand

so that no brick remains or stained glass
of sky-high sanctuary windows,
not a step or splinter of a door
to altar, or reception hall

nothing to linger over,
nothing to propel them back to review
the immigrant climb they'd journeyed far
to settle here.

A certain madness in that shrug
again a letting go a dream
a place they had made their own

As families gather around the seder table to share the story of the Exodus – from generation to generation – let us reflect on the journey from slavery to freedom, and celebrate the peace we enjoy and cherish as Canadians.

On behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada and our Parliamentary caucus, my family and I extend our very best wishes on this Passover.
Chag Pesach Sameach!

חג פסח שמח

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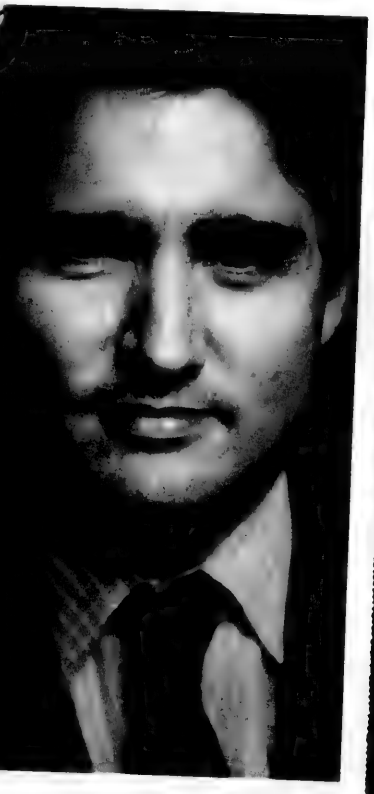

Operation Passover

Continued from page 43

As we came out to the street and started walking to take a bus or taxi, we thought that a time machine threw us back 40 years, so poor, grey and shabby the city looked. We took a bus, that could take us there, but after a short ride, we got off that rattling box. After a very long, difficult walk, after many enquiries, by late afternoon we approached this dungeon-like hotel.

Inside, we asked about the group from Alma-Ata, but again, we got no information. So, another pack of Camels, this magic key, helped us to start the conversation. The receptionist confirmed that the group did arrive. Another Camels helped to open the book with names of the people in the group, but to our horror, the woman said that my sister's name was not there. We were petrified. Did we make a trip for nothing? Was it true she was not there, that she did not arrive? I told my mother that I did not believe the clerk until I saw the book with my own eyes. Using some chutzpah I asked her to show me the list of names, but she refused. Again I had to force her to be nice and show me the list by giving her a double portion of Camels. Finally, she opened the book with names and I saw what I really wanted to see: My sister's name was squeezed in between the lines, most likely added later. Thank God! She was in town and we would see her!

> *All of a sudden, another man entered angrily into the room*

At that moment an odd man approached us and inquired what we were doing there. So we told him that we wanted to meet somebody from the group. We understood right away he was a KGB agent. He did not allow us to stay in the building, so we waited outside. The group was touring the city and was coming later for dinner.

Some time passed, it became dark, and finally, the tour bus pulled in. People started coming out, we held our breath. Almost at the end, she came out. Yes, it was my sister that we had not seen for over 15 years. I quietly called her by name once, no reaction, then for the second time, and as she turned around and saw us, she smiled in disbelief. She did not immediately grasp that we were standing there for her.

After her dinner she approached us and took us up to her room secretly. First thing we did was to give her all the gifts we had brought her which she hastily hid in her luggage. After hugs and kisses, mixed with happy tears and emotions, we had our lengthy conversation. All of a sudden, another man entered angrily into the room and asked us who we were. My sister naively answered that her mother and sister from Canada came to visit her. You should have seen this raging KGB bull! He started screaming with threats that if he noticed "something", (meaning "suspicious,") he would send her by plane directly to Moscow! We looked at him calmly, with some disdain, but without any confrontation, we worried for my sister. It was getting late and was time for us to leave. We asked her about plans for the next day and left the hotel.

It was pitch dark outside, complete blackout, like during the wartime. No lights, no ads, nothing; just thick, enveloping darkness. We were worried, how would we get back to our hotel now? The taxis were impossible to get, they were all operating only on special orders. My mother and I felt desperate and scared in this forlorn and miserable city. We were standing for a full hour in this thick darkness, two lonely women, at the main intersection, praying to God, that He would help us get safely to our hotel. Not a single human soul was seen on the streets.

All of a sudden, the tall figure of a policeman appeared close to us. I rushed to him with the speed of lightning and explained our situation. We, Canadian tourists, needed to get to our hotel and asked for his help to get us a taxi. He understood my desperate request, took out his walkie-talkie and ordered a special taxi for us, which arrived in two minutes. We were saved, our prayers were answered! It was a miracle! Thank you, God!

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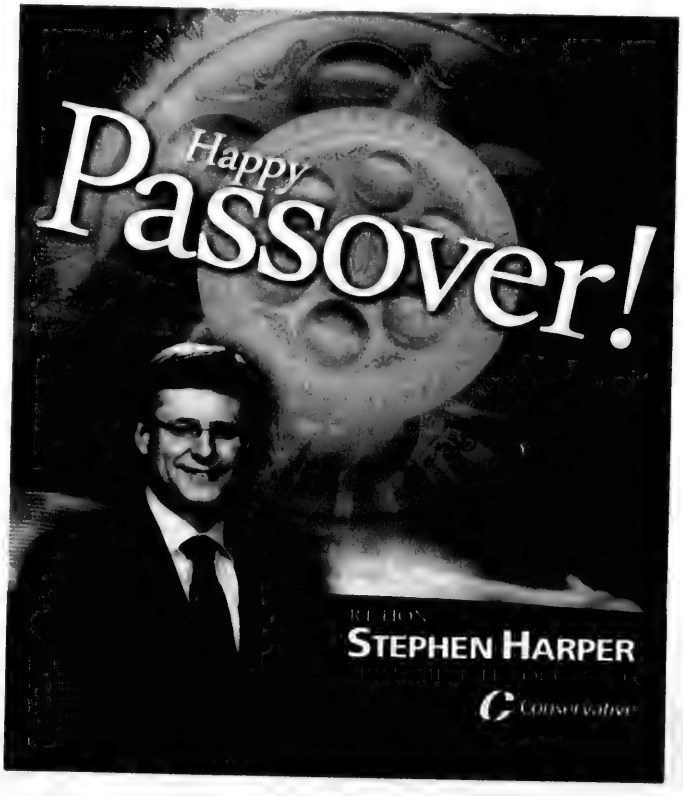

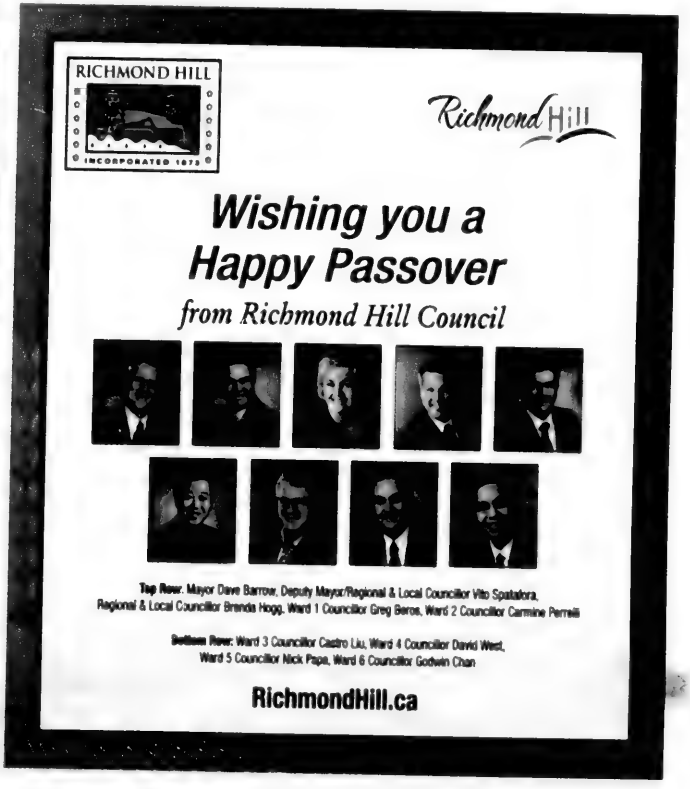
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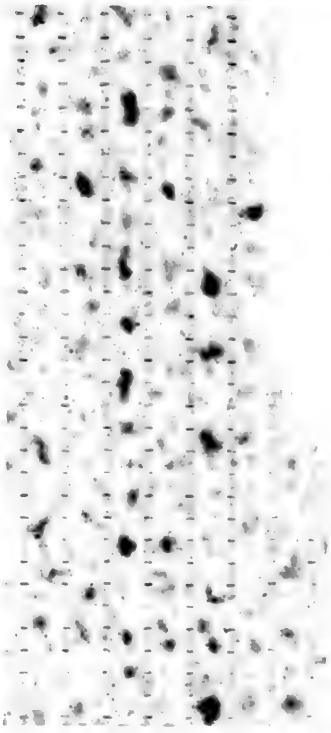
Continued from previous page

Next morning we found out that my sister's group unexpectedly left the city, their stay in Bucharest cut short. We were upset, but were determined to chase them further to Hungary. We bought tickets through a travel agency and flew by Malev Airlines to Budapest. The search was on again, to find the group's location in the new country.

This time it was even harder, because nobody there spoke English, only German or Hungarian. But what a drastic difference it was between the cities! Budapest was nicer, cleaner and richer in every aspect; even the weather was much brighter and put us in a better mood. The city was flooded with Soviet military personnel.

We hired a taxi and started our journey, better to say, adventure, to find my sister there.

The driver was a gentleman, very polite, he spoke no English. We communicated in signs, and simple Russian words for him to understand our request. We paid him with our cigarettes very generously, and he did his best to help us.



> *We communicated in signs and simple Russian words*

Finally, before evening, we found this remote place where the group was staying. The KGB man of the group was now unconsciously drunk in his room, thanks to some help from my sister's friends. Nobody interfered with our second reunion.

We even stayed overnight in my sister's hotel room until morning. This was our time of brief happiness together. Next day (the officer still drunk), we took a taxi and went sightseeing with her. We took her to the best places, took pictures, dined in the best restaurant in town, with Gypsies playing and singing. She had never seen anything like that. We went shopping, making her happy, buying stuff for the whole family, having a good time.

And then, the next afternoon it was time to say goodbye. We could not complain, our hard work and efforts were all rewarded. We found her, our needle in the haystack. They were leaving by train, so we came to the train station to be with her for the last moment before their departure. Two strong men in leather jackets and caps, typical KGB uniforms, were standing right behind the three of us, closely watching her, just in case she would defect with us. After the whistle, my sister and the men all boarded the train. My mother and I stayed there until it disappeared in the distance.

It was our time to return home, the long transatlantic flight was waiting. We were exhausted and drained emotionally and physically, and ready to go back home, to our family in Canada.

Yes, this Passover week in 1985 was definitely very different from all other weeks in our lives, but it had something in common with the haggadah of Pesach: both had miracles! ■

The Tallit Whisperer

Continued from page 11

Last year you sat here in your huge new tallit. It's a traditional white with royal blue and gold stripes. It's big enough for you to envelop our daughters, one under each arm. Last year I sat at the end of our four, happy that my girls had you. Had your love, your kindness, your consideration. So thankful they had a father like you-tender, and caring. I'm grateful I gave them you as a father.

Remember when you finally decided that your old tallit, the one from your bar mitzvah, was too small? It had shrunk over the years gotten shabby, stained with sweat and rust. It traveled at the bottom of your drawer on our boats, never taken out, but there keeping you company. When we moved off the boat I took it out.

"Do you need this?" I said holding it up, ready to toss it in the pile to discard.

"Yes," you said with an edge to your voice, taking it and tucking it in the suitcase. Your Judaism was a private thing all our sailing years. Finding it hard to explain, you kept it to yourself. Not asking me to learn blessings, or prayers.

Last year you couldn't do the sit and stand. You sat while we stood. Today, two congregants appointed with the honour, open the ark at the front of the synagogue. I sigh. One year we did that on Rosh Hashanah, you and me, at the front of the synagogue with 150 people standing before us. You stand tall and proud – a big smile lights your face, a wink at me. We wait while the rabbi takes out each sacred scroll and hands it to a specially appointed someone, to hold and carry around the synagogue. We don't directly touch it, but only with prayer books, then kiss the book, or with the corner of our tallit and then kiss the tallit. Keeping my gaze on the Torah scroll, I do all this from rote, as I've been taught. These things I've learned I cling to now, hoping they may ease my way. By learning this respect, this gratitude, these ancient traditions, maybe my path will be smoothed. When you were beside me I could tread lightly through life, almost float.

Before you weakened, you held the Torah up, like a feather. High above your head, its weight nothing to you. Opened so the letters could be seen, each letter holy, ancient, mystical. The synagogue made me feel welcome – loved, tolerated, accepted. God was like the parent I never had. When you first got sick, even while you were in the hospital, my heart sank with fear. Will I still be Jewish when you're gone? I even ask our rabbi.

"Of course you will," he said. "We've got you now. It's not so easy to get rid of us." With you gone it feels like you took that with you – that unconditional love, that acceptance, that sense of being seen. So much of me and how I see myself is because of you. With you gone do I feel Jewish? Will I be able to keep feeling it inside?

Today the Torahs shine at the front of the shul in their white holiday covers, dressed in their silver adornments for the high holy days. Atop one rests a big silver ball covered in tiny silver bells swinging and tinkling. Two silver globes poise on tall silver pokers on another. All are polished and ready for the grand opening.

Closing my eyes I let the service and music wash over me. I hold onto Ariel's hand and hope it can tether me to the world, like I once tethered her. At 15

Continued on next page

חג שמח

Best wishes for a happy and healthy Passover

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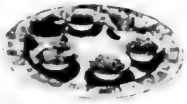
Happy Passover

Wishing you a Chag Kasher v'sameach



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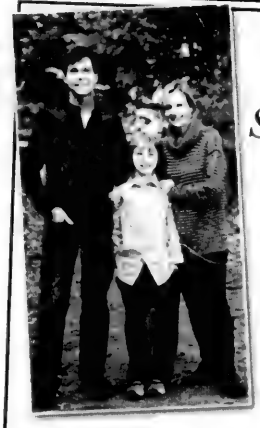

Chag Sameach

Wishing you peace, good health & happiness on Passover

Dr. Eric Hoskins
Member of Provincial Parliament for St. Paul's

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Continued from previous page

months we took her out on our sailboat from Cape Town across the South Atlantic. I held tight to her little safety harness then. Then I feared sinking and getting into a life raft with a baby, where dark blue waves stretched endlessly out around us. Now in shul I hold her hand and I fly out with you over those undulating mountains up and down. I soar like the wide wing spanned albatross we saw out there, huge wings gliding, riding the air currents inches from the water, just skimming. Sailing again, it's peaceful. Inside my head I'm free, like you were at the end, lost in your daydreams.

Genesis, the story of creation, is read, words that speak to me – of my journey with you. "...and there was darkness upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved over the surface of the waters ...and there was light. ... let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night, they shall serve as signs for the set times – the days and the years....which the waters brought forth in swarms: and the winged birds of every kind.... Let us make a being in our image after our likeness...resting on the seventh day."

I draw the words in, to comfort and distract me from my loneliness, my separateness. Remember how we rounded the breakwater from the harbour at Virgin Gorda, made the cut through the reef, and headed into the wind? How we left land and the world behind. Each time we left shelter I felt a surge of pride and strength and courage. Each time you and I bonded more tightly. You at the helm coiling lines, me at the mast raising the main sail. You fall off the wind, let it catch the sails and push us away and out beyond, gliding up and over the waves to North Sound. We round the black cliffs of St. Helena in the South Atlantic, sail through the oil rigs off Galveston during a solar eclipse, make landfall in a Bequia palm-lined bay on Valentine's Day. I share those memories with only you. Of pelicans gliding silent above dark waves, of a giant fuchsia Portuguese man-o-war sailing deadly beside us, of your big hand gripping both the tiller and me, steady, firm, right.

The cantor starts to sing the *Mi Sheberach*- the prayer for healing. I love this song and try to sing, but choke on each word. I remember all the times in the last 18-and-a-half months that I begged for you to get better. Our rabbi stood over your white turbaned head, and tubed face in the neuro-ICU. Machines hum in the dimness of the in between world of life and death. Months later he came to our house and sang it with you and the girls sitting around your hospital bed. He laid tfillin with you, the small black leather boxes. I found them in your mom's old vanity case, with her opera glasses, pill boxes, your swim awards, her award in 1938 for elocution.

"These are really old," the rabbi says as he takes the covers off the tfillin. You can't tell us if they were yours or your dad's that memory is lost in the folds of the tumour. He gently unwraps the worn and cracked straps and then rests the box on your forehead. Carefully he adjusts the straps behind your head and down over your Superman T-shirt. You can't get out of bed now and we do all your care in bed, feeding, washing, kissing, dancing, listening to *Psychedelic Sunday* and now laying tfillin. He wraps the other tfillin around your arm seven times and explains why, and recites the blessing with you. Your lips move in time connecting to an ancient world, your world. I know you did this every day at your Jewish day school in Joburg.

"Boy, Syd you really look Jewish," he jokes sitting beside you on the bed. I smile, but tears pour down my face. I wipe them away, but they keep coming.

Now in shul I keep my eyes open and focused ahead on nothing. A tear runs cold down my cheek. I don't move. My throat constricts. I hope no one will see. We couldn't save you even for one more year to sit with us now. Your whisper is around my shoulders like a warm shawl. I'm comforted by our buried love, by love dead and decomposing, turning its rotting beauty into a permanent mantle for me. I'll take it forward from this day. Bask in the splendour of my glittering faith. I don't want to create a new world without you, an after the apocalypse world. My whole life shines through this sheen of tears, of sorrow, of pain. They say there's a kind of wisdom born of this loss. My heart is broken, but the healing heaviness of you pulls me gently upright and forward. ■

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chag Pesach sameach to the entire community

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Inside

York U, Technion agree to partnership

Deal could ultimately see students at the two educational institutions jointly develop commercially viable projects. **PAGE 12**

Downtown Toronto is different

South of St. Clair Avenue is a foreign country, author says. **PAGE 17**

Mimouna

A local organization that promotes Moroccan-Jewish culture is hosting a celebration to mark the end of Pesach. **Page 17**

Chol Hamoed Pesach

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	7:45 p.m.	8:51 p.m.
Montreal	7:26 p.m.	8:33 p.m.
Toronto	7:46 p.m.	8:52 p.m.
Winnipeg	8:09 p.m.	9:21 p.m.
Calgary	8:19 p.m.	9:34 p.m.
Vancouver	7:51 p.m.	9:03 p.m.

What makes a film Jewish?

Is there an empirical definition of a "Jewish" film? On the eve of the opening of the Toronto Jewish Film Festival, we ask five experts to weigh in. **PAGE 8**

Why Canadian Jews will remain in the Tory camp

Opinion: Stephen Harper has worked hard to build stronger ties with the Jewish community. **PAGE 11**

Liberal victory a welcome relief

PQ gov't. defeated: Jewish leaders view themselves as part and parcel of Quebec and see their future there. **PAGE 20**

Have brooms, will travel

Q & A: Canadian brothers promote curling in Israel. **PAGE 42**

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A SNIP THAT COULD SAVE LIVES AND AN INNOVATION THAT COULD SAVE TIME

Not a surprise to us

A Université de Montréal study has shown a lower risk of prostate cancer among circumcised men, especially those who underwent the procedure as adults. The most striking of the results, published in the *British Journal of Urology International*, is that men circumcised after age 35 were 45 per cent less likely to later develop prostate cancer than men with intact foreskins. The protective effect of circumcision was most pronounced among black men, of whom there were 178 in the study of 2,114. Their risk was cut by 60 per cent. The researchers say they don't know why circumcision may protect against cancer, although they think it may be related to the already documented lower risk of sexually transmitted infection. They also cautioned the findings must be confirmed by more studies. Will this latest snippet of research quiet anti-circumcision activists? Don't count on it.

Iconic food maker sold

The Manischewitz Company, well known for its sweet Kiddush wine and wide variety of Passover foods, was sold a week before the holiday. Sankaty Advisors, an arm of the private equity firm Bain Capital – Mitt Romney's former employer – purchased the Newark, N.J.-based purveyor of kosher foods for an undisclosed price. In addition to its flagship brand, it also markets food under the Rokeach, Mishpacha, Season, Guiltless Gourmet and other banners. Under its new owner, Manischewitz, which was founded in Cincinnati in 1888 as a matzah maker, is expected to promote kosher as an indication of quality food rather than just a religious designation.

Just try to boycott this!

Israeli tech startup StoreDot introduced a boycott-proof concept at Microsoft's Think Next symposium in Tel Aviv last week: a device that can recharge your cellphone in less than 30 seconds. The device is years away from stores – 2016 is the projected date – but the company showed off a prototype that recharged a Samsung S4 with a completely dead battery. It's yet another Israeli breakthrough that even BDSers will be unable to live without. ■

Inside today's edition

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Commentary ... 6	National ... 20	What's New ... 36	Food ... 40

Numbers

8

The number of games Maccabi Tel Aviv centre Sofoklis Schortsanitis is expected to be suspended for charging into the stands to attack a fan of crosstown rival Hapoel Tel Aviv after a game April 7. The 6-10, 365-pound hoopster said the fan threatened to rape his daughter.

5

Days left of Passover. Pass the matzah.

Quotable

66

To say it's in the early stages would be an understatement.

— Curler Jeff Lutz on the current state of his sport in Israel. See p. 42 for our full interview.

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- Listing of Cemeteries and Maps of Sections
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Letters to the Editor

Kudos on the new design

Kudos to all of you! The new *CJN* is fabulous! Interesting, informative, easy to read and so "with it". You have all done an outstanding job!

Patricia Starr
Toronto, Ont.

Lessons from the election

As a native Montrealer who returned to this wonderful city after a 29-year absence, I strongly urge the leadership of Jewish Montreal to build on Quebec's election results and not just exhale a sigh of relief.

The results of this pivotal vote must not be taken for granted. Montreal's Jewish population may well continue to lose individuals and families. A Liberal win, no matter its size, just buys time to get out.

Recall Quebec premier Robert Bourassa's ride to victory with a Liberal majority in 1985, only to see subsequent Parti Québécois victories. The nature of politics being what it is, no one party provincially or federally, is re-elected in perpetuity. Voters get tired, they get upset, and human nature being what it is, they eventually opt for change.

My advice to those in the leadership of Jewish Montreal: building on the current Liberal win means focusing on helping people, no matter their age and vocation, get jobs and stay to build a life here.

It means also making every person count, in what he or she can contribute through their time and expertise, to Jewish communal life. It also means being open to new ideas and fresh faces. Because there's an old saying in Yiddish that translates: "If you don't want it, you don't need it."

Dorothy Lipovenko
Westmount, Que.

Passover and the election

Just as Passover teaches us to cherish our freedom and not be slaves to our impulses, so, too, does it teach us to respect other people's rights to their freedom, including the right to wear religious headgear in the workplace. In their attempt to control other people, the Parti Québécois encroached on this right and exercised a form of enslavement.

This Pesach, Jews in Quebec can breathe a sigh of relief and truly celebrate *zman cheruteinu*, the time of our freedom from tyranny and religious oppression!

Mordechai Bulua
Montreal

Pollard held hostage

It is obscene that the release of Jonathan Pollard is being made conditional on Israel releasing 400 convicted Muslim terrorists.

Pollard's incarceration is a blight on the American system of justice, and abuses every fundamental principle of justice and precedent.

Some years ago I was retained by Pollard as his Canadian counsel. On his behalf, I spoke to many synagogues urging that his sentence for supplying secret information to an ally was even more stringent than those sentences meted out for American citizens who gave secret information to enemies.

One of the shocking aspects of the Pollard trial, one that has not received the publicity that it should have, is that there had been a plea bargain arranged between the government and Pollard and his first wife.

Subsequently, and quite improperly, then-U.S. secretary of defence Caspar Weinberger sent a note to the trial judge urging that Pollard be dealt with in the harshest possible terms. Such actions in Canada by a member of the government would have resulted in an immediate acquittal and firing of the official in question.

That, of course, never happened.

At a convention of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists in Israel, I introduced a resolution condemning the American judicial system with respect to this particular case, with regard to the harshness of the sentence, the flawed judicial process and the fact that there would be no way that Pollard would have any further worthwhile secret information to reveal upon his release.

By every legal standard Pollard should have been released years ago.

Once again, the Palestinians are extracting a concession from Israel to extend the futile Middle East peace talks and giving nothing in return.

Bert Raphael
Canadian Jewish Civil Rights Association
Thornhill, Ont.

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*

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RABBI-2-RABBI

How do today's shuls judge success?

More young families are coming through the doors, but attendance still isn't what it used be in the good old days. That just might be a good thing.

RABBI ADAM SCHEIER
CONGREGATION SHAAR HASHOMAYIM, MONTREAL

RABBI ADAM CUTLER
BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION, TORONTO

Rabbi Scheier: When I first came to the Shaar Hashomayim community 10 years ago, I was given two challenges: Change nothing, and change everything. Over the past number of years, we've focused on engaging a group we call "young families." This group includes children, parents and young adults. The YF events are typically fun, energetic and catered to various segments within this particular demographic. I wonder whether you've focused your efforts on this group, and how you would measure success with this kind of outreach?

Rabbi Cutler: In my five years at Beth Tzedec, we have indeed placed a growing emphasis on youth and young families. We have certainly noted increased attendance at young-family-focused programs. However, counting the number of Jews through our doors does not by itself indicate success.

We will have succeeded if, after a program, those who attended tell us that the content had an impact on their lives, and if they convince their friends to join them the next time. But we can't expect the dividends to begin paying out for a very long time.

Rabbi Scheier: I think the long view is the right view, but we don't have time on our side. When I first interviewed for the rabbi position at my congregation, the interview took place on "Youth Shabbat," which was (and continues to be) an energetic weekend when the synagogue was filled with young people. I – optimistically and innocently – asked one of my hosts, "Is it like this every week?" He wisely replied, "It could be."

Once I arrived to serve as rabbi, I realized that we were far from this dream. On each Shabbat morning, there was exactly one stroller parked outside the sanctuary. Ten years later, there are many, many more strollers and children.

I think an essential part of my job is convincing my community that we still believe that "it could be." And while our success might be measured over a long period of time, we have to move forward with a sense of urgency.

Rabbi Cutler: It's wonderful to read about your successes in Montreal. I am also glad to read of your sense of urgency. However, I don't see preserving the Jewish future as a goal unto itself. Judaism doesn't exist so that Judaism can continue to exist. Our religion is here to guide our lives today, helping us to build a relationship with things that are beyond ourselves. Our youth activities need to focus on how our rich tradition benefits the lives of its adherents. We will be successful if those in our spheres of influence find Jewish practice to be meaningful, relevant and uplifting.

I frequently walk by a picture of our cavernous sanctuary filled with what appears to be more than 1,000 congregational school students. We forget, though, that Hebrew school for many children was an abysmal experience. We remember the grand oratory of rabbis past, but forget that congregants were rarely challenged to think for themselves. Our past has a vote, but not a veto.

Rabbi Scheier: So, maybe, there's the rub: on the one hand, we have the nostalgic synagogue, brimming with congregants who are not being intellectually challenged and Hebrew schools that are full, yet fail when it comes to fulfilling their mandate to educate and inspire. On the other hand, we have the modern congregation that provides an emotionally stimulating and intellectually challenging experience for the select few who show up, and Hebrew schools that struggle to attract students, but thoroughly inspire those who do attend. And the difference between the two is that, due to a larger membership size, the former is able to pay its bills, while the latter struggles.

Of course, neither depiction is accurate, nor is history ever so simple. The thing about nostalgia is that you can never achieve what they achieved, nor are our challenges as difficult as theirs were. Nostalgia, in the same breath, can enrich and distract.

Rabbi Cutler: Tinted perhaps with rose-coloured glasses, we can certainly picture our synagogues' pasts. What, though, of their future? Wouldn't it be marvelous if our buildings lined their hallways not with images of times past, but of our best wishes for the future? ■

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Children in Brantford, Ont., prepare a model Passover seder in 1948.
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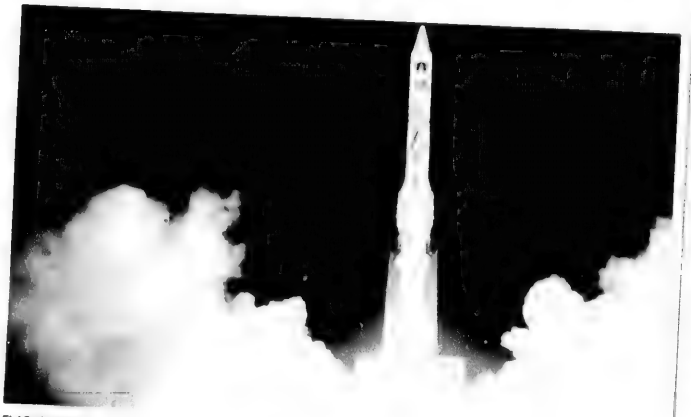

FLASH90 PHOTO

The new Israeli military spy satellite Ofek 10 was launched into orbit last week from the Palmachim army base outside of Tel Aviv.

From Yoni's Desk

Beginning the healing process

We Canadian Jews come in all sorts of political stripes. Take, for example, Michael Taube and Adam Goldenberg, two of *The CJN's* new columnists making their inaugural appearances in their roles on page 11 of this week's newspaper.

Goldenberg, a former Liberal speechwriter, argues Conservative partisans in this country have been manoeuvring during the last decade to make Israel a wedge issue in order to win Jewish votes. Meanwhile, Taube, a former speechwriter for Prime Minister Stephen Harper, claims that Jews and Tories share mutual ground far beyond Israel. "Jewish values and Tory values have a great deal in common," he writes, "and this important relationship will only continue to get stronger."

Most of us accept that there's not much point trying to distill the Jewish community's position on specific points of political interest. It's simply not possible – and that's not a bad thing, so long as we respect each others' right to hold opinions different from our own. I would argue the community as a whole benefits specifically because it can accommodate so many disparate political and social views.

Nevertheless, all of Canadian Jewry – or at least as close to it as you're ever going to get – would probably agree that Phillipe Couillard and the Liberal Party's recent triumph in Quebec's provincial election was a tremendous victory for the Jewish community.

Armed with a majority government, Couillard, hopefully, will follow through on his election promises to fix Quebec's economy, create jobs and reduce the deficit. That is where the Liberal government should focus its attention, not the two political hot potatoes the previous Parti Québécois government obsessed over: separation from Canada and the shameful charter of Quebec values. If Couillard merely steers the conversation away from those avenues, it will be a good start.

Quebec's Jews – and, really, all religious people in the province – can breath a sigh of relief after a tense campaign that just a few weeks ago appeared to be heading toward a very different outcome. They no longer have to worry about the prospect of picking up their families and moving away, a very real possibility for many had the PQ and now-ex-leader Pauline Marois improved on their minority government. Nor do they have to fear discrimination in the workplace because they choose to wear a kippah. Their province has soundly rejected the PQ and Marois' politics of division and xenophobia.

Couillard's victory – Marois' defeat – was celebrated beyond the borders of Quebec, too. For Jews who live in the ROC (rest of Canada) – and the ROC in general – the election result felt like a critical affirmation of religious rights across this country. The notion that under a PQ government some Quebecers might not be allowed to express themselves religiously by law left so many of us chilled, wondering whether there truly was a future for Quebec's nearly 250-year-old Jewish community.

This campaign and the 19 months preceding it during which Marois and the PQ ruled was a scary period, for Quebec and for Canada. It will take time for the fear to fully dissipate. The good news is Quebec voters have declared that the healing process may now begin. ■ — **YONI**

PERSONAL HISTORY

The return of the Robinsons

Gerald Posner

It's a fact that many westerners, particularly Winnipeggers, have over the years made their way to a new life in Toronto.

Most of them came on their own initiative or because some relative was living there. But, in the case of Shayne, Brenlee and Hart Robinson, their move to Toronto rekindled a spark begun long ago by their great-great-grandfather.

The Robinson saga started in 1840 when Nathan Reubenson, as he was known then, was born in what was Russian Poland. Reubenson's legacy continues to this day in the form of a significant chain of his descendants who have returned to Toronto after a long time away.

Not so surprisingly, Nathan received a very Jewish education, given that his father was the dayan (judge) of the town, Kalwarya, where he lived. In 1877, Nathan Reubenson came to Toronto to accept a position connected to the pulpit at what was then B'nei Shalom Congregation, later to be amalgamated with Holy Blossom Temple. At the time, there were all of 100 Jews in Toronto. That fact led to Reubenson taking on the roles of shochet, mohel and chazzan. Throughout his 22 years in Toronto, he was devoted to the synagogue. He was married at a young age and had many children, one of whom was R. S. Robinson, who began the next phase of the Robinson story.

R.S. – R for Reuben and S for Simon –, was born in Russia in 1864 and educated not only in a religious way, but also in business in Toronto. But then he made a left turn and traded his tfillin in for snow shoes and settled for six years in Wabigoon, Ont., where he acted as inland revenue commissioner, license commissioner and school trustee. But in 1903, R. S. moved to Winnipeg and began a business that still operates to this day although under a different name. That first business was R. S. Robinson and Sons Ltd., which was owned and operated by R.S. and his five sons. He was the first parnas of the Shaarey Shomayim Synagogue and was instrumental in the establishment of the Esther Robinson Jewish Orphanage Children's Aid Society of Western Canada named for his mother. He was president of the Winnipeg Hebrew Free School. To put it mildly, R.S. was a mover and a shaker in Winnipeg, both in the Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

The Robinson family circa 1910.
1. Ruth (married name Leberg)
2. Bessie (maiden name Sugarman)
3. Hattie (died at 31)
4. Sydney Isaac
5. Percy (Percival)
6. Wilbur
7. Reuben Simon
8. Dora (married name Cohen)
9. Nate (Nathan)
10. Fanny (married name Goldstine)
11. Ralph

One of his five sons, Sydney Isaac Robinson, took the family to an even higher level. S.I. took over the business from his father and improved it. It became S. I. Robinson Furs, later Sydney I. Robinson Sporting Goods, then S.I. Robinson Sporting Goods and finally SIR Sporting Goods. It was the name SIR Furs that became a landmark in Winnipeg, with a big billboard sign showing a large black bear facing Portage Avenue. S.I. ran the business until his stroke in 1978 and subsequent death in 1980.

S.I.'s son Earl changed the direction of the family by heading into sporting goods. SIR Sporting Goods was the leader in the field, and people from all over Western Canada patronized the store. Earl operated the business until he sold it to the large U.S. chain Cabella's just a few years ago.

Yet another son of Sydney I., Myles Robinson, led the family in an entirely new direction as he became one of Canada's first developers of shopping centres and subdivisions, something he did in relative anonymity. The only daughter of S.I. Robinson was Gloria, who settled in Toronto and in a rather coincidental way, in terms of names, married the late Justice Sydney L. Robins formerly of the Ontario Court of Appeal.

In the last few years, the Robinson family has come full circle, as three of Myles Robinson's four children returned to Toronto, from whence their original ancestor, Nathan, came. In doing so, the children, now adults, have in their own way added to the family story, yet they have also continued aspects of the family history and tradition.

Thus, son Shayne, now married and the father of two new Robinsons, moved back to Toronto from Winnipeg in 2007. He has followed his great-great-grandfather, Nathan, in terms of his involvement in the synagogue world by his very significant role in the First Narayver Congregation (located not far from the original B'nei Shalom shul that his ancestor was active in so long ago) as chairman of its social action committee. Brother Hart Robinson is a freelance programmer/analyst.

Their sister, Brenlee Robinson, has followed her great-grandfather Reuben by being a leader in promoting an outdoor style of life. She's a past president of the Mosaic Outdoor Clubs of America and a vice-president of the Ontario Urban Forest Council for four years. She's currently a consultant and educator in urban forestry.

It's been almost 140 years since Nathan Reubenson arrived in Toronto to make his mark. He would surely derive satisfaction from knowing his descendants are back in the city and following his religious bent while at the same time pursuing the interests of his son Reuben. ■

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What makes a film Jewish?

On the eve of The Toronto Jewish Film Festival, opening May 1, we asked five experts this all-important question

ALLEN BRAUDE

TJFF programmer

Most of the films I preview for the Toronto Jewish Film Festival (TJFF) have obvious Jewish content. Occasionally a film will come along in which no character or documentary subject ever identifies as Jewish, yet I find the film to be very Jewish. If asked why, I'd say that such films have a Jewish "sensibility."

Nu, what's a Jewish sensibility? Drawing from the examples of such films in this year's festival I'd say they are films about characters that seem to not quite fit in and feature humour that is self-deprecating – they are films that bring the characters' neuroses to the forefront, and put more emphasis on talk than on action.

Does this sound stereotypical? Perhaps it is, and I would add that it is influenced by my experience both as a minority and as someone who connects culturally to being Jewish rather than through religion.

Is sensibility exclusive to the Diaspora experience? The Israeli film *A Strange Course of Events* suggests that might not be the case. In this subtle and slyly humorous, film, 40-something Shaul doesn't seem to fit in anywhere, and isn't happy about it. He blames his problems on the father he hasn't seen in five years and decides to confront him, only to find his father a changed man.

To me, the film clearly shares the Jewish sensibility I've described. It turns out, however, that director Raphaël Nadjari grew up in France. Whether or not this Jewish sensibility is only found in films from the Diaspora, my feeling is that enough people recognize it to allow films without overt Jewish content to still be very Jewish.

Although *Margaret* was not by a Jewish filmmaker, the film about a young Jewish girl, played by Anna Paquin, whose moral courage is tested, is very much a Jewish film.

KEVIN COURRIER

Editor-in-chief of Critics at Large

Perhaps the easiest way to answer what constitutes a Jewish film is to say it should take the viewer inside the world and values of Judaism. It should also express some aspect of the sensibility of being Jewish.

For me, as a non-Jew, Eytan Fox's *Walk on Water* was like acquiring a passport into Israeli culture. But you don't have to be Jewish to make a Jewish film. Kenneth Lonergan proved that recently with *Margaret*, a movie about a young Jewish girl whose moral courage is tested when she has to face up to her role in a fatal accident.

However, being Jewish doesn't mean you're always making a Jewish film. (William Wyler was certainly Jewish. But does that make *Wuthering Heights* a Jewish film?) On the other hand, the Coen Brothers are Jewish and *A Serious Man* is soaked in Judaism, but their tone is so churlish and judgmental toward its characters that it seems to betray the need to even raise questions so germane to Judaism.

The Big Lebowski, on the other hand, has only one Jewish character (and he converted), but the Coens turn the detective novel into the perfect Jewish parable about the unknowability of truth. There's no question that Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* is a Jewish film, but how come nobody thinks of *Jaws* as the Jewish *Moby Dick*?

PHYLLIS ANGEL GREENBERG

TJFF board member

Is there an empirical definition of a "Jewish" film? Certainly it is not enough to have a Jewish writer and/or director/producer/actor, or even a character, for if that were the case, then almost every Hollywood film would fall into the category.

So what makes a film Jewish? A Jewish perspective? Jewish subject matter? A Jewish setting? Yes, but sometimes there are intangibles that lead us to label a film "Jewish" or of particular interest to a Jewish audience.

In a "Jewish" film, the "Jewish-ness" should be self-conscious and not by chance. Also, the film must be of specific Jewish interest. Holocaust films, whether or not they are about Jews, would likely always qualify. Documentaries are more easily categorized as Jewish because the subject matter is clear: anything to do with Judaism – for example, the history of Jews in Italy, the first female ordained rabbi, the influence of Jewish merchants in Leeds, the life of Marc Chagall, comedians in the Catskills, anti-Semitism – and the list can and does go on and on. If the topic of the film is Jewish, the filmmakers need not be Jewish for the film to fit the bill.

(A documentary submitted last year is an interesting and disturbing analysis of miscegenation laws in Virginia. Sadly, the only Jewish element in the film is that one of the lawyers' last name is "Cohen." Not enough! A peripheral Jewish character does not make a film "Jewish.")

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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Guest Voice

That first Passover

REGINA BRETT
JNS.ORG

That first Passover was a tough one. I had been dating a Jewish man for the first time and he invited me to celebrate Passover with some friends. He didn't warn me about the four cups of wine. (I don't drink). He didn't tell me about the meat. (I'm a vegetarian.) He didn't tell me what to wear. (I'm fashion impaired.) So I showed up wearing a sporty red, white and blue dress that was probably a few inches too short and a few shades too red.

I would have stood out anyway. The name Regina is like a brand that you're Catholic. I was clueless about Jewish traditions – and Jewish geography doesn't extend too deeply into counties Clare and Mayo where my dad's parents came from in Ireland.

I gave up on blending in at the seder the minute I walked in the door. Before my boyfriend could introduce me, the host shouted with glee from across the room, "A goy!" then rushed over to welcome me. That was the first time I met philanthropist Lee Seidman, whose joy for all things Jewish became contagious and got me hooked for life. That Passover night I became Jew-"ish."

As a Catholic in a small town, I was rarely exposed to anyone Jewish. The only thing my parents said about Jews is that they were still waiting for the Messiah, as if they had missed some spiritual bus we had climbed onto. In Catholic school, when we collectively played the part of the Jewish crowd on Good Friday chanting, "Crucify him!" we didn't know it was anti-Semitic. We believed God chose for Jesus to die on a cross for our salvation.

My parents never said anything negative about anyone Jewish, but they didn't teach us anything about Jews or Judaism and all the rich rituals and traditions and endless holidays that seem to occur every third day of the year.

Most gentiles I know (yes, I've adopted that word over the years) are clueless about anything Jewish except for *Seinfeld* reruns and Stephen Sondheim lyrics.

So I stumbled through my first seder, and I soon felt like family. As soon as they started the service, my heart relaxed. I knew the story from Exodus about how Moses led the people from the bondage to freedom. This was my life story, too. This was my past, too. Exodus. Deuteronomy. Isaiah. It was all familiar, except for the matzah, charoset and gefilte fish, which doesn't even resemble a fish.

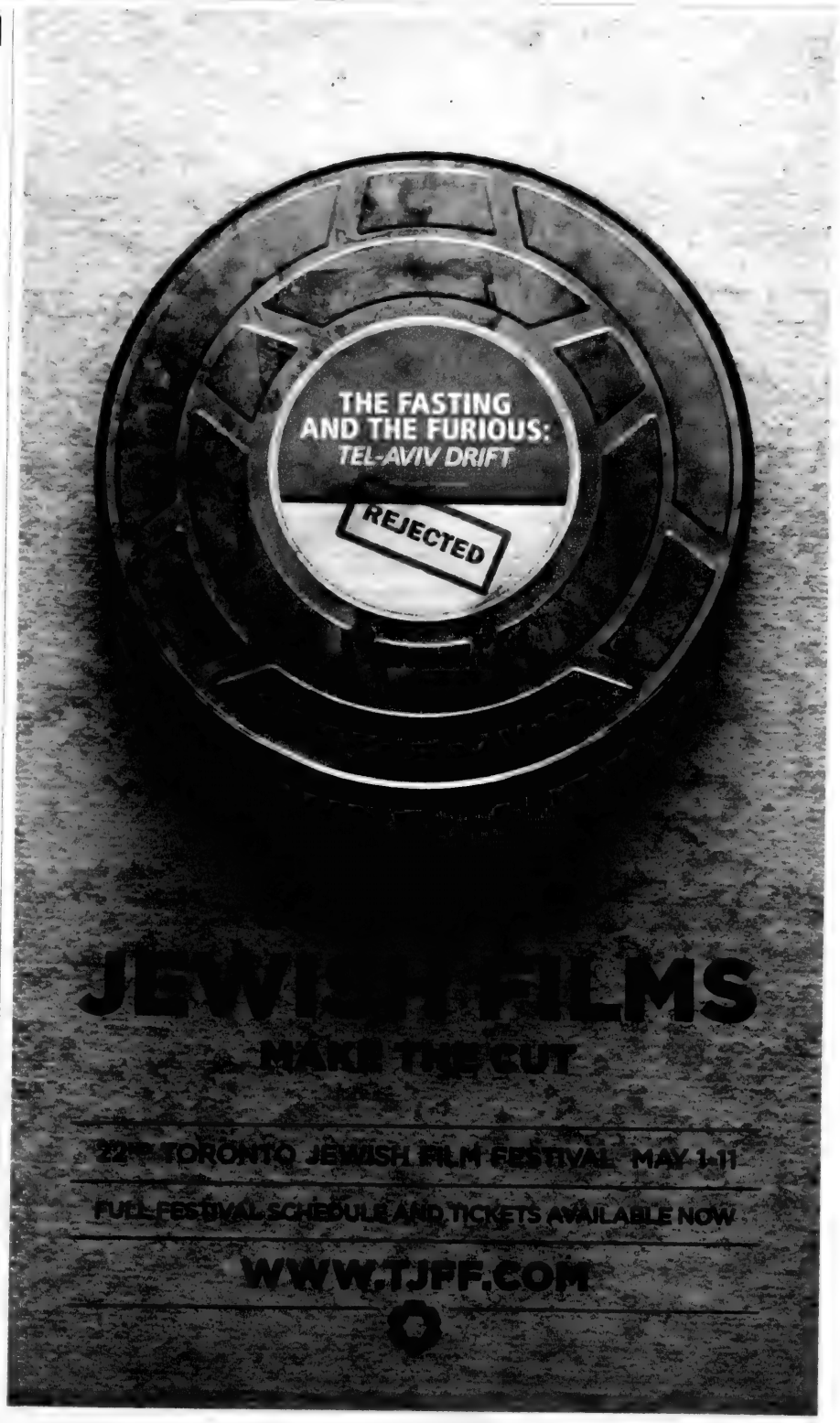
Passover taught me to re-view the past, to see it all through the eyes of gratitude, framed by that powerful word *Dayeinu* – it would have been enough for us. If God had only brought us out of Egypt, it would have been enough. If God had just parted the sea for us, it would have been enough. But God kept – and keeps on – giving.

As I listened to the history of the Jews, I heard my own history in a new light. If God had only given me my daughter, it would have been enough. If God had just bestowed on me good health, it would have been enough.

I ended up marrying the boyfriend who took me to my first Passover seder. God ended up giving me a Jewish husband, who came with two wonderful sons, three amazing siblings and more Jewish friends than I can count.

That first Passover pulled me into a new world, one that now feels like home. ■

Regina Brett is a columnist for the Cleveland Jewish News *– where this article first appeared – and a Pulitzer Prize finalist.*



OPINION

Lies, distortions and the world's oldest hatred

Gil Troy

The *McGill Daily* has long been the *Pravda* of Montreal, as totalitarian and surreal as the Communist propaganda sheet that masqueraded as the Soviet Union's newspaper. In general, I don't respond to anything published there. As a student daily its commentaries should be rebutted by other students, not professors.

Still, a friend recently forwarded a *McGill Daily* article trying to justify an academic boycott against Israel – which makes as much sense as pilots boycotting jet fuel. The article's opening lines provide what we in the education business call a teachable moment. "Israel is a colonial settler state," the article began. "This is very hard to contest, regardless of the history – religious or secular – of the Zionist movement."

I wish I could quote the two lines, chuckle and feel confident that all honest people, Jewish or not, would join me in laughing at (and crying about) the many lies and distortions embedded in those 23 words. But shame on most of us for not being able to defend truth, democracy, and yes, the Jewish State more effectively. Given this collective failure, allow me to zero in on the four major assaults on truth provided, suggesting a rather efficient A-IDR – an anti-Israel duplicity rate – of one warping whopper per 5.75 words.

Start with "colonialism." Wikipedia defines colonialism as "the establishment, exploitation, maintenance, acquisition, and expansion of colonies in one territory by people from *another territory*" (emphasis added), what one historian calls "foreign invaders" from "a distant metropolis." For this definition to apply to Israel, the Jews would have to have no rights, no history, no presence and no standing in this contested territory – which is not true regarding Israel or its overlapping West Bank neighbour, where borders have shifted repeatedly, although the allegation is central to the Palestinian claim. This Palestinian negation explains the demand for recognition of Israel as a Jewish state.

The word "settler" is more accurate but still mischievous. A settler is simply "a person who settles in an area." But the term has become loaded, with Palestinians using it to mean foreign interloper. Ironically, Wikipedia's first definition says settlers "typically" settle "in an area… with no or few previous inhabitants." We, equally mischievously, could claim that every time Palestinians call Jews settlers, they are de-legitimizing themselves, emphasizing how much open, undeveloped land there is in the West Bank – which is where most new towns sprouted up and where most Jewish "settlers" settled.

The third lie is epistemological, related to the theory of knowledge. The writer claims the proposition is "very hard to contest." In my first college seminar, the professor raised a book and challenged us to offer an opinion, a principle, a belief, let alone a historical or ideological conclusion that was as true as the fact that once the professor dropped the book, it would fall. Historical judgments can't compare in authority to the laws of gravity – and I admit that as a professional historian.

Finally, the author pulls an old debater's trick, saying "regardless of the history – religious or secular – of the Zionist movement." This implies that no matter how we settle that debate, it reinforces his point. But besides emphasizing that Israel's ties to the land are religious *and* secular, thus not colonial, the debate over Zionism's character is irrelevant. However you slice it, Jews have a stake in the area. We are not outsiders.

Academics usually take professional pride in unmasking simplistic slogans, sloppy definitions, bogus postures and false choices. That campuses are becoming centres for concocting these big lies about Israel being colonialist, racist and imperialist is a triple betrayal. It betrays academics' mission to embrace truth in all its complexity. It betrays educators' moral obligation to be honest and accurate. And it personally betrays people like me, who have dedicated our lives to academic ideals, only to see them trashed in the pile-on against Israel.

When the hatred of something is so great that people sacrifice core values, defining characteristics, foundational principles and professional standards, we plunge from the rational into the psychopathological. When that descent involves Jews, we have a term to describe it: not "just" anti-Zionism, today's trendiest hatred, but anti-Semitism, the world's oldest hatred. ■

What are your 100 essential Jewish books?

Sara Horowitz

During a festival that celebrates the freedom and spiritual redemption of the Jewish People, how can we not add a compelling fifth question: what is the future of Jewish peoplehood? In an era characterized by rapid social change, we wonder what the Jewish world will look like in 100 years. Will we transmit our traditions down to later generations?

Surveys and other vehicles of measurement focus on such things as institutional affiliation, neighbourhoods, dating choices and schooling – all valid factors. Alarm bells sound – we're losing ground. Perhaps. But it's worth remembering that as a people and a culture, Jews have experienced cataclysmic sea changes, morphing, adapting, redefining and at the same time retaining something solid at the core.

It's hard for most of us to look at Jewish history without imprinting our own experience on it. Religiously observant post-biblical Jews, for example, impose the laws of kashrut on our forefathers and foremothers, place a tallit on Abraham's shoulder's while he binds his son on the altar and credit Jacob with composing the Minchah (afternoon) service. Some socially conservative students imagine their long-ago Eastern European Jewish great-great-etc. grandmothers as stay-at-home-moms, leaving the breadwinning to their spouses. They model this imagined arrangement on 20th-century bourgeois families, not the realities of shtetl life, where stay-at-home and working were synonymous, not mutually exclusive.

What Jews are and how Jews live changes over time. At the same time, there must be some constants if Jewishness is not to fade into non-existence. One subtext of the currently airing BBC series *The Story of the Jews* is a meditation on what comprises those necessary constants. The series is narrated and conceptualized by Simon Schama, a gifted British historian . A London-born Jew of Ashkenazi and Sephardi family background, Schama makes his point verbally and visually. The Torah – by which he means the text and scroll – unites Jews worldwide and through time, and has done so since Sinai. But Schama doesn't mean only the Torah. Again and again, he points to the Torah as the origin of a tradition of transmitting stories – stories about the Jewish past, but also stories that reflect the Jewish present, that impart Jewish meaning, stories that may begin orally, but eventually find their way into Jewish texts.

Consider this a call for a commitment to Jewish texts, to reading Jewish books. In a PhD program, it's not uncommon to ask students to create and master a list of 100 books in his or her field. If Jewishness, Judaica, or Judaism were the field, what books would you put on it? Which would provide sufficient familiarity with Jewish history, stories and ways of being, to enable the reader to think with Jewish ethics in mind about the complicated issues that surround our lives.

Different folks, different lists. The first few choices would be simple. Then it would get interesting. My guess is there would be areas of great overlap and significant areas of difference. For many, they would blur the line between religious and secular, perhaps reading sacred texts through a secular lens or discerning the sacred in a secular text.

I'm not suggesting a Jewish canon . In fact, I'm suggesting just the opposite – an anti-canon, if you like. The very act of compiling a list is enfolded in deciding what sort of Jewish life and Jewish community you envision for yourself, what sort of Jewish commitments are close to your heart, how you wish to nurture a Jewish ethic and what life issues demand a Jewish lens.

One hundred is a daunting number if we think about reading the books in a compressed period of time, as doctoral students do. But what if there's no time limit? Just begin, take as long as necessary, digest, think and go on to the next. Read with a partner, a group, a teacher or solo.

The signature exercise in Pilates is called doing the hundreds. A simple form to master, it does wonders to strengthen the core. Want to strengthen the Jewish core? Let's do the Jewish hundred. ■

What are your essential books? Email us at cjninfo@gmail.com

OPINION

The Israel trap

Adam Goldenberg

As a Liberal staffer during the 2008 federal election, I often received incredulous emails from Jewish friends who wondered how I could possibly be trying to defeat Stephen Harper, a prime minister who was such an adamant supporter of Israel. When I worked for Michael Ignatieff, I was treated to regular pronouncements that my boss was an anti-Semite.

Too often, I'd take the bait. "Harper didn't change Canada's voting record at the United Nations. Paul Martin did!" I'd protest. "The Conservatives haven't actually changed the content of Canada's Middle East policy since they took office!"

For non-Conservative Jews, this is the Israel trap: the temptation to argue endlessly about the Jewish state with friends for whom it is the single most important subject in Canadian politics. By playing their game, we've all been complicit in turning Canadian Jews into single-issue voters for the first time in our community's history.

This hasn't happened by accident. It used to be that, as a community, our political priorities were distinctly multifaceted. Irwin Cotler and Canadian Jewish Congress helped to craft the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. David Lewis and Dave Barrett were powerful voices in social democratic politics. In Ontario, Eddie Goodman led the "Big Blue Machine" through decades of Progressive Conservative rule.

Jews who voted Conservative used to do so because they were true conservatives – because they shared the party's views on the economy, the environment and health care. Many of these partisans have spent the past decade trying to persuade the rest of us to join them, and they've used Israel as a wedge to win Jewish votes. It's worked. Exit polls after the 2011 federal election indicated 52 per cent of Jewish voters marked their ballots for a Tory candidate.

In the United States, Jewish Republicans have tried to replicate their Canadian cousins' success, to no avail. Nearly 70 per cent of American Jews voted to re-elect President Barack Obama in 2012, despite a multimillion-dollar effort – led by billionaire casino magnate Sheldon Adelson and groups such as the Republican Jewish Coalition – to paint the Democrats as insufficiently hawkish in their support of Israel. In a 2013 poll by the American Jewish Committee, 52 per cent of American Jews identified as Democrats, and just 15 per cent as Republicans. A 2012 poll by the same organization, identified the economy, not Israel, as the most important election issue for Jewish voters by a wide margin.

It could be that, as conservatives go, our Tories are simply less menacing than their Republicans, so Canadian Jews who are politically moderate might be more willing to support right-wing politicians in Canada than they would be in the United States. But to explain a phenomenon is not to deny it. Anyone who has discussed politics at a seder table in the past decade will confirm that Canadian Jews who vote Conservative are likely to do so because of one issue more than any other: Israel.

Of course, not every Jew who votes Tory does so solely, or even primarily, because of the prime minister's pro-Israel rhetoric. But the manner in which our community interacts with our country's politics has unquestionably changed. Party operatives of every stripe have come to think of Jews as single-issue voters, and our community's elites seem keen to prove them right.

Look no further than Canadian Jewish Congress. For more than 90 years, its advocacy focused as much on human rights at home and abroad as on the Middle East. When it disappeared in 2011, the leaders of the organization that replaced it dropped Canada from its new name, the "Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs." Canada's most prominent Jewish organization now refers to just one country – and it isn't ours.

This Passover, Harper will undoubtedly be praised from shul pulpits across Canada, and not just by the 21 rabbis he brought to Israel. Between now and the 2015 election, you'll likely see the photo of the prime minister at the Kotel – which Tory MP Mark Adler infamously described as "the million-dollar shot" – in campaign leaflets and ads. The panoply of political concerns that once defined the Jewish community will continue to fade into the background.

No one forced Canadian Jews into the Israel trap, and no politician can keep us there. But if we don't want our leaders to see us as single-issue voters, it's time we stopped acting that way. ■

Canadian Jews will remain in the Tory camp

Michael Taube

Stephen Harper became Canada's 22nd prime minister in February 2006. Since that time, he has worked extremely hard to build stronger ties between the Conservative Party and Canada's Jewish community.

To Harper's credit, his efforts have been quite successful. An Ipsos-Reid exit poll noted that 52 per cent of Canadian Jews voted for the Tories in the 2011 federal election. While a higher number would have been more desirable, it's a start in the right direction.

Many left-wing Jews have tried to dismiss these important Tory gains as a short-term political phenomenon. "It's all because of Harper's pro-Israel stance," some have said. "The Jewish community doesn't believe in the right-wing political and economic ideas that the Tories espouse," argue others. "In time, they'll all go back to their natural political homes and vote either Liberal or NDP," a few triumphantly proclaim.

A fascinating analysis, to be sure. If I may borrow a line from William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "Lord, what fools these mortals be!"

All kidding aside, it's easy to understand the left's terse reaction. In my view, the political tide has turned in Canada – not temporarily, but permanently. Historic political allegiances and perceived voting behaviour are things of the past. In their place, Canadian Jews (especially younger ones) now understand the Tories aren't the political bogeymen the older generation once feared and resisted. They realize that Jewish values and Tory values have a great deal in common, and this important relationship will only continue to get stronger.

It's true that some Canadian Jews supported Harper and the Tories due to their strong defence of Israel. They would be regarded as single-issue voters, something that all political parties have to deal with during election cycles. Many of these individuals cannot be counted on for long-term support, but some will seek out a better understanding of Tory policies and principles. In time, they may like what they see.

Meanwhile, Harper and the Tories aren't advancing, and have never advanced, a right-wing political and economic agenda since taking office. No federal or provincial political party on the right has ever done this in our country's history. (Some of us wish they had, but that's a different story.) Rather, they're following a political and economic path shaped by incremental conservatism. As noted by the University of Calgary's Tom Flanagan, this particular strategy leads to "endorsing even very small steps if they are in the right direction, and accepting inaction in areas that can't feasibly be changed right now, but opposing government initiatives that are clearly going the wrong way."

This helps explain why the Tories have consistently favoured targeted tax credits instead of broad-based tax relief; why they have supported small-scale private reforms to social services, and maintained commitments to publicly funded programs like universal health care, and why they have promoted a stronger role for Canada in international affairs rather than simply abandoning hapless organizations like the United Nations.

There is no hidden Tory political agenda. There is no elaborate scheme to dramatically alter Canadian ideas and values. Rather, these policies are designed to decrease government's overwhelming role in our daily lives and increase individual rights, economic freedom and democratic values.

Have there been some bumps in the road? Of course. Last year's Senate scandal was a huge political setback for the Tory government. At the same time, the elimination of the federal budget deficit in 2015, the open skies agreement with Mexico, and the monumental trade deal with the European Union are all direct results of the Tory policy of incremental conservatism.

Harper's steady political hand and economic stewardship have made us a financial success among G20 countries. His vital interest in foreign policy matters has made our country a leader on the international stage. And, of course, his principled and honourable support for Israel is commendable and deserves our thanks.

Sure, there will always be Jews who vote for left-wing parties. Yet a growing number of them realize a Tory-led Canada has greater political and economic potential than a Liberal-led Canada ever did. Contrary to popular belief, they're not going to abandon the Tories anytime soon. ■

News GTA

York U, Technion agree to partnership

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

The Lassonde School of Engineering at York University and the Technion Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa have entered into a strategic partnership that could ultimately see students at the two educational institutions jointly develop commercially viable projects.

The partnership will allow Lassonde students to develop their entrepreneurial skills based on the Technion model, said Janusz Kozinski, dean of Lassonde.

"Twenty-five of our people will go to the Technion and learn just how they do entrepreneurial education," Kozinski explained.

The Lassonde personnel are particularly interested in learning "how they create an ecosystem at the Technion that's the best in the world, better than MIT," he added. "It's a unique opportunity to learn from the best."

The "first phase" or "test drive" of the project is scheduled to kick off in August, when 25 Lassonde students, faculty and administrators will visit the Technion's Haifa campus "to learn more about the educational approach and how they teach entrepreneurship," said Kozinski.

Spokespeople for the Technion welcome the arrangement with Lassonde.

"The program that the Lassonde School of Engineering and York University aims to take at Technion in August is a first step in a more comprehensive and large scale co-operation between the universities," said Ariel Geva, managing director of Technion's International School in Israel.

"The Lassonde project is both the first time it is done with a Canadian university and also the longest faculty led entrepreneurship program. Technion e.Xpert Program aims at capitalizing on Israel's innovative and entrepreneurial success and the Technion's reputation as a world-class academic institution with a solid track record in entrepreneurial activity both on campus and through its alumni. The program is based on partnering with peer leading schools to enrich students' knowledge in entrepreneurship," Geva added.

Following the initial week at the Technion's campus, students will head off for one week at spinoff companies created by Technion students.

In the last week they will visit larger, more mature companies whose businesses are related to the ventures they hope to start in Canada. That way students and faculty can witness first hand the entire chain – from education, to startup to mature corporation, Kozinski said.

The Lassonde participants are particularly interested in medical devices, public safety and security solutions, as well as civil infrastructure, including buildings, roads and materials, he added.

The second phase of the proposed arrangement will see participants from both sides jointly invest in businesses they create together.

Janusz Kozinski

> *Program aims at capitalizing on Israel's innovative and entrepreneurial succcess and Technion's reputation as a world-class academic institution*

So far, Lassonde students seem to be quite enthusiastic about the partnership with Technion, Kozinski said. A preliminary meeting that featured a talk by Hershel Recht, national development director of Technion Canada, was well attended.

"I've never had so many undergraduate students at a meeting with the dean," Kozinski said. "They are into it."

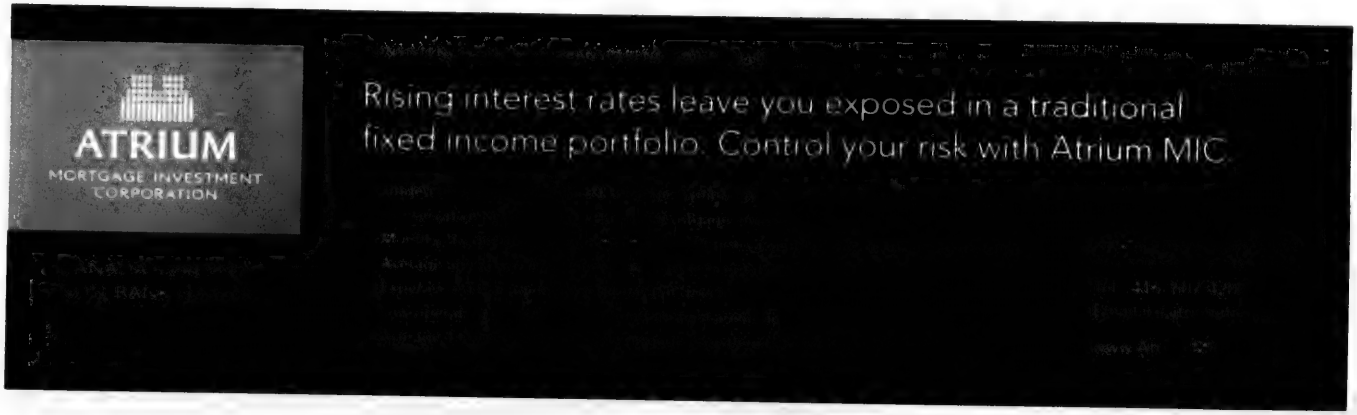
Asked whether there were any naysayers at the university, who object to joint programs with an Israeli school, Kozinski said, "There is always some place for nonsense in the world. It's inevitable. We're doing what's best for our students and faculty.

"If you want to do something for the betterment of the school and students, then I don't think there will be any problem with it."

Geva said a recent MIT survey ranked Technion as one of the world's leading universities – in sixth place – for "Creating an Eco-System of Entrepreneurship and Innovation," but as the top university for doing so under challenging circumstances.

Technion, he noted, has trained many of the country's top engineers and managers.

It has been at the forefront of the innovation and entrepreneurship that has led Israel to be dubbed "start-up nation," said Geva. ■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Rabbis shave their heads for cancer research

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Rabbi Micah Streiffer of Temple Kol Ami in Thornhill and Rabbi Stephen Wise of Shaarei-Beth El Congregation in Oakville participated in a fundraising initiative called Shave for the Brave April 1 at the annual Reform rabbinical convention in Chicago.

Seventy-four Reform rabbis from across North America took part in the shave, inspired by rabbis Phyllis and Michael Sommer's eight-year-old son, "Superman Sam," a nickname he acquired during his brave fight against cancer.

"Superman Sam" was diagnosed in June 2012 with acute myeloid leukemia and died on Dec. 14.

The participating rabbis have raised almost $600,000 for St. Baldrick's Foundation, a charity committed to funding the most promising research on childhood cancers.

"My young cousin, Olivia Wise, recently passed away. When I heard that 'Superman Sam' had died, that hit close to home. We are a very tight-knit community, and I wanted to pay tribute to my cousin, Olivia, and to Sam, as well.

Rabbi Stephen Wise, left, and Rabbi Micah Streiffer after the shave. Inset: Sam Sommer aka 'Superman Sam'

"I was nervous about shaving my head, but I think that is why this works because it is something you don't normally do – it was an opportunity for all of us to do something out of our comfort zone," Rabbi Wise said.

"For me, shaving my head was the least I could do to recognize the pain and the bravery of these extraordinary people [rabbis Phyllis and Michael Sommer] who went though this, and of this wonderful, amazing child whose life was lost far too early," said Rabbi Streiffer.

The shave was watched by several hundred rabbis following their evening program. The participating rabbis were given green St. Baldrick T-shirts – though some chose to wear Superman T-shirts – as well as a specially designed kippah.

"The cameras were rolling, as was a live stream [people as far away as Israel were watching]. The rabbis were called up on stage. Sam's parents spoke to the crowd about how much money had been raised and how meaningful this was to them. Eight barbers from the Chicago area rolled out plastic across the stage and pulled out their clippers and started shaving us while hundreds of rabbis were cheering and clapping," Rabbi Wise said.

"Superman Sam was the inspiration, but everybody there had a story of someone they knew affected by childhood cancer."

According to the Childhood Cancer Canada Foundation, about 10,000 children are living with cancer in Canada. Each year, about 1,500 cases are diagnosed. Leukemia as well as tumors of the brain and nervous system, lymphatic system, kidneys, bones and muscles are the most common childhood cancers.

Cancers are responsible for more childhood deaths in this country than any other disease – more than asthma, diabetes, cystic fibrosis and AIDS combined. About one in four children who are diagnosed with cancer will die of the disease.

Rabbi Streiffer told *The CJN* about his new bald look.

"My head is cold and I am having a little trouble keeping a kippah on my head. People have suggested double-stick or superglue," he said.

"On the other hand, it's very conspicuous, and it has given me an opportunity to talk to people about this cause. When someone comes up to me and asks, 'Why are you bald?' suddenly it gives me the opportunity to let them know why I did this and why this cause was important, and why I participated in this initiative." ■

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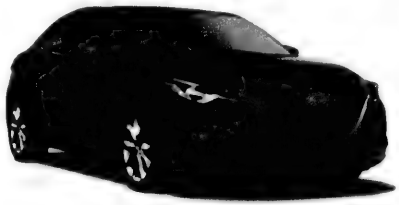

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Irwin Igra had consented to donate his organs before his death.

Health

Organ donation: It's completely kosher

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Irwin Igra collapsed with a brain aneurysm last April 24 and was rushed to Toronto's St. Michael's Hospital. He was declared brain dead 24 hours later.

Igra and his wife, Joanne Shinwell, had signed the back of their drivers' licences "years ago," she said, registering their consent to donate their organs and tissue. Still, she says, "I'd been indoctrinated that Jews can't do it."

Shinwell knew she wanted her husband's organs and tissues to be donated, but she also wanted to be absolutely sure it was "kosher." She was worried that her husband wouldn't be buried in a Jewish cemetery without his organs and tissues intact.

From the hospital, Shinwell had telephoned David Rosen, the cantor of the couple's shul, Beth Radom Congregation, and he came down to speak to the family, which includes two children: Danielle, who's now 21, and Jonathan, 18.

When she asked Rosen about organ donation, the cantor told her "most definitely, it's better to save a life" and assured her "it was OK," she said, and that her husband could still be buried in a Jewish cemetery.

The hospital then contacted the Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGL), an Ontario government agency that plans, promotes, co-ordinates and supports organ and tissue donation and transplantation across Ontario. Shinwell was put in touch with a Trillium representative.

"The people at Trillium were so respectful of how we were feeling," Shinwell said. "She [the Trillium representative] answered every question, every concern. She followed up with us the next day. She was very empathic."

Igra, a self-employed senior investment adviser who volunteered in the minor hockey community, was well known. His funeral was attended by about 1,000 people. Shinwell said her husband was a gregarious fellow with a big, booming voice. "He made it his business to speak to as many people as possible."

Minutes before the funeral, "we got the message that Irwin's retinas were being planted," Shinwell said. "It was very comforting for me." She added that her husband's kidneys and cornea were also donated, along with various tissues for research. "Out of that terrible situation, something good happened. Someone can see, someone doesn't have to be on dialysis."

Shinwell said she and her husband were a normal couple in a normal family when the tragedy struck. "You don't expect anything like this to happen," she said, adding that "you need to have a conversation with your loved ones. As awful as it was, I knew what I wanted because we spoke about it, because those are tough decisions to make."

With her husband's birthday coming up, Shinwell will be speaking at Beth Radom's organ and tissue donation educational event on May 5, along with Dov Altman, who had a double lung transplant last year, Rosen, who donated a kidney to his mother, and a rabbi who will discuss organ donation and Halachah.

Education is one of the mandates of the National Council of Jewish Women Canada's (NCJWC) Gift of Life Organ and Tissue Donation Program. NCJWC partnered with TGL in 2011.

Rates of registration for organ donation are low, according to TGL – 24 per cent in Ontario and 15 per cent in Toronto – and people are dying waiting for transplants. At this writing, 1,534 people are waiting for organ transplants in Ontario. In 2012, 161 Canadians died while they were waiting, 97 of them in Ontario, according to a Canadian Institute of Health report. One donor can save up to eight lives and enhance the lives of up to 75 others through tissue donation.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka, chair of the TGL board, helped the NCJWC create literature that explains the Jewish view of organ and tissue donation. "The value of pikuach nefesh (saving a life), which is at the core of organ donation, is a principle shared by the entire Jewish community, regardless of denominational affiliation," the literature states.

To the question, doesn't Judaism require us to be buried with our bodies intact?, the literature states that "Judaism clearly draws a distinction in the case of donating organs and tissues in order to save a life. The saving of a life is the greatest mitzvah a Jew can perform. This is an overriding principle."

Ronda Pinsky, chair of NCJWC's gift of life program, said that most Jews she speaks to say they believe organ donation is a good thing but "they're scared, so we combat that."

NCJWC fights that fear by holding educational events. The group is currently using Facebook to promote the cause, and in future they will be using other social media. NCJWC also asks local rabbis to add the subject of organ donation to their sermons on yontif.

The NCJWC-Toronto be-a-donor web page, online at https://beadonor.ca/ncjwc-ts, which was put up in April 2012 and aimed for 200 registrations, now has 394. Pinsky said that it's important to register, not just to sign the back of your driver's licence or keep a yellow donor card in your pocket, as they may not be accessible in an emergency. ■

April is BeADonor Month in Ontario. For it, the NCJWC is holding an event to promote organ and tissue donation registration, along with a blood donor clinic, at the NCJWC building at 4700 Bathurst St. in Toronto on April 28.

Guest Voice

Downtown Toronto is a whole different world

CHARLES HELLER

South of St Clair Avenue is a foreign country: they do things differently there.

"I wouldn't live downtown if you paid me!" said our friend B., when we told him we'd moved out of Bathurst Manor. "Wait till the winter! You'll never get out of the lane!"

He was right. We got stuck in the unplowed snowdrifts so often that we ended up having to buy a new car that could get us out. But the best solution was to get rid of our second car altogether. The traffic is terrible, you get stuck behind streetcars, and parking is expensive – $3 just to get to the morning minyan (and an extra $1 for time to enjoy our man Dave's deluxe breakfast – scrambled eggs, pancakes, and kippers on a good day!).

Who needs a car if everything is within walking distance? Stores, concerts, movies, shuls: there's the Kiever and the Minsker in their beautiful original buildings, with signs and inscriptions in the distinctive downtown Toronto Yiddish dialect: *Shul gebildet in 1930* (This shul was built in 1930), *Men darf du gor nisht dreyen* (Absolutely no wandering around during the service), *Avegzetsen oyf a seat* (Sit in your seat!), "We have the best *baalei tefiles*" (prayer leaders).

Then there are the new communities covering the entire religious and gender spectrum. On the first night of Shavuot, hundreds of people converge at the Miles Nadel JCC for the all-night *tikkun*, with learning sessions covering every conceivable (and inconceivable) topic of Jewish interest, organized in conjunction with Limmud. Of course there are vegan snacks all through the night – you can't be downtown without a vegan alternative. (How fondly I recall those Bathurst Manor street parties of yore, with their kosher hot dogs and doughnuts! A heart attack in every bite, God forbid.)

Walking is good for you. The City of Toronto has actually mapped out which neighbourhoods have the fittest people – it's the ones downtown, where every street has sidewalks and there is something interesting to see on the corner. By walking around, you bump into people, and from these unplanned interactions emerge the ideas that make cities work. People have written books about this, starting with the classic *Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs, the patron saint of downtown. There is even a whole subject area about it, called "emergence".

> *Who needs a car if everything is within walking distance? Stores, concerts, movies, shuls: there's the Kiever and the Minsker in their beautiful original buildings, with signs and inscriptions in the distinctive downtown Toronto Yiddish dialect*

And talking of emergence, how about this: every month I like to get to the Yiddish Vinkl, which meets at the Free Times Café on College Street. I was on my way there recently when I bumped into Sabrina from Shoresh Organic Farm (I love their logo – a Magen David made out of beetroot). Which is how I found out about the plans to plant a vegetable garden at the Kiever shul in memory of shul treasurer and patriarch Max Pinkus, who died last year at age 100 – a remarkable testimony to the benefits of healthy eating. All we need is a break in the weather, and we're ready for planting.

Toronto Jews have identified with the reawakened sense of downtown as a desirable place to live, and the historic Jewish downtown, which was for a time on the verge of being abandoned, is now being revitalized. New congregations have sprung up, such as Rabbi Aaron Levy's Makom and, more recently, Rabbi Elyse Goldstein's City Shul.

And now the Koffler Centre of the Arts has moved to spanking new premises at Queen and Shaw. On opening night, as I walked past the First Nations drummer, I bumped into my friend Moish, who I usually see at the Markham Street shul *sholosh sudes* on Saturday afternoons.

"Nu," he said, "isn't it a *mechayeh* (a life-enriching experience) to be down here?!" ■

Charles Heller is the award-winning author of What To Listen For in Jewish Music *(www.ecanthuspress.com). He lives in downtown Toronto.*

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Robbins' students win debating tournament

CJN STAFF

Robbins Hebrew Academy (RHA) students, Jack Lipton and Danielle Sharir-Smith, standing in back, comprised the winning team at the fourth annual Jewish Middle School Debate Tournament, held at Leo Baeck Day School's north campus on April 3.

Tournament judges were, seated, Joel Kurtz, Amy Goldsweig, and Eli Savage, standing at right, a Leo Baeck Middle School teacher and tournament founder.

With seven schools, the debating competition saw its largest participation yet, including Associated Hebrew Schools (Danilack campus), Bialik Hebrew Day School, The Toronto Heschel School, both campuses of Leo Baeck, Netivot Hatorah, and RHA.

"We started with three participating schools and fewer than 50 students," said Savage, who initiated the tournament four years ago. "Now it has grown to seven schools, incorporating 150 students."

The goal was not only to bring the broader Jewish student community together, but also to fill a certain void.

"In today's generation," said Savage, "face to face communication is dying out, and thus the skills are diminishing. This heightens the importance of debating."

Seeing it more as an experience than as a competition, Savage believes it reinforces students' sense of Jewish community and dreams of expanding it to other cities in Canada and North America. ■

DAVID BALE PHOTO

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS

CJN

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Community invited to celebrate Mimouna

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@cjnews.com

A Toronto-based organization that promotes Moroccan-Jewish culture will be hosting a Mimouna celebration to mark the end of Pesach and the beginning of a new agricultural season.

Simon Keslassy, the president of the Communauté Juive Marocaine de Toronto (CJMT), which represents the 18,000-strong Moroccan-Jewish community in Toronto, said this event, scheduled for April 22 at the Sephardic Kehila Centre, is a first for his organization.

The origins of the celebration, held the evening that Pesach ends, are unclear, but some believe it marks the death date of Maimon ben Joseph, the father of the great Jewish philosopher, Maimonides.

Others believe the tradition is linked to the Arabic word for health and good fortune, *ma'amoun*.

In addition to being able to eat chametz again, Mimouna also marks the beginning of spring.

Keslassy said he hopes this event, sponsored by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, will attract people from both the Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities in Toronto.

> *We celebrate this in Israel, Morocco and France, and everywhere where there are people of Sephardi heritage origins*

"We celebrate this in Israel, Morocco and France, and everywhere where there are people of Sephardi heritage origins," he said.

"That's why we invite the Ashkenazim to be part of it, so they know what Mimouna is all about."

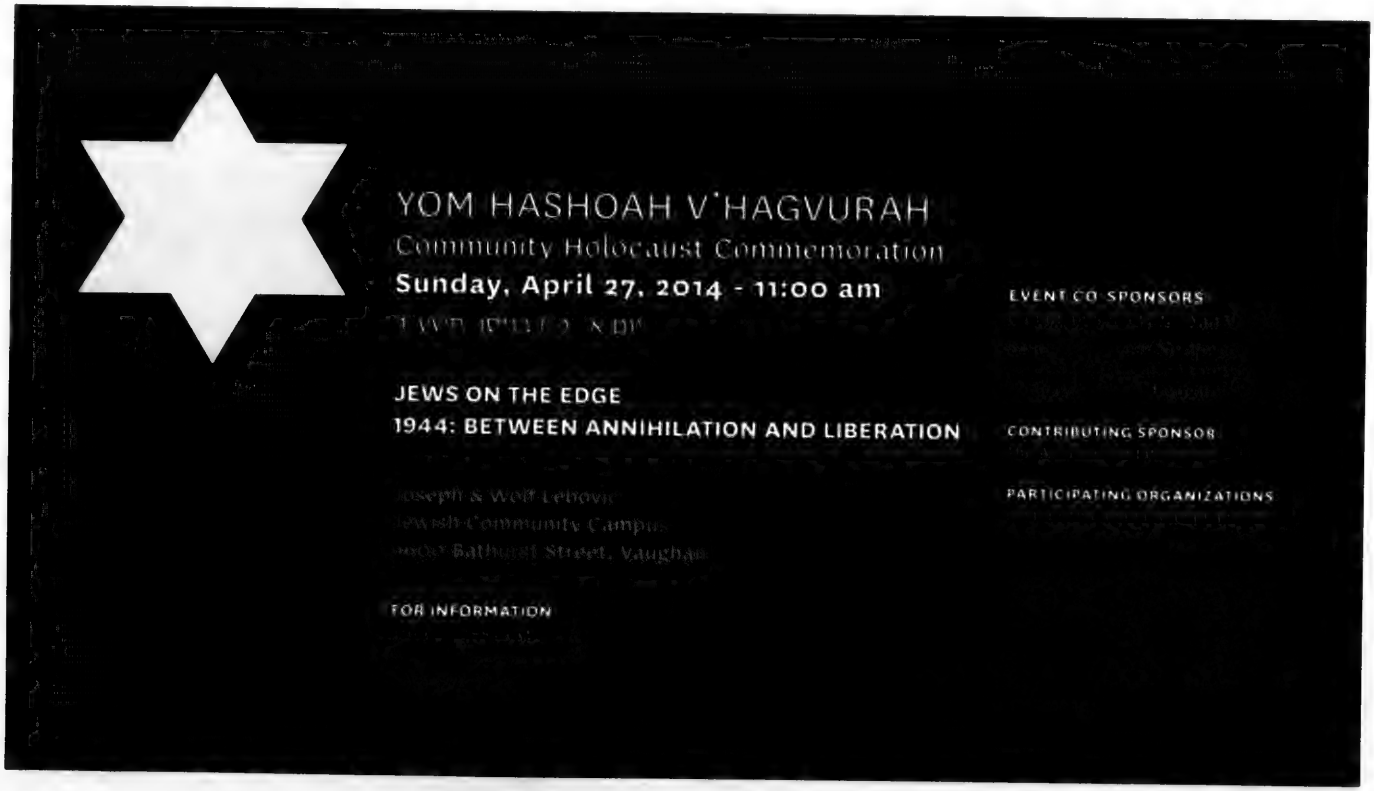
The event will feature a sweet table featuring traditional Moroccan treats, including *moufletta*, a thin, fried crepe drizzled with honey.

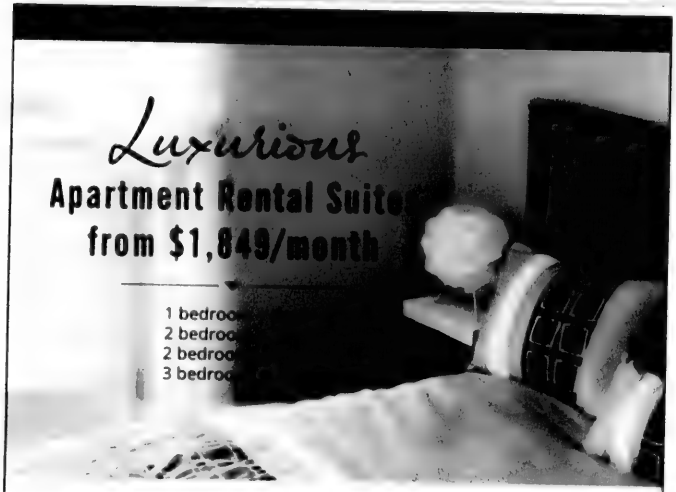
"*Moufletta* is one custom for every Moroccan, so we're going to have that," he said.

"We're also going to have lettuce with honey. It's significant because we say a brachah to the children with the lettuce and honey... that this year will be a prosperous year," Keslassy said, adding that this custom is the most important one.

Celebrating the end of the Passover holiday with the traditional North-African Mimouna ceremony in Rehovot ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

The event will also feature music and a film screening about the tradition of Mimouna in different Moroccan cities. The guests are encouraged to wear traditional Moroccan garb – jilabas and kaftans. ■





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Incidents of anti-Semitism fell in 2013: B'nai Brith

CJN STAFF

Canada-wide incidents of vandalism, violence and harassment targeting the Jewish community dropped by 5.3 per cent in 2013 compared to the year before, according to the Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, published by the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada.

Altogether 1,274 cases were recorded by the League. While harassment dropped by 13.9 per cent in 2013 from 2012, incidents of vandalism and violence increased by 21.6 per cent and 7.7 per cent respectively.

The League speculated that reporting of harassment may be down because of feared social repercussions and retaliation in the workforce, plus the reluctance of law enforcement to "resolve complaints."

The overall trend over 10 years showed a 49 per cent increase in the level of anti-Semitism in Canada, said Frank Dimant, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada.

"Although the numbers for this year are down slightly, hatred of Jews has veered so far into normative discourse that it is no longer seen as wrong," said Dimant.

Anti-Semitic imagery and harassment is especially prevalent on Canadian campuses, he added.

"The de facto replacement of 'The Jew' with Israel, combined with the constant barrage of Holocaust imagery in relation to the Jewish state and Jews and its supporters, create a visceral sense of apprehension," Dimant said. ■

Plenty-o-Gefiltefish in this group

Seen at a recent brunch of Plenty-o-Gefiltefish are, from left, organizers Giselle Gasper, Ron Dragushan, Anne Gewurtz and Raya Kuperman.

CYNTHIA GASNER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The social media have revolutionized the way people meet.

Ron Dragushan was not looking for a website for Jewish singles 45 and over when he came across a Toronto Meetup group called Plenty-o-Gefiltefish.

"When you are in your 50s or 60s, Jewish older adults want to meet new people" says Dragushan, a divorced 60-plus technical writer and media specialist with an 11-year-old daughter. Until recently, there were very few non-pressure places to meet.

"Now it is as easy as turning on your computer for real-life connections."

Dragushan, who is one of the organizers of Plenty-o-Gefiltefish, told *The CJN* that today, boomers and beyond – never marrieds, divorced and widowed – are looking for networks of friends for social activities, and they look to the growing number of Meetup groups.

"At Plenty-o-Gefiltefish we have people with numerous interests, and we organize potlucks, day trips, holiday celebrations, pub nights, book reviews, theatre, fund-raising events and more."

Plenty-o-Gefiltefish was formed in 2010 by Beth Komito-Gottlieb. There are now more than 450 members.

When people register for membership on the Internet, which is free, they are asked, "Are you Jewish, single and between 45 and 69?"

But, he added, "we don't kick out anyone if they turn 70."

Members can post pictures and a profile describing themselves. Although some members contact other members with similar interests, most meet other members at planned events.

"This is a more casual and a low-stress way of meeting other singles. Although this is not a dating site, some people have made lasting relationships."

Members pay only for the events they participate in, Dragushan said. "They only pay in advance when there are costs involved, such as for food at a restaurant."

Plenty-o-Gefiltefish is organized by volunteers. ■

For more information, go to the Plenty-o-Gefiltefish website, www.meetup.com/Plenty-o-Gefiltefish.

A sense of collective Jewish identification

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Israeli films will by definition be considered Jewish films, be they documentary or narrative, animated or live action.

Narrative films are more difficult to categorize than documentaries. A film, such as *Twelve Years a Slave*, whose subject is marginalized people or enslavement or religious freedom or genocide will be of profound interest to a Jewish audience, but would not be deemed a "Jewish film" if it is not explicitly about a Jewish character or theme: Israel, the Diaspora, Jewish identity, Jewish characters struggling with their religious or cultural heritage, interfaith challenges, religious conflict, Jews in the arts.

However we may define a Jewish film, we probably come back to "we know it when we see it." Happily, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival programmers and the festival help us see, learn from and enjoy a myriad of narratives and documentaries that enlarge our Jewish perspective and engage our imaginations.

STUART HANDS
TJFF program manager

As program manager, the answer for me is quite elusive, especially when it comes to representations of secular Jewish identity.

This question brings to mind my first year working at TJFF, when I helped Ellie Skrow curate a series of films that explored the relationship between blacks and Jews in the creation of American music. At the same time, I was completing my master's degree relating to Jews and the Popular Front in the '30s and '40s, of which singer/actor/activist Paul Robeson was a significant icon.

So Ellie and I both felt strongly about including a documentary on Robeson in the context of the series, even though the film itself contained barely any reference to his strong Jewish fan base, or the fact that he sang many Jewish folk songs in Hebrew and Yiddish.

To our delight, the Robeson film was the very first screening to sell out that year. I have never seen a TJFF audience quite as passionate as the one that showed up on that sunny Friday afternoon. Several men, then in their 90s, came up to us, enthusiastically recalling seeing Robeson in concert many years before. And there was much cheering during the screening itself, cheering his music as well as his political integrity, which most of that audience still cherished.

Although perhaps the Robeson documentary was not a "Jewish film" in the strictest sense of the term, it produced a passionate feeling of collective identification among a specifically Jewish audience, which to me felt quite magical. Allowing such experiences to happen, and the possibility to reflect on them, is very important to me as a programmer at TJFF.

SUSAN STARKMAN
TJFF programmer

Few questions generate more debate in our programming meetings than what constitutes a Jewish film. Like the various branches of Judaism, the responses range from clearly defined orthodox positions to more liberal interpretations. *Heeb* magazine's list of top 100 Jewish movie moments fits into the former category, citing films with overtly Jewish content.

In contrast, *Tablet* magazine's recent top 100 Jewish films fits squarely in the latter group. Its No. 1 Jewish movie of all time: *E.T.* The film's Jewish sense of "exilic longing" and "existential dread" were offered by the editors as reasons for bestowing the coveted position on this less than obvious choice.

Though I can understand the reasoning behind *Tablet*'s decision to see *E.T.* as a Jewish film, I can't say I agree. Any film can be seen through a Jewish lens, but that does not make it a Jewish film. Consequently, assigning a Jewish label to *E.T.* seems to be imposing a Jewish perspective that is not in keeping with the film's other tropes.

Admittedly, my own opinion on what defines a Jewish film is based rather more on gut feeling than on any hard and fast definition. However, I do believe that to merit a position in a Jewish film festival, the Jewish element needs to stem organically from within the film. A Jewish film is one whose content, at least in part, reflects on, illuminates, or even obfuscates some aspect of the Jewish "experience."

This year's inclusion of *Marvin Seth and Stanley* in the TJFF is a perfect example. Apart from the family's surname (Greenstein), there is little overt Jewish content in it. However, the family dynamics, the dialogue and the overall sensibility of the film are inarguably Jewish.

The definition of a Jewish film, like Judaism itself, is evolving. Undoubtedly, the programming team at the festival will continue to debate this same question with the intensity of yeshiva students arguing over an obscure talmudic passage. How Jewish is that? ■

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NATIONAL

Quebec Jews welcome Liberal victory

JANICE ARNOLD
MONTREAL
jarnold@cjnews.ca

There is a sense in the Montreal Jewish community that Quebec has entered a new political and social era with the election of a majority Liberal government on April 7.

Whether the defeat of the Parti Québécois (PQ) after 18 months in office was a rejection of its proposed charter of values or the possibility of another sovereignty referendum, or, in fact, support for Philippe Couillard's offer of a stable government that focuses on the issues that affect people most directly, Quebec has emerged from under the cloud of sectarian strife.

Public opinions polls in the latter half of the 33-day campaign showed the Liberals were steadily gaining in popularity, yet few federalists dared count on the party's capturing 70 of the 125 seats in the National Assembly and more than 41 per cent of the popular vote.

Community leaders are already speaking of a much more positive climate where Jews "view themselves as part and parcel of Quebec and see their future here.

"The charter had broken a modus vivendi in Quebec in which we had acknowledged the French fact... But all of a sudden, you not only had to speak French, but kowtow to the government in how you express your religious beliefs," Luciano Del Negro, Quebec vice-president of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

The new government, he believes, must immediately repair the harm caused by the "toxic" debate over the charter that the PQ launched last August leading up to the tabling of Bill 60 in November.

While Del Negro agrees the charter was not a major issue in the election campaign, he interprets the result as a "clear no" from Quebecers to what he sees as having been a cynical ploy by the PQ to stir up anxiety over the growth of religious minorities in order to get a majority and then create favourable conditions for a third referendum.

"This is a resounding vote of confidence that we are all Quebecers, it's the defeat of a divisive vision... It's not so much the end of the independence movement, but that the PQ is no longer seen as representing a force for progress, especially among the young."

The increasing strength of the third-party Coalition Avenir Québec, which gained four seats to 22, is also indicative of the desire for a new way, he thinks.

"The PQ was the architect of its own demise. It threw away its principles. It sold its soul... It's a bit ironic that the party that was musing about firing workers [who defied the charter's ban on religious symbols among public employees] got fired themselves."

The non-partisan CIJA's tepid relations with Premier Pauline Marois soured during the campaign when she refused to repudiate her Gouin candidate, Louise Mailloux, whom CIJA accused of anti-Semitism for alleging kashrut certification is, essentially, a racket in which all Quebecers are victims.

Philippe Couillard

Mailloux, a college philosophy teacher, finished second, but almost 10,000 votes behind the incumbent, François David of Québec Solidaire.

As for Couillard, Del Negro said there is some history between him and the community from when he was health minister in Jean Charest's government and since he became leader last year.

"He has always been available to the community to discuss the charter and other matters," Del Negro said. "We look forward to his being the premier of all Quebecers."

Nevertheless, the possibility of some kind of new legislation reinforcing the principles of state neutrality and providing a framework for dealing with reasonable accommodation requests from religious groups can't be ruled out.

In January, the Liberal party issued its policy on the issue, which emphasized the necessity of public employees who represent state authority, such as police officers and prison guards, only being allowed to wear religious symbols after they have made the effort to "integrate."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Sole Jewish MNA took 92 per cent of the vote

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Couillard, a neurosurgeon who once practised in Saudi Arabia, stated at the time: "Our position hinges on respect for what we are and for what defines us collectively, historically and culturally. I understand and share concerns expressed by Quebecers regarding the rise of religious fundamentalism."

The Liberal position is that the primacy of state religious neutrality be included in the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (as Bill 60 proposed), and that any accommodation made for a person's religious beliefs be in keeping with that tenet, as well as respect for gender equality.

It was a Liberal government under Charest that a few years ago tabled Bill 94, which would have banned face coverings in the delivery or receipt of public services. It died on the order paper.

The most recent polls on the charter found 63 per cent in favour in Montreal and about 53 per cent in the regions, contradicting the assumption it played best with those less exposed to other cultures.

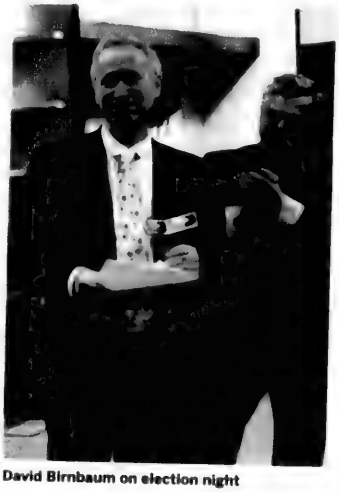
"I think the government should exercise extreme caution in re-opening the charter of rights," said Del Negro. "There is a consensus in Quebec on state secularism, the need for a framework to resolve reasonable accommodation requests, and on the equality of men and women, but the charter of rights is there fundamentally to protect minorities…

"The Jewish community has always been incredibly cautious in dealing with the charter of rights. It believes it is adequate. There is de facto recognition of state secularism and the human rights commission has jurisdiction to deal with reasonable accommodation."

The sole Jewish MNA, Liberal David Birnbaum, took 92 per cent of the vote in Montreal's D'Arcy McGee, the only riding with a Jewish majority. There is speculation the newcomer could be named to the cabinet, possibly the education portfolio.

"This is a new opportunity for Quebecers, whatever their background or affiliation, to be part of part of a movement forward, rather than division… What I saw in my riding was a great deal of sadness and anger over what might lie ahead if the PQ was re-elected. Now, they feel a part of Quebec again and that they are not looking from the outside at a very destructive [course the PQ was taking]."

Birnbaum, 58, was director general of the Quebec English School Boards Association and a past executive director of Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region. He replaces Lawrence Bergman, who resigned at the start of the campaign after 20 years in office.



David Birnbaum on election night

Elsewhere, the fourth-party Québec Solidaire (QS) elected a third member for the first time in its short history, Manon Massé in Ste. Marie-St. Jacques by a narrow 91 votes.

Massé, who has been a social justice activist for 30 years, was aboard the Canadian boat that was part of an international flotilla that attempted to reach Gaza in 2011. QS supported that unsuccessful effort to break the Israeli blockade and deliver purported humanitarian aid to the Palestinians.

The left-wing sovereigntist party officially endorses the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel.

Ste. Marie-St. Jacques is in the Plateau Mont-Royal, and encompasses the block on St. Denis Street where the Le Marcheur and Naot shoe stores are located, which have been targets of BDS demonstrators in the last few years.

Besides David, the QS MNA Amir Khadir, an outspoken critic of Israel, was re-elected for a third term in neighbouring Mercier riding.

Nevertheless, CIJA wants to keep the channels of communication open with all parties. "We have a fundamental disagreement with the QS… but as long as it is kept civil and honest, we can agree to disagree," Del Negro said.

B'nai Brith Canada also believes this is a time to "mend fences" and hopes Couillard will reach out to all Quebecers to allow them to "feel at home in the province once more." ■

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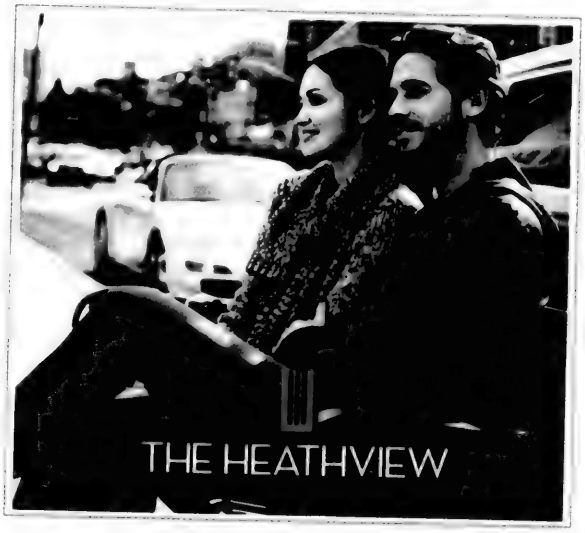

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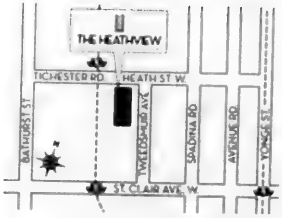

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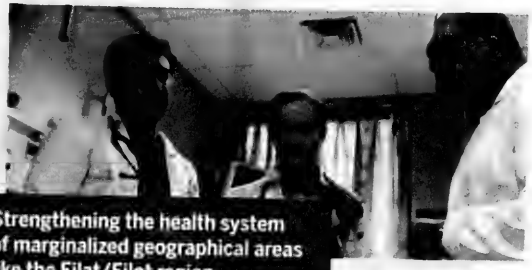

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Rabbinic caucus holds two-day 'fly-in' in Ottawa

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@cjnews.com

A group of 28 rabbis from across the country gathered in Ottawa last week to meet lawmakers, diplomats and representatives of other faith groups to discuss public policy issues of concern to their congregations.

Meeting under the auspices of the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus (CRC), the religious leaders discussed the rise of anti-Semitism with the French ambassador; they met representatives of the three main national parties in Ottawa to exchange views on the Middle East peace process and the danger posed by Iran; and they convened for a lecture by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner on the Jewish view of assisted suicide.

The CRC operates as a branch of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA). It was formerly part of the Canada-Israel Committee, but was dormant for several years after that organization was dissolved, said Howard English, CIJA's senior vice-president for the Greater Toronto Area.

The CRC includes rabbis from across the country and from all strands of Judaism – Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist.

The group is chaired by Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl of the Conservative Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto, Rabbi Reuben Poupko of the Orthodox Beth Israel Beth Aaron Congregation in Montreal, and Rabbi Jonathan Infeld of the Conservative Congregation Beth Israel in Vancouver. The CRC's vice-chair is Reform Rabbi Debra Landsberg of Toronto.

CIJA revived the caucus to benefit from its guidance and input, to establish another influential Jewish voice on the Canadian scene and as a line of communications to the participating congregations.

"The rabbis represent a very large constituency within the Jewish community," English said. "Synagogues are the most popular institutions to which Jews belong, so they are influential and [the rabbis] can transmit the nuances of issues to a lot of people.

"The rabbis offer a point of view to which people of influence will listen," he added.

During their two-day "fly-in," the rabbis met with Liberal party leader Justin Trudeau, the foreign affairs critics of the Liberal and New Democratic parties, French Ambassador Philippe Zeller, officials in the offices of Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird and the Prime Minister's Office, as well as with senior representatives of the Anglican Church and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

They also met with Israel's ambassador to Ottawa, Rafael Barak.

Rabbi Infeld said the fly-in afforded "an opportunity for rabbis to learn from these people and express our concerns."

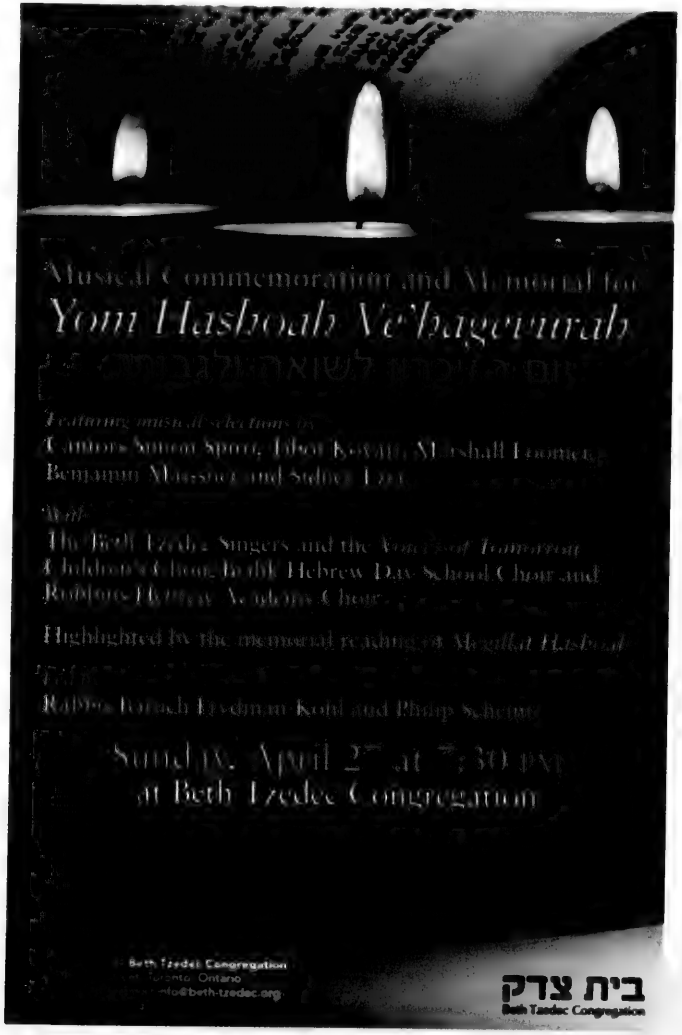
As to whether the rabbis were of one mind when it came to their views on the issues, Rabbi Infeld said, "We're Jewish, so I don't think there's a fully unified opinion on anything. But we have things in common.

"For all of us… I think the importance of Israel was clear."

Rabbi Infeld was gushing in praising Rabbi Torczyner's presentation on assisted suicide. And he said the meeting with Ambassador Barak presented the opportunity to discuss ways Israel, as the cultural and religious capital of the Jewish People, could assist in strengthening Jewish education in Canada.

English said the caucus "strengthens congregations to know rabbis are participating on issues of national scope that are important for the Jewish people in Canada, if not worldwide."

In addition to its three national co-chairs, the CRC features an 18-person executive committee consisting of six rabbis from each of the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform streams. ■



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St. John has only Jewish historical museum in region

JOEL JACOBSON
ATLANTIC CORRESPONDENT

Saint John, N.B. is the second oldest Jewish community in Maritime Canada with its roots dating to the mid-1800s, about a century after Halifax welcomed its first Jewish citizen.

However, Saint John stands ahead of everyone with the only Jewish Historical Museum in the region, a site supported through artifact donations and other participation by members of the local Jewish community, and visited by more than 4,000 people annually.

The museum has several permanent exhibits, new exhibits each year, occasional travelling exhibits, as well as a library and archive of Jewish history. Outreach programs include hosting tours from local schools, distribution of educational kits, and offering guided tours to cruise ship visitors.

Long-time resident Marcia Koven fulfilled her dream of creating the museum in 1983 as she saw the decline of the Jewish community's once-vibrant population.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

Exhibit at the St. John Jewish Historical Museum

Join Toronto contingent for New York's Celebrate Israel Parade

For the first time ever, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is organizing a contingent to New York, New York for the 50th Annual Celebrate Israel Parade and you are welcome to be a part of it.

And, if you have family or friends living in the New York City Region, why not have the ultimate family reunion by joining us on Sunday, June 1st, and participate in this historic event? Even if you don't, why not come anyway and join the fun? We especially want to connect to the many Torontonians, especially college students and young professionals, in the New York region and have them join us.

The 50th Annual Celebrate Israel parade takes place on June 1st in New York City

Join the more than 100,000 proud participants who will be parading up Manhattan's Fifth Avenue in celebration of the Jewish state.

Kicked off by the blowing of shofars, the Parade, witnessed by one million spectators, includes colorful floats, marching bands, celebrities, politicians, and various other participants.

Chaired by Judy Bronfman, and with the help of our New York-based volunteer Naomi Matlow, (naomimatlow@gmail.com), the Toronto contingent will have the opportunity to attend a mid-afternoon Israel Day music concert in honor of the day in Central Park and, as the sun sets, the Empire State Building also becomes part of the festivities when it is bathed in the blue and white colors of the Israeli flag.

"As Chair of Toronto's inaugural participation in New York City's 50 year old parade, I am both proud and challenged to lead this exciting initiative," says Bronfman. "I am excited by the opportunity to rally Torontonians studying in New York, young professionals working there and their parents in support of Israel and invite other Canadians to join us. Our community has a great opportunity to create a new and exciting partnership with our neighbours. It is a chance to experience firsthand that we are part of a wide and proud Jewish people. We welcome all Canadians from both countries to join us as we parade through Manhattan on June 1st."

For more information or to register, contact Shimmy Wenner at ***416.631.5699*** *or* ***swenner@ujafed.org***

Jewish Intentions is published as a community service by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

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Oral interviews conducted

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Immigration from northern and eastern Europe brought the community to about 1,400 members in the 1920s but, by the 1960s, Saint John's Jewish population fell to about 300 members. Today there are roughly two dozen Jewish families in the congregation.

Koven collected community history through oral interviews with elderly members and through photographs, organization minutes, and other records.

She rented a small studio to hold her collection until the museum opened its doors in the summer of 1986 with a modest exhibit on the lower level of the Jewish Community Centre.

In succeeding years, with Koven as curator, the museum, open only in the summer months for tourists, expanded to encompass nearly the entire community centre building. By 1990, the museum started welcoming group tours from local schools, churches, and social organizations throughout the fall, winter and early spring. Today, it is a year-round operation.

When Koven retired as curator in 1998, Katherine Biggs-Craft, who had a strong art and history background but no Jewish connection, was hired.

"People tell me I know more about Judiasm, Jewish history and the community here than many who were born and bred in Saint John," she laughs, while admitting she is learning more and more all the time as she deals with artifacts, books and pieces of the history of the long-time community.

The collection has grown so that Biggs-Craft has to pick and choose what will be displayed at any one time.

"There is a permanent exhibit which includes a Hebrew school classroom and 'From The Cradle to the Grave', a display focusing on the history of the Saint John Jewish community and on religious practices and traditions."

Other display areas change annually to feature some aspect of the community's life, such as Jewish weddings, servicemen and women in World War II, bar and bat mitzvahs, Jewish businesses in Saint John, and notable men and women who have come from or lived in this community.

The 2014 exhibit will be on Pamdenac, a summer cottage community about 20 kilometres from Saint John that, between the mid-1940s and the late 1970s, housed more than 50 Jewish families plus hundreds of annual visitors. Biggs-Craft has assembled many photographs, artifacts, written memories, even old Yiddish record albums, games and sporting equipment from those decades.

In 1995, the museum created a series of eight Jewish educational outreach kits to teach students and others about the Jewish religion and way of life, and create understanding. They are sent, on a two-week loan, to schools and churches throughout New Brunswick and even to organizations in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

A high school Holocaust study group is held annually, culminating on Yom Hashoah when the museum organizes a guest speaker and program.

"The students in the group, 18 this year, hear from speakers and survivors, and do book reports, PowerPoint presentations, or write poetry, music or do painting as their final project," says Biggs-Craft. "Their work is displayed at the Museum on Yom Hashoah when we attract more than 300 people."

The mandate of the museum is to collect, display and preserve articles related specifically to the Saint John Jewish community, and to educate and to provide a research facility for genealogists, historians, and religious scholars. ■

To contact the museum: Saint John Jewish Historical Museum, 91 Leinster Street, Saint John, N.B. E2L 1J2; Tel: 506-633-1833; email: sjjhm@nbnet.nb.ca; Web: personal.nbnet.nb.ca/sjjhm

Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto

NOMINATION NOTICE

The Nominating Committee of Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto has prepared a list of ten (10) candidates for election to the Board of Directors for the ensuing term.

Shimmy Brandes	Jay Heller	Jordana Stockhammer
David Wm. Brown	Jodi Pasoff	Suzy Tylman
Wayne Chertkow	Elliott Marer	Jonathan Zepp
Hart Heller		

Additional nominees will be accepted if properly received no later than 5:00 p.m. May 5, 2014. For further information please contact Elliott Brodkin, Executive Director/CFO, at (416) 494-7666, Ext. 200.

DATED April 11, 2014
TORONTO, Ontario

Sheldon Carr, Chair
Nominating Committee

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K.C. gunman was KKK 'grand dragon'

Police investigating whether attacks were a hate crime

JTA
WASHINGTON

The suspect in the deadly April 13 shooting attack on two Jewish targets in a Kansas City, Kan., suburb was identified as a prominent white supremacist.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, a hate group monitor, identified the alleged gunman as Frazier Glenn Miller, 73, of Aurora, Mo., and said he was the "grand dragon" of the Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1980s and subsequently a founder of the White Patriot Party. The centre said Miller served three years in prison on weapons charges and for plotting the assassination of its founder, Morris Dees.

CBS News also identified the suspect as Miller, and a security source confirmed to *JTA* that the suspect had a long history in the supremacist movement.

Miller is suspected of killing a grandfather and his grandson at the Jewish Community Centre in Overland Park, Kan., then killing a female resident of Village Shalom, a Jewish assisted-living facility a few blocks away.

The family of the victims killed at the JCC identified them as William Lewis Corporon and his 14-year-old grandson, Reat Griffin Underwood. A local TV station said they were members of the Church of Resurrection.

The JCC was reportedly hosting a dance class and an audition for a play, both for teenagers.

U.S. President Barack Obama pledged "the full support of the federal government" in the investigation, while Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent condolences to the families of those killed.

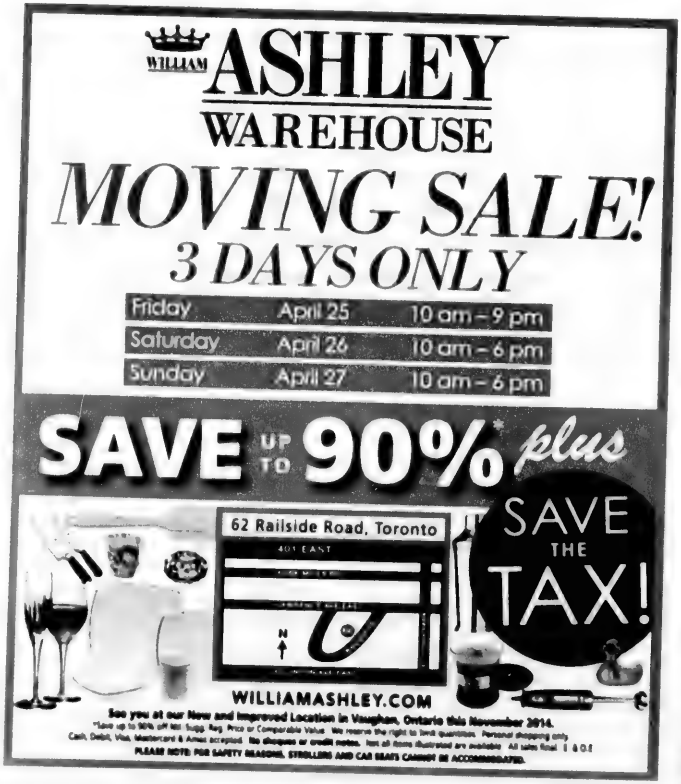
"We condemn the murder that by all the signs was done out of hatred of Jews. The State of Israel, as one with all civilized people, is obligated to struggle against this blight," Netanyahu said in a statement April 14.

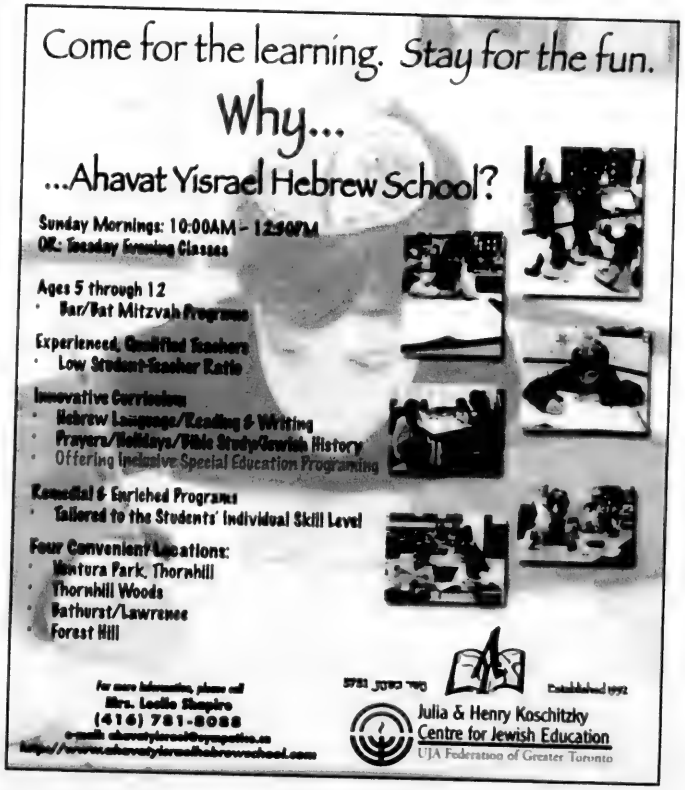
Police authorities in Kansas City had not determined on Monday whether the attacks are a hate crime. The ADL said in its statement that it's working with local, federal and state law enforcement officials as the investigation continues.

B'nai Brith Canada expressed its sympathies to the victims' families, adding that "given the location of the shooting, the reports of shouts of Heil Hitler as the suspected perpetrator... was taken into custody, as well as the fact that it [came] just before... [Passover], this must be investigated as a hate crime. While this appears to be an isolated incident, every precaution should be exercised here in Canada."

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto said it was taking precautions.

"We have reached out to all three JCCs and the Wolfond Centre, and have arranged additional security for those institutions in the interim," CEO Ted Sokolsky said. ■





OPINION

Passover and recognizing the Jewish state

Gerald Steinberg

The purpose of the Passover seder is to teach our children (and to remind ourselves) of our history and identity as a people and a nation. For at least 2,000 years, and probably long before, Jews have learned and relearned this history, from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to slavery in Egypt, the dramatic Exodus at the heart of the celebration, and the return to Israel – the Promised Land. In every generation, our ancestors asked the questions, recited the answers, and debated the consequences, ending with "Next year in Jerusalem". For those of us privileged to live in the restored Jewish homeland, the thrill of fulfilling this ancient wish never gets stale.

But in recent years, Jewish history and identity have been under assault, as part of the wider war against restored national sovereignty in the State of Israel. In the Arab "narrative", Zionism is a form of "colonialism", and 4,000 years of Jewish attachment to the Land of Israel are erased from history books and television programs. The invasion of five Arab armies in 1948 has become a Jewish war of conquest and Palestinian tragedy (nakba), terrorism is transformed into "resistance," and those who claim refugee status are given an invented "right of return," which would put an end to Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish People.

Most importantly, these myths erase the history of Jerusalem – the centre of Jewish identity, worship and history since it was founded by King David more than 3,000 years ago. The Western Wall is transformed from the remains of Herod's Temple to the site of a fictional midnight visit by Muhammad. The post-1967 rebuilding of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City that was desecrated and destroyed in the 1948 war and the Jordanian occupation that followed, and the restoration of Jewish ownership in neighbourhoods that were ethnically cleansed is attacked by Arab groups and in the United Nations as "Judaization."

In 2000 at the Camp David summit, PLO leader Yasser Arafat told then-U.S. president Bill Clinton and then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak that the Jewish Temples were never in Jerusalem, and, therefore, there was no basis for discussing compromise proposals. Nothing has changed since then – the Palestinian leadership and the Arab League continue to reject any discussion of Jerusalem and Israel in terms of Jewish rights. These myths, and not the post-1967 settlements and occupation, are the main reasons for the ongoing conflict.

More disturbingly, this virus has spread beyond the Middle East to large parts of Western Europe and has gained a foothold at university campuses and some highly politicized church groups in North America. The myths of Zionist "colonialism," Palestinian "resistance," the "right of return" and the "Judaization of Jerusalem" are repeated as justifications for boycotts, divestment and sanctions and other forms of political warfare against Israel.

Every year, tens of millions of dollars are supplied to erase Jewish history, under the facade of support for peace and human rights, particularly by European governments. Dozens of radical anti-Israel non-governmental organizations (NGOs) lead these campaigns. Groups such as Zochrot, which gets money from ill-informed German government officials, hostile Belgium church groups and similar sources, campaign for the myth of a Palestinian "right of return" and condemn Zionist "colonialism." On Jerusalem, Ir Amim and Terrestrial Jerusalem promote the "Judaization" narrative of imperialism, reinforcing the myths and false narratives.

As a result, the Israeli demand that, as part of a peace agreement, the Arabs recognize Israel's Jewish roots and the legitimacy of the Jewish state is essential to ending the conflict. If the myths continue to dominate the Arab and Muslim relationship to Israel, no peace agreement will last, and the engines that propel the wars and terror attacks against Israelis will continue.

At Passover seders, Jews in Israel and the Diaspora continue to teach our children Jewish history. This history is the essence of our collective identity as a people and a nation, and it's essential to our survival. ■

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Jewish Heritage Month
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Israel ready for peace, Liberman says

THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

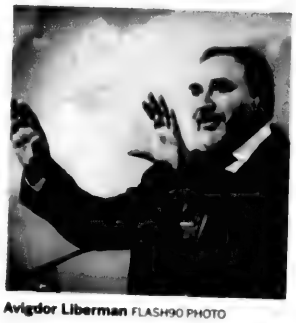
Israel has proven repeatedly that it is prepared to make peace with the Palestinians, and remains ready to achieve "a comprehensive solution" despite the latest crisis in the talks, Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman said last Sunday.

"We're ready to talk, we're ready to negotiate, but we won't accept any unilateral steps" on the part of the Palestinians, Liberman told foreign diplomats at the Foreign Ministry headquarters in Jerusalem.

In the past, he added, after the Oslo and Annapolis talks, it was the Palestinians who refused to sign agreements, yet world leaders continue to place the blame squarely on Israel.

"What is interesting from our point of view, certain countries and leaders… refused to blame the Palestinians for sabotaging the agreement. After some time… they started to blame Israel, and of course placed all pressure on us."

Israel nevertheless has "proven our readiness to achieve a comprehensive solution, a final status agreement with the Palestinians," and this readiness was "not lip service."



Avigdor Liberman FLASH90 PHOTO

Negotiations have reached the brink of collapse in recent weeks when Israel criticized a Palestinian refusal to commit to further talks past the April 29 end date set when negotiations began nine months ago. Israel then cancelled a promised fourth round of prisoner releases.

The Palestinian Authority, in turn, applied for membership in 15 international conventions and organizations, a move Palestinian officials have said demonstrates to Israel that international recognition for a Palestinian state can be obtained without Israel's agreement.

Israel responded to the applications by instituting a series of financial and governmental sanctions on PA institutions.

Despite the crisis, Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, who is Israel's lead negotiator to the talks, sounded a decidedly optimistic tone on Sunday morning.

"I believe we're close enough to a decision on the part of both leaderships, encouraged by the Americans, to continue negotiations," she told the *Ynet* news site.

The discussions on returning to the negotiating table were "very complex, not simple, at times with raised voices," she added, but insisted in the interview that "peace isn't a luxury. We need this. It's an Israeli need."

Livni was meeting with her Palestinian counterpart, Saeb Erekat, on Sunday afternoon in Jerusalem as part of the continuing U.S.-led effort to restore the talks.

A bipartisan group of MKs announced that they would travel to Ramallah Wednesday to meet Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in an effort to help overcome the crisis. ■

Timesofisrael.com

Spanish village may no longer 'kill Jews'

JTA

A Spanish village is considering removing the phrase "kill Jews" from its name.

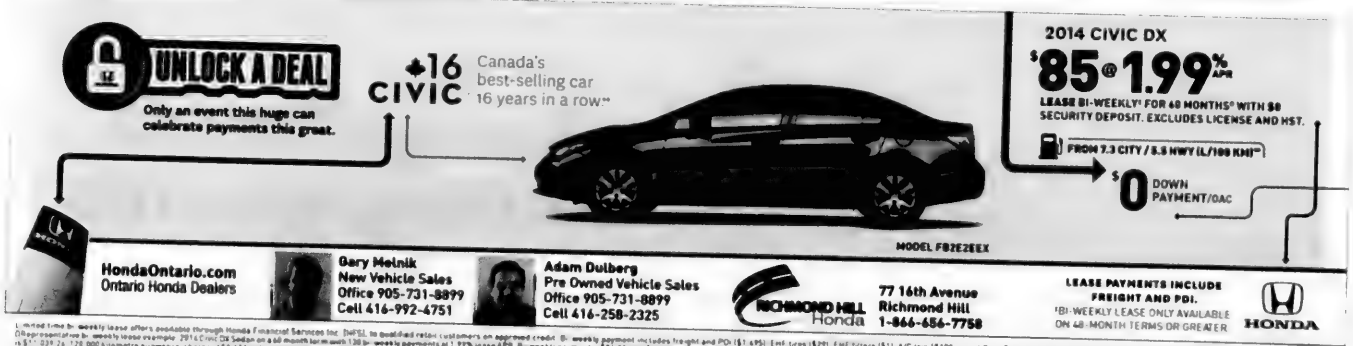
The village of Castrillo Matajudios near Leon in northern Spain will convene its 60 resident families at a town hall meeting next week to discuss and vote on the first formal proposal to change the village's name, the regional daily *Diario de Burgos* reported last week.

Mayor Lorenzo Rodriguez, who submitted the proposal, suggested changing the village's name to its original Castrillo Mota de Judios, which means Castrillo Jews' Hill. He said the name was changed during the Spanish Inquisition.

In parts of Spain, and especially in the north, locals use the term "killing Jews" (matar Judios) to describe the traditional drinking of lemonade spiked with alcohol at festivals held in city squares at Easter, or drinking in general.

Leon will hold its "matar Judios" fiesta on Good Friday, April 18, where organizers estimate 40,000 gallons of lemonade will be sold.

The name originates from medieval times, when converted Jews would sometimes be publicly executed in show trials at around Easter. ■



Jewish Life

The Iron Sheik is seen above with the Magen brothers, Page, left and Jian.

The Iron Sheik: Popular entertainment company brings wrestler to the big screen

DAVID SILVERBERG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The multi-tasking brothers behind that bar mitzvah you just attended will soon unveil a pet project harkening back to their youth when they first staged wrestling shows for neighbourhood kids.

Jian and Page Magen of event production company Magen Boys Entertainment are the driving force behind The Sheik, a full-length documentary chronicling the rise, fall and return of The Iron Sheik, a star of 1980s-era World Wrestling Federation (now WWE).

You might remember him as Hulk Hogan's foil, and the documentary's publicity materials plays up the rivalry: "Without the Iron Sheik there could be no Hulkamania," a press release reads.

The wrestling legend, real name Hossein Khosrow Ali Vaziri, hails from Iran, where the Magen Boys first met him decades ago. Vaziri was a good friend of the Magen brothers' father, a ping-pong champ also hailing from Iran.

"We considered the Sheik our uncle," says Jian Magen in an interview. When wrestling matches came to Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens, the Sheik introduced the Magen family to all the WWF icons, such as Randy "Macho Man" Savage, Jake "The Snake" Roberts, King Kong Bundy and countless more.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 17, 2014

Play focuses on medieval religious conflict

KATHRYN KATES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Daniel Kash will perform the role of Cocco, one of the four strong men in Tarragon Theatre's world premiere of *A God in Need of Help*, by playwright-in-residence Sean Dixon.

The play is based on a true story from the 17th century about four men tasked with carrying a painting through the Alps.

"To put the play in a nutshell is difficult – it is a conflict between church and politics, but in the end it is probably about art," says Kash. "It is set in 1606, Venice, where four strong men win a competition by the Venetian government, to carry a painting over the Alps from Venice to Prague. They don't want to destroy this special painting by Albert Durer. It is a prized religious, Renaissance painting."

Halfway through the journey, the four strong men, who are Catholic peasants, meet a large group of Protestant iconoclasts, who want to destroy the painting.

"In the middle of this moment, one of the strong men, who happens to be effeminate, creates a miracle [when] he brings the Virgin Mother and Christ child out of the painting in front of [their] eyes and then all the Protestants decide to convert to Catholicism."

The play then follows the trial that takes place when a Venetian representative and a cardinal from Rome interview the men and try to figure out if the miracle really happened.

> *I don't know if this miracle is true but it is true that these guys carried the painting over the Alps*

"I don't know if this miracle is true but it is true that these guys carried the painting over the Alps," Kash says.

The stellar cast includes Greg Ellwand as Cardinal-Archbishop. Alden Adair, Tony Nappo and Jonathan Seinen along with Kash play the four strong men, and Dmitry Chepovetsky is the captain hired to ensure their safety. Daniel Giverin and Ben Irvine are the guards. It is directed by Tarragon's artistic director Richard Rose

"Marco represents the very strong, uneducated peasant, then there is Dolfin who is an actor who just needs some money, there's Rafal who is this effeminate boy who had no business wining this competition and then there is me, Cocco. I'm a mercenary soldier and older than the rest of them. I have been a gun for hire. I am not as impulsive as the rest of them when we are attacked," explains Kash.

"I am really the protector of everyone and when I confront the cardinal, he gives me more respect because I have stood my ground – I am a man of reason. I am sort of the future of humanity as I see things from a scientific point of view. I am a soldier that has survived on my own wits."

Kash says during that period most people were illiterate, so propaganda was often communicated through art, as was the case with Napoleon 200 years later, who commissioned artists to paint pictures of battles preceding his return to France.

The actor's past theatrical experience includes *Cruel and Tender*, *Alice's Affair*, *Unidentified Human Remains* and *The True Nature of Love*. In film and on television he's appeared in *Casino Jack*, *Skins*, *Alphas*, *The Line*, *Aliens*, and *Gross Misconduct*, to name a few.

Daniel Kash

"One of the reasons I stay in Canada is because here you can do film, television and theatre," Kash says. "I always want to keep my foot in the door in theatre because it is a great mental workout. We should cherish our theatrical environment because it is a very good one." ■

A God in Need of Help runs April 23 to May 25 at Tarragon's Mainspace. 416-531-1827 or online www.tarragontheatre.com

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CJN's No Place Like Home section
May 8th issue

Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

ARTIST ADAD HANNAH EXPANDS UPON "FROZEN MOMENT" IN NEW SHOW AT KOFFLER GALLERY

Vancouver-based artist **Adad Hannah** has earned an international reputation for his video-recorded tableaux. His new body of work centres upon a "frozen moment" of personal history, a photograph of his mother painting a portrait at an art club in Kodiak, Alaska in 1953 – 18 years before he was born. Through a variety of means, Hannah breathes new life and meaning into the family snapshot.

Adad Hannah – Three Generations (Kodiak Art Club, 1953) opens with a public reception at the Koffler Gallery, Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St. Thursday April 24, 6 to 9 p.m. The exhibit continues to June 8.

• • •

Film Series on David Lynch: Toronto film critic **Adam Nayman** presents **David Lynch** in *Nayman's Terms*, an analysis of the film and TV work of filmmaker Lynch from *Eraserhead* to *Twin Peaks*, and an assessment of his impact on popular culture. Miles Nadal JCC, Mondays, eight sessions from April 28 to June 23, 7 to 9 p.m. $90 for series, $12 drop-in, students $6. esthera@mnjcc.org. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• • •

Names in the News: A host of local cultural organizations including the Miles Nadal JCC, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Alliance Francaise of Toronto, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Royal Conservatory, Royal Ontario Museum, Gardiner Museum, Bata Shoe Museum, Japan Foundation and Bloor Hot Docs Cinema, joined forces earlier this month to proclaim the Bloor Street Culture Corridor into being. The idea is to make residents and visitors more aware of this "mile of cultural treasures in the heart of Toronto," all squeezed into that thriving stretch of Bloor between Bathurst and Bay.

Arts in Brief

• *Beatrice & Virgil* is a novel by *Life of Pi* author **Yann Martel** about two men, a writer and a taxidermist, and a donkey named Beatrice and a monkey named Virgil. Factory Theatre recently brought Lindsay Cochrane's adaptation to the stage. The production continues at 125 Bathurst St. thru May 11. $23 and up. 416-504-9971, www.factorytheatre.caw

Adad Hannah- Three Generations runs April 24 to June 8.

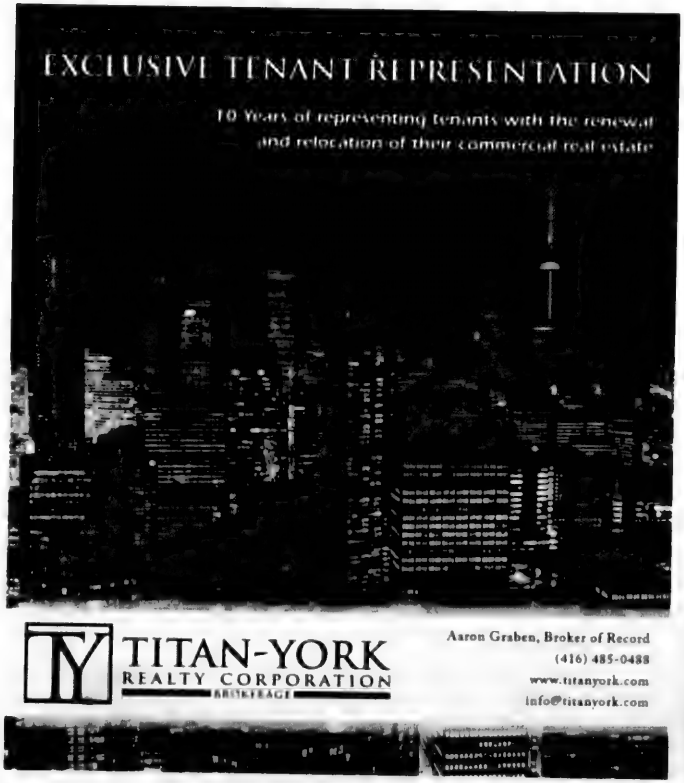
• Curtain Call Players presents *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein*, a musical experience based on the movie. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. $26. April 17 to 19, April 23 to 25, 8 p.m.; April 19, 2 p.m. 416-706-6181, www.curtaincallplayers.com

• Commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day with a presentation by local survivor George Stern, and receive a free copy of his memoir, *Vanished Boyhood*. Co-sponsored by the Azrieli Foundation. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday April 27, 11 a.m. Free admission. 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

• • •

Out of Town: Eddie Carmel supposedly stood more than nine feet tall, weighed over 470 pounds and wore size-36 shoes. He was known as the World's Tallest Man. The son of immigrants from Tel Aviv, Carmel lived a normal life in New York until the mid-1950s when a rare growth hormone caused his extreme growth. In April 1970 American photographer Diane Arbus visited him at his home in the Bronx and took some photos.

Those photos are the centerpoint of *Diane Arbus's Jewish Giant*, which opened recently at The Jewish Museum in New York as part of its Masterpieces and Curiosities series. The photos explore the tension between normalcy and aberrance; many other artifacts and memorabilia are included in the show, including items pertaining to the biblical giant Goliath and the Jewish legendary figure of the Golem. On view to August 3, 2014. www.thejewishmuseum.org ■



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Kafka's old strangeness renewed

NORMAN RAVVIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Franz Kafka wrote his novella *The Metamorphosis* in 1912, before his 30th birthday. It was among other early stories that highlighted fathers triumphing over sons, and which presented, along with this outcome, extravagant punishment. His friend Max Brod saw in this creative output something unusual. In his diary Brod wrote, "Kafka in incredible ecstasy. Writes all night long . . . ."

The Metamorphosis was published in 1915 as *Die Verwandlung*, but Kafka did not consider it a literary triumph. In his diary, not long after its completion, he wrote: "Great antipathy to *Metamorphosis*. Unreadable ending. Imperfect almost to its very marrow. It would have turned out much better if I had not been interrupted at the time by a business trip."

Like many of Kafka's self-characterized failures, *The Metamorphosis* went on to become one of the major texts of 20th century literature, in part because of its seeming impenetrability, but also for its hyper-real fantasy: a salesman wakes "one morning from troubled dreams" to find "himself transformed right there in his bed into some sort of monstrous insect."

What exactly Samsa has been transformed into – an *Ungeziefer* in the German original – is one of the Kafkaesque puzzles associated with the story, and the English language version quoted above is from a new translation by the young, New York-based translator Susan Bernofsky.

Franz Kafka, The Metamorphosis. A New Translation
Susan Bernofsky
Norton

Its cover is graced by a lovely, though mildly grotesque illustration, made of elaborately decorated letters, some sporting buglike legs, arranged in such a way as to form the *Ungeziefer* itself. This image skirts the famous Kafkan injunction to his publisher that his book should include no realistic illustrations of bugs, beetles, or whatever actual insect one might imagine Samsa to have become.

The Metamorphosis is harder to pin down than some of Kafka's other strange masterpieces. *The Castle* and *The Trial* are suggestive of bureaucratic nightmares, of the barriers set up by officialdom, and the abuse of law, which functions in them only to assert its own existence and power. (English translations of these novels appeared in the 1930s, when readers were increasingly interested in totalitarian abuses of power and language).

The Metamorphosis is a purely domestic tale: once transformed and unable to go out on the road, Gregor is a challenge and a misery to his family. Things end, as one might expect, badly. The charwoman responsible for maid duties at the Samsa home finds him one morning and announces, "Come have a look, it's gone and croaked – just lying there, dead as a doornail!" Here Bernofsky's stamp on Kafka's voice and tone is clear; my 1992 Penguin version reads, "Just come and look, the creature's done for; it's lying there dead and done for!"

Translating Kafka presents special challenges. The work's patent strangeness, but, too, its relationship with the time and place of its creation, raise conflicting challenges and possibilities. The Penguin translation of the charwoman's utterance is drab, even characterless, as if the translator sought out an idiom that would be marked neither by place or time. Bernofsky's choice suggests an actual voice, one that is crude and prone to colloquial cliché.

Bernofsky's version readily employs unusual, even risky words – "carapace" to convey Samsa's shell-like back; a "thunderstorm of invective" to describe the talking-to Samsa expects from his boss for having missed work. But in other ways Bernofsky presents a casual, less formal style of delivery than previous translations, and this gives Kafka's prose an immediate and more contemporary tone.

Darkly comic set pieces, like Kafka's description of Gregor's sister's care for him, are dramatic and sharply drawn: "The moment she came in, without even pausing to shut the door – although she always took such pains to shield the others from the sight of Gregor's room – she would race straightaway to the window and fling it open with hasty hands as though she were on the point of suffocating, then remain standing there, however cold it might be, gulping in the air. All this racing and racket was inflicted on Gregor twice a day; he would be trembling beneath the settee . . . ."

An encounter with a familiar text like *The Metamorphosis*, newly translated, provides a reminder of how translations can smooth or impede our access to Kafka's special form of narrative estrangement. Testing a translation in this context is a luxury; someone else has done all the heavy lifting; an older, more familiar version can be set alongside the fresh one; the reader does his or her best to decide if things ring true. At more than one hundred years remove from its writing, *The Metamorphosis* continues to offer possibilities for new kinds of strangeness. ■

Norman Ravvin writes and teaches in Montreal. This spring he will give talks on Canadian Jewish writing in Lodz and Konin, Poland.

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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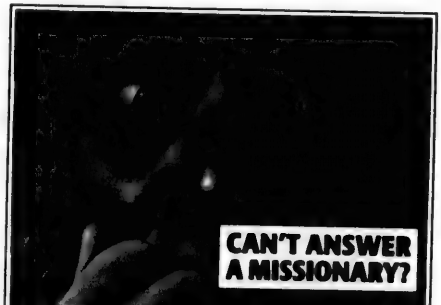

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KEEPING JEWS JEWISH

Sheik's popularity peaked in Hogan era

Wrestler fell prey to drug abuse and career-ending injuries before rebounding on Howard Stern show

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

So what makes the Sheik's story so compelling to share with audiences? This isn't a wrestling film, Magen says. "He was cast as an evil anti-American character but in reality he's all things American. He fled his country to make a better life in the U.S. and is now truly the nicest guy you'll ever meet."

A quick glance at the Sheik's widely popular Twitter account (413,000 followers), though, might have you reconsidering Magen's "nice guy" assessment. The Sheik plays a character, Magen says, and that attitude now lives on Twitter instead of in the ring. The tweets are crude, antagonistic and intentionally immature. It's an act, something any wrestling fan will truly see through.

Magen says as much as the film will profile the Sheik's wrestling career, it will also show the softness behind the hard mask the Sheik wears.

It's a dream come true for the Magens; they staged wrestling matches in their driveway at 16, paying amateur wrestlers to compete for teen crowds. It wasn't long before the brothers founded their successful event business known for GTA-area weddings, bar mitzvahs, and special shows.

Toronto filmmaker Igal Hecht came on board as director/editor/writer, and the veteran director behind 53 documentaries gets giddy when he discusses The Sheik. "Wrestling is my soap opera, I love it," he says, "and I just knew this would be an amazing film, considering the Sheik's story."

He explains how the wrestler's popularity peaked during the Hogan/Bob Backlund days but he fell prey to drug abuse and career-ending injuries. His rebound was partially thanks to *The Howard Stern Show*, where the American radio show invited The Sheik to spew his diatribes against other wrestlers.

> *We considered the Sheik our uncle*
>
> **JIAN MAGEN**

Despite the character he plays, the Sheik is far from phony, Hecht says. "He's the real deal, he's authentic. And he still wants to entertain people, which he's now doing on Twitter." ■

The Sheik will debut at Toronto's Hot Docs Film Festival on April 26 at 9:30 p.m., at the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema. The film will later be released across Canada in May. The Iron Sheik will be at the premiere of the documentary at the screening, but don't worry, he won't pin you down in his classic camel-clutch.

The Iron Sheik is the real deal.

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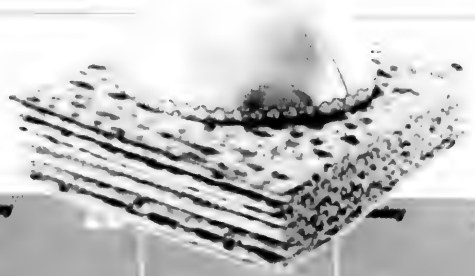
What's New

APRIL 17 - APRIL 24



Thursday 17	Friday 18	Saturday 19	Sunday 20	Monday 21	Tuesday 22	Wednesday 23
Passover	Passover	Passover	Passover	Seventh day of Passover	Eighth day of Passover	Your lunch has a story. Find out what it's saying at Beth Emeth Syna-

Wednesday, April 23

LUNCH STORY
Tamar Maerim Yunger discusses "The Story of My Lunch: Judaism and Sustainable Food Systems," 8 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. $5/$7.

JEWISH GENEALOGY
Paul Jones discusses how to design a "Tracing Forward" plan to finding family, with the Jewish Genealogical Society, 7:30 p.m., North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge St. www.jgstoronto.ca

JEWISH TEXTILES
Judith Leitner, visual arts teacher at the Toronto Heschel School, leads the Pomegranate Guild of Jewish Textiles in creating a fabric arts sketch of the word "Shema." Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m. pomegranateguild.wordpress.com.
❱ **April 26** an exhibit of guild members entitled *The People of the Book*, will be on display at the Apotex Centre, Baycrest.

DEATH, LIES AND VIDEOTAPES
Philippe Karsenty, French media analyst who has faced a long battle in the French courts, is the guest speaker at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 8 p.m. Doors open at 7:15 p.m. $5/$10. Call 416-221-3433.

STARS OF DAVID
Avery Saltzman, director of *Stars of David*, discusses his new play at Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 24

WARSAW UPRISING REMEMBERED
The 71st anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising will be commemorated at Toronto Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W., at 7:30 p.m.

Deadline Reminder:
Due to Passover, deadlines will change. The deadline for the issue of May 8 is April 28. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Death, Lies and Videotapes

Philippe Karsenty, the French media analyst who has been embroiled in a long battle in the French courts after alleging state television doctored video of the death of a Palestinian boy, speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue April 23.

FAMILY LAW WORKSHOP
Family law lawyer **Victoria Starr** discusses "Parental Alienation." For more information, call the Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women at 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

Upcoming Events

WOMEN AND ABUSE
The legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers free legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

HOST FAMILIES NEEDED
Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel is looking for families to host an Israeli hero for two weeks in June. Call 905-695-0611, or email info@beithalochem.ca.

YIDDISH CULTURE
Explore Yiddish Culture, a 6-week session for intermediate Yiddish students, Sundays, starting **April 27**, 10 a.m., Beth David Synagogue. Register by email: bbarak@ujafed.org or 416-631-5843.

VIRTUAL ISRAEL TOUR
Rabbi Shaanan Scherer leads a virtual tour of Israel **April 29,** 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

MAXIMUM MEMORY
Dr. Angie Troyer discusses "Maximum Memory: What memory changes are a normal part of aging," **April 29,** 1:30 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple.

FIND YOUR TRUE LOVE
Frank Maloney, life coach and author, discusses how to live an authentic life, with Singles in the Park, **April 27,** Earl Bales Community Centre, 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m. $15/$18. RSVP debbygo@rogers.com or 416-631-0005. Singles in the Park is open to single, divorced and widowed Jewish men and women over 50.

KEEPING YOUR MEMORY SHARP
Dr. Gillian Rowe of Baycrest discusses "Keeping your Memory Sharp as you Age," **April 27,** 11 a.m. at Temple Har Zion. $3/$6.

DANI CONFERENCE
DANI holds a conference May 4 with keynote speaker **Rabbi Michael Taubes** discussing "Beyond the Illusion of Inclusion. Register by **April 25.** Call 905-889-3264, or email info@dani-toronto.com.

MORASHA CLASSES
Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum teaches a class on "When the Bible is confusing," Part II, Wednesdays starting **May 7**, 11:15 a.m. **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner** teaches a class on "The Jew and her Food, from Sinful to Sacred," starting **May 7**, 10 a.m. Classes held at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Call 416-789-7400 to register.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT
Bereavement support group, led by a trained group facilitator meets Sundays starting **May 4**, 10 a.m. at Beth Tikvah. Call **Rosalie**, 416-221-3433 to register.

SOCCERATHON
Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro is holding a soccerathon, **April 27** at Trio Sportsplex, 601 Cityview Blvd., Woodbridge. Email gilad.epstein@lorexcorp.com or cfobis@rogers.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
❱ Circle of Care needs Russian, Hebrew and English-speaking volunteers to provide support to clients and family members with life-threatening conditions.
❱ Volunteers are needed to spend time with seniors along the Bathurst Street corridor. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2860, or email lspringer@circleofcare.com.

LUNCH AND LEARN
Lunch and learn starts **April 29** at Beth Tikvah Synagogue with **Robert**

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Rotenberg discussing the crime fiction novel. Lunch at 12:15 p.m., lecture at 12:45 p.m. Call 416-221-3433 to register.

WONDERFUL WOMEN
Weizmann Canada's Women and Science Committee presents a panel of accomplished women discussing how they overcame obstacles to become front-runners in their fields, **April 29**, 6:30 p.m. at Casa Loma. Featuring best-selling author **Jennifer Weiner**; artistic director of the National Ballet of Canada, **Karen Kain**; economist **Sherry Cooper**; and award-winning scientist **Naama Geva-Zatorsky**. For tickets, call 416-733-9220, or email wonderfulwomen.weizmann.ca.

NEWTONBROOK TURNS 50
Newtonbrook Secondary School, 155 Hilda Ave., is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year with an open house May 24 and a pub night. For tickets to the pub night, call 416-395-3280.

YOM HASHOAH
- Oraynu Congregation marks Yom Hashoah, **April 27,** 7:30 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr.
- Temple Sinai marks Yom Hashoah **April 27,** 3 p.m. Featuring the story of cantor emeritus **Severin Weingort.**
- Temple Har Zion marks Yom Hashoah **April 28,** 7 p.m.
- Beth Tikvah Synagogue marks Yom Hashoah **April 26,** 7 p.m. starting with Minchah, featuring a presentation by **Gerda Frieberg.**

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS
Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.
- **One Family, Two Homes:** A 6-session group for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children and adults participate in separate groups. Starts April 24, 6:30 p.m.
- **Mind-Body Connection for Women:** A 7-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 29, Lebovic JCC, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES
- Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mahjong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Paul Hyman** discusses "Brain Fitness," April 24, 1:30 p.m., doors open at 1 p.m.
- **Osnat Lippa** discusses "Treasures of the Guggenheim," April 29, 1 p.m. For all programs, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. April 24, **Marsha Fenwick** discusses "The Power of Food to Optimize Health," 1:30 p.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine April 30 (register in advance); Dance with live music, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise starts May 6; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.
- **Day Centre for Seniors** provides a friendly, secure place for seniors with dementia. Hot lunch, stimulating activities, transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.
- **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.
- The book club discusses *Matadora*, April 28, 1 p.m.
- The Yiddish group holds a Yom Hashoah program, April 28, 1:30 p.m.
- Musician/educator **Jordan Klapman** hosts a two-part musical journey through Jewish popular songs, April 24 and May 1, 1 p.m.
- **Iain Scott** discusses opera star Enrico Caruso, May 5, 1 p.m.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of J.M.W. Turner and David Hockney, May 13 and 20, 1 p.m.
- **Amnon Zohar** hosts "Israeli Hot Topics," Thursdays, May 1-29, 10 a.m.
- **Norene Gillietz** gives a workshop on making challah, May 4, 3 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org
- *Young Frankenstein*, presented by the Curtain Call Players, runs at the Al Green Theatre, April 17-19 and April 23-25, 8 p.m., except 2 p.m. on April 19. For tickets, call 416-706-6181.
- Yom Hashoah Commemoration, April 27, 11 a.m.
- Register for the Joke Lab with actor **Jack Newman** and learn how to tell hilarious jokes and humorous anecdotes, April 24-May 15, 7 p.m.
- Register now for spring film studies with **Adam Nayman,** looking at the work of **David Lynch,** April 28-June 23, 7 p.m..
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition (male voices needed) July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. ext. 250.
- Harmonia, a Jewish choir for youth ages 8-18 directed by **Yonah Sienna,** meets Sundays at 4 p.m. Email harmonia@mnjcc.org.
- *Duets, Portraits of Aging and the Art of Care*, photos by **Debra Friedman,** is at the gallery, until April 22.
- The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.
- **Robert Freedman** discusses how Tel Aviv's urban design shapes the city, May 6, lunch served at 11:30 a.m., lecture at noon.
- Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays, until May 6, 7 p.m., Wednesdays until May 7, 11 a.m. MELT Method – hand and foot, Mondays April 7-May 12, 2:30 p.m. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays until June 18, 12:15 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821
- Zen kids art for children age 4 to 6 starts Thursdays, May 1.
- Karate club for children aged 7 to 10, Tuesdays starting April 29. To register, **Jennifer** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275.
- Vendors wanted for an Israeli market for Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration, May 6. Email **Andrea** at adaiam@srcentre.ca.
- Join the SR Centre for a trip to see *Hay Fever* May 28 in Stratford.
- Buffalo shopping trip, April 29 (register by April 24). ■

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A. David Levine

The annals of professional sport are full of Jewish men and women who have achieved and excelled in the world in professional sport: Sandy Koufax. Half of Amare Stoudamire. The list goes on.

Now, one more young hopeful can be added to their ranks: but hockey prospect Daniel Stone of Squamish, B.C., isn't just another Canadian hockey prospect – he's a Canadian hockey prospect who is Jewish.

Though only 17 years old, Stone – who is Jewish – is already a veteran of the rink, having played hockey since he was four years old.

"Since he could stand," laughs his mom and biggest fan, Mary-Catherine. "We used to catch him stick-handling in the driveway, late at nights. It got strange."

Not long after joining his first pee-wee league, Dan would discover that being Jewish was no obstacle to developing the fundamental balance and agility required to skate. "That never came up," he says, adding: "I'm pretty sure that's not a thing."

At 5-9, Stone – a Jew – may never be the largest player on the ice, but he is the most likely to win a Nobel Prize. When asked about his faith, Stone is proud of his heritage: "My mom is one," he says, "so yeah, I guess so."

After playing two high school seasons with St. Mary's, Stone's puck-handling skills led him to transfer schools twice – first to Holy Trinity, then to Our Lady of the Assumption, where he continued to excel, refusing to let his Jewishness be an excuse for failure.

"You see that more and more," says Mary-Catherine, her gaze sinking.

"Talented young athletes dropping out to become doctors, lawyers, accountants – many of them showed tremendous potential. It's a real shame."

But Mary-Catherine's shame is personal, too.

"His brother's a doctor," she confesses, weeping.

As a child, Dan's inquisitive nature revealed a religious curiosity: "When Dan was 14, he asked why we didn't go to church more often. We laughed and laughed, and told him 'Jews don't go to churches.' And he thought I had said 'juice.' It was the start of a long conversation."

That discussion sparked Stone's interest in all things Jewish, according to his mother.

"He really wanted to go on Birthright, to learn more about his ancestry and heritage."

Unfortunately, the free trip to Israel ended up conflicting with a team road trip that he'd already committed to. "Dan didn't want to disappoint his friends," she says.

"Still, Dan's childhood home was filled with Jewish culture – whether he knew it or not."

Mary-Catherine cites family cultural activities that brought a Jewish spirit into Dan's life. "Dan loves anything with Eugene Levy. Also that Mandy Patinkin show."

And what cuisine appeals to this lansman among linesmen?

"My mother-in-law brought us some of those holiday pancakes one year," she says, probably referring to latkes. "Dan had seconds."

Despite the common belief there are few Jews if any in professional hockey, there are nine, and while Stone has been actively scouted since he was 11, his chances at being drafted by an NHL team have narrowed, thanks to his pronounced myopia and an undiagnosed, late-onset thyroid condition.

Jews are no strangers to struggling through adversity – from Moses in the desert to Mayim Bialik in *The Big Bang Theory* – and Jewish athletes (like Sandy Koufax!) are no different.

At least that's what Dan Stone is betting on.

But if sheer love of the game counts, then Dan would be a shoe-in.

"This is the game I was meant to play. Flying up the ice with the puck on your stick," he says, "is the closest I get to a religious experience."

And Dan Stone should know about religious experiences, because no matter what the future holds for this young Jew's career, there's no denying the fact that Dan Stone, who plays hockey, is Jewish. ■

Family Moments

Sara & Mark Korytowski of Vancouver welcomed Michael Gershon on March 21. Proud grandparents, Joanne & Barry Fisher (Thornhill) and Tita Korytowski (Munich).

Emie & Brenda welcome their granddaughter, Grace Kathryn Waltman born March 4 in Westchester, N.Y. Parents, Matthew & Jennifer and grandparents Steve & Vickie Gordziel.

Mazel tov Michelle & Adam on your engagement. Summer 2015 wedding. Love, Heather & Darryl Hennick, Ferne & Jack Frydman, grandparents Ricky Hennick, Joseph Israeloff, and siblings.

Harold & Alice Lehrer joyfully welcome their new granddaughter, Naomi Sydney Eisenberg, born to Michelle Lehrer & Neville Eisenberg on March 24 in Johannesburg.

Harris Benjamin Epstein, son of Ian Epstein and Erin Awalt, born March 22, Halifax. Grandparents Paula & Stanley Epstein and Linda & Reginald Awalt.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on **"Family Moments"**

Mazel Tov!

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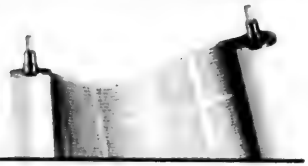
Mazel tov to Harry & Lory Beer on your 60th anniversary, wishing you good health and happiness from your loving children, grandchildren and the entire family.

Parshah

Shabbat Chol Hamoed | Exodus 33.12 - 34.26



Rabbi Aaron Katchen on Moses, Isaiah and seeing the shadow of God
Rabbi Michal Shekel argues our freedom comes with an obligation to offer a helping hand
Rabbi Howard Morrison shares Pesach memories and suggests how we can create new ones

Aaron Katchen

And [God] said, "You cannot see My face, for [humans] may not see Me and live." – Exodus 33:20

The idea of prophecy arises in the reading of the Torah on the intermediary Shabbat of Pesach and Sukkot. We read about Moses re-ascending Mount Sinai to seek God's forgiveness. In the process, Moses asks to see God's presence. He is rebuffed, with the verse relaying that people cannot see God's "face" and live. The rabbis of the Talmud struggle with this verse. They point out that in Isaiah (6:1), the prophet said, "I beheld my Lord seated on a high and lofty throne." How is it that the greatest prophet in Judaism, Moses, is told he cannot see God, yet a later prophet, Isaiah, can?

I have been educated in the methods of Nechama Leibowitz, whose first rule of Torah study is to give every question its space. (Often the question is more interesting than any possible answer). The answer the Talmud presents in regard to Isaiah's vision is that all prophets saw God through an *aspaklaria* – a type of looking device. Moses' device was clear, and thus he would have died had he seen God. The other prophets looked through an opaque device that prevented them from fully seeing God; they saw the "shadow" of God.

I believe in this context, the seeing that the Torah and Talmud mention actually refers to a full understanding of God. As mere humans, we are incapable of fully seeing/understanding God. But to claim our place as the "children of prophets," we can strive within our limitations to see and understand the shadow of God. Even if we cannot ever see "God's Face," we can aim to see the "throne," God's presence in this world. ■

Rabbi Aaron Katchen is associate executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Michal Shekel

"None shall appear before Me empty-handed." (Exodus 34:20)

A short verse in our parshah brings to light an interesting Pesach connection. After being instructed to redeem all first-born animals as well as our first-born sons, we're told "None shall appear before Me empty-handed." While the redemption of Israel's first-born sons mirrors the destruction of the Egyptians' first-born, the instruction not to appear empty-handed is a bit confusing. As Rashi reminds us, there's no commandment to appear before God with the first-born. The specific text cautioning against appearing empty-handed on Pesach occurs in Exodus (23:15), as well as in Deuteronomy (16:16-17).

Being empty-handed is symbolic of slavery, since slaves have no possessions. A former slave was truly free only once he or she had the wherewithal to fend for himself or herself, hence the instruction in Deuteronomy (15:13-15) not to let the freed slave go empty-handed. The person who left with nothing was merely owned by a new master: poverty. In fact, the instruction to fill the hand of the slave follows the example set by God when we were redeemed from slavery.

Pesach is our reaching out to grasp the freedom God offered us with an outstretched arm. Such a reaction was verbalized by Harriet Tubman in 1849 at the end of her journey on the Underground Railroad: "I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven."

Our freedom entails an obligation to hold out a helping hand to those enslaved in various ways. We're obligated to fill the empty hand. Appearing empty-handed is more than a ritualistic faux pas. It's an example of unappreciated and squandered freedom. ■

Rabbi Michal Shekel is executive director of the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

Howard Morrison

When I was growing up, my father would jokingly refer to each of his four children as representing one of the four children in the Haggadah. With a smile, he'd refer to me as the Rasha, the wicked or rebellious child. His comment, always made in fun, has stayed with me.

I was blessed to have a close-knit family that gave me many fond Passover memories. To this day, my Aunt Ruth, now in her mid-80s, travels to Toronto to celebrate with me. She's my link to the past, having attended almost every seder in my life. The seder is one of the most widely observed practices across the spectrum of Jewish observance, ideology, affiliation and identity, so Passover offers an integral opportunity to recall old memories and create new ones for new generations.

When I recall the seders of my youth, I'm transported to a joyful time. I remember wine stains on the pages of our family Haggadahs. I remember opening the door for Elijah the Prophet and being convinced by swirling wine in his cup that he had appeared at our table. I recall the challenge of singing *Chad Gadya* in a quick tempo. Now, as a parent, it falls to my generation to help generate new memories. What new ones did we give today's younger generation at this year's seders? What old memories did we maintain?

Ever since I began leading my own seder after the deaths of my parents and uncle, I've kept the tradition of reciting a Passover poem written by my maternal grandmother, whom I never knew, that my mother read for years. Ever since my uncle died more than 20 years ago, I've also continued his tradition of reciting the Four Questions in his Yiddish way.

Pesach ends shortly. We needn't wait until next year to recall old memories and generate new ones. Every time we observe a mitzvah, we can recall past memories and create new ones. ■

Rabbi Howard Morrison is senior clergy at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue in Toronto.

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 17, 2014

Macaroons: a classic cookie

EILEEN GOLTZ
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

A true macaroon is small cookie classically made of almond paste or ground almonds (or both) mixed with sugar and egg whites, said to have originated in Italy although the French try to claim it as their invention as well.

Almond macaroons can be chewy, crunchy or a combined texture with the outside crisp and the inside chewy. Adding nuts and/or chocolate and coconut to the recipe just makes them more delicious.

The macaroon is a close cousin to the meringue, but the meringues tend to be crisper and the macaroons chewier. If a macaroon is overbaked, it tends to become dry and crumbly. Most modern day recipes for macaroons include almond paste to create body in the cookie as well as adding a more intense flavour than ground almonds. Macaroons made without paste tend to be light and airy with a delicate crust. French and Italian macaroons are made with almond paste piped into a round shape with frosting holding two macaroons together

There are two key tricks to making macaroons at home. The first is to make the egg white foam with tons of volume, and the second is to have the consistency of the batter such that it doesn't run or spread too much. A spoonful of batter should stay put on the pan without spreading too much. If the batter doesn't co-operate add more nuts or coconut.

Getting macaroons to release from the cookie sheet can be a challenge. Most recipes call for baking on parchment and then peeling the cookies from it shortly after they are removed from the oven. This is good advice: use the parchment paper. You can use a well-greased baking sheet, but you'll have to use a thin metal spatula to remove the cookies immediately upon taking them out of the oven. Be warned – if the macaroons are undercooked, the centres will be soft and gooey and tough to get unstuck from the parchment paper.

If you don't want to take the time to make individual macaroons, try making a macaroon bar type of cookie, changing the kind of nuts you use or adding coconut (note if the coconut is sweetened, you may want to cut back on the sugar in the recipe.) If you feel like it, you can add different extracts and chopped dried fruits. ■

Easy Coconut Macaroons

- ❑ 3 large egg whites, room temperature (room temperature is important)
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. vanilla or almond extract (optional)
- ❑ 1 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- ❑ 1 1/2 cups sweetened flaked coconut (or more as needed)

Grease a baking sheet very well if you are not using parchment paper. Preheat oven to 350. Place the egg whites in bowl of an electric mixer and beat until the foam forms stiff, glossy peaks. Add the extract if using. With a spatula, fold in the powdered sugar and nuts at the same time until just combined.

Spoon the batter onto the prepared pan in rounded mounds. The batter's consistency should allow a spoonful to stand as a mound 3/4-in. high and about 1-1/2 to 2 inches across. If the batter is too thin and runny, add more coconut. Bake for 15 minutes for small to medium-sized cookies, 18 minutes for larger cookies, or until the cookies are a light brown. Immediately remove the cookies from the oven and then remove them from the pan. Let cool on a rack. Makes about 2 dozen.

Apricot Macaroon Bars

Crust:

- ❑ 3/4 cup butter or margarine, softened
- ❑ 1 cup sugar
- ❑ 2 eggs
- ❑ 1/4 tsp. almond extract
- ❑ 1 1/2 cups cake meal
- ❑ 1 cup coconut

Filling:

- ❑ 1 1/2 cups dried apricots, chopped
- ❑ 1 cup water
- ❑ 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- ❑ 1/3 cup toasted coconut

Preheat oven to 350. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter or margarine with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add the granulated sugar and beat till combined. Beat in eggs and almond extract. Beat in as much of the cake meal as you can with the mixer. Stir in any remaining cake meal with a wooden spoon. Stir in coconut. Spread the batter into a greased 9X13-in. pan. Bake for 25 minutes.

In a saucepan combine the dried apricots and water. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for 7 to 8 minutes, or till apricots are tender. Stir in brown sugar. Cook and stir till sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and add the vanilla. Spoon the filling over the hot crust. Sprinkle the toasted coconut over the top. Return to the oven and bake an additional 10 minutes. Cool in pan for at least 30 minutes. Cut into bars. Makes 30 to 36.

Mixed Up Macaroons

- ❑ 3 egg whites
- ❑ 1/4 tsp. salt
- ❑ 1 cup sugar
- ❑ 1/2 cup ground almonds
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- ❑ 6 oz. (about 1 cup) semisweet chocolate chips, melted, cooled

Preheat oven to 350. Grease 2 cookie sheets or use parchment paper. In a bowl of an electric mixer, beat the egg whites and salt until stiff but not dry. Beat in the sugar, a little at a time, until the mixture is thick and glossy. Mixture should stand in peaks. By hand, fold in the almonds, vanilla and melted chocolate. Drop chocolate macaroons by teaspoonfuls onto the prepared cookie sheets. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes. Makes about 48 chocolate macaroons.

Macaroon Fudge Bars

Store bought macaroons make this treat easy and simple.

- ❑ 6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, melted
- ❑ 1 cup unsalted butter or unsalted margarine
- ❑ 1 1/2 cups brown sugar
- ❑ 1 tbsp. sugar
- ❑ 3 eggs
- ❑ 3/4 cup matzah cake meal
- ❑ 1/4 cup potato starch
- ❑ 1 1/2 cups lightly packed quartered or coarsely chopped macaroons (any brand or flavour)

Preheat oven to 350. Lightly grease 9 x 13-in. pan. In a pot, melt the chocolate and butter or margarine over low heat. Cool to room temperature. Stir in brown sugar, vanilla sugar, eggs, flour and starch. Stir in macaroon pieces. Spoon batter into prepared pan. Bake about 40-50 minutes, until top seems set and is beginning to take on a cracked appearance. Do not overbake. Brownies should be set and seem dry to touch - but there should not be a dry crust around sides. Makes 24. Leave plain or glaze.

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 17, 2014

Jeff and Brad Lutz: Promoting a sport with brooms

RON STANG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Recently, the Israel Curling Federation (ICF) toured several North American cities, searching for candidates for a national curling team. This followed the country's reinstatement last year by the World Curling Federation after eviction several years earlier for non-payment of dues. Now the desire for a national team is stronger than ever. And two of its foremost proponents are North Americans – Detroiters Jeff and Brad Lutz who cross the river regularly to play in Canada, one of the world's curling powerhouses. *The CJN* sat down with them at Windsor's Roseland Golf and Curling Club.

What's your interest in curling?

JEFF: It's not only the strategy behind the game but the great camaraderie. One of the things I learned when I first started was the friendships. You could be playing with a stranger for two hours on the ice and you're a friend for life.
BRAD: I love the fact that it is a mentally complex game, that it isn't just throwing some rocks. It's more of a mental challenge than some people appreciate.

What is the legacy of Jews and curling?

JEFF: I remember my uncle asked, 'How did they treat you?' He said he went to the Detroit club back in the late 1970s and they were making ethnic slurs at him, they were making some jokes and openly doing it, like a country club atmosphere. But we know [discrimination] is still out there. I've seen it on Twitter (about the ICF drive) - comments not only about Jews but also about Israel. But I think there isn't as much of that country club atmosphere.

You're from Detroit, why do you come to Windsor to curl?

JEFF: When I started, there wasn't a Detroit club. My quick story was I got interested in the sport through watching the 1998 Olympics, and I called the Detroit club shortly thereafter and said I wanted to learn. But the club was a paper club. So that's why we came to Windsor. This is home, this is where we feel welcome.

How much interest is there by the Windsor Jewish community and the Jewish community in curling?

JEFF: It's hard to gauge right now. What I've learned is that knowledge of the sport is proportionate with what it is with the public generally. And when the Olympics come around there is more interest. What we're seeing as part of our ICF outreach is a groundswell of people who have seen the sport and want to try it. So hopefully it starts growing at an exponential rate and that's the hope in trying to create a national team.

Detroiters Jeff, left, and Brad Lutz at Windsor's Roseland Golf and Curling Club
RON STANG PHOTO

> *There were dozens and dozens of tweets from Israel coming out of each curling match during the Olympics*

Some people are saying curling is becoming a cool sport and young people are becoming interested.

BRAD: I would agree. I know that when people ask me 'What's your fun fact' or 'Tell me something about yourself,' one of the first things I say is 'I'm a curler.' And people's eyes light up and they go 'Oh that's awesome, I always wanted to try it.' You know, these are people who are college age or professionals or young adults.

How did your link with Israel come about?

JEFF: It came in two ways. Right around the 2010 Vancouver Olympics I really wanted to reach out to Israel. I did a lot of legwork at that time trying to find who the right people were. And people in Israel were also working on a team. I approached the Olympic committee in Israel and asked if I could be a part of this. Flash forward to September last year when Israel had been reinstated by the World Curling Federation. I reached out to members of the federation. I wanted to be there.

Why Israel?

JEFF: When I look at the possibilities, there's just a special connection. I mean every time I think about what is happening here, what I am trying to do on my end, [is create] a program that could be built off the ground, and suddenly represent a nation, a nation not known for having winter sports. Israel is a nation that holds a special place in all of our hearts.

What are the aims of the recruitment drive?

JEFF: I think if you look at the overall goals, recruitment is never done. A lot of times we don't necessarily know because we're creating this out of clay and we're making it up as we go. But the eventual goal is to build a strong national program from a junior program. At the moment I believe we have enough people for a men's team, a ladies team, and a mixed doubles team. You wouldn't believe the amount of people who have reached out to me. The other day before leaving work I got a call from some random person in New Jersey wanting to try out.

What kind of facilities are there in Israel for curling?

JEFF: Right now there's two hockey size facilities – one of them being the famed Canada Centre in Metulla. In fact that is probably the premiere facility and has been for some time. There's another full facility in Eilat, it's in the middle of a mall, which of course is where you put all great ice facilities! And then in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem right now there is what I'd call figure-skating rinks which are essentially not full-size rinks. Therefore people can learn curling, they're just not learning the game as we know it with a full sheet [of ice]. To say it's in the early stages would be an understatement.

What is the public mood in Israel for curling?

JEFF: From what I've heard from [ICF official], Simon Pack, and what I've seen on Twitter, there were dozens and dozens of tweets from Israel coming out of each curling match during the Olympics. Simon was working with Sport 5 television. They got decent viewership throughout the Olympics. And he's basically simulcasting and doing Hebrew over the broadcast. And we know there's general interest. It gets shown rather frequently because it is a European-based sport and there's great interest in Israel being a European country.

Would North Americans who make the Israeli team have to live in Israel and what are the commitments – citizenship, military service?

JEFF: It's a citizenship commitment. In some cases if you're too young of an age or you're not of an exempt status that may mean military service. I turn 30 in four weeks and I will be totally exempt. I guess there could be some national emergency where they could pull the whole nation together in a war effort but that's extremely rare. In Brad's case – he's 27 – because he's in the 26 to 29 age window he would be on a reserve list. (Dual citizenship is possible.)
BRAD: If given the opportunity I would pursue citizenship. As for the military requirement, from my understanding the instances of people in my position actually being called into some sort of duty is once or twice in the entire nation's history – for example, the 1948 and 1967 wars. (The brothers are still waiting on whether they will be chosen for the team.)

Can Israel have a national team and have the participants train in another country given their warm weather climates?

JEFF: Very much so. In fact if you look at what is working right now on the world stage, Canada is like the gold standard. The whole Chinese curling association was built off of Canadian coaching and Canadian ice. And come 2018 if you don't think they could be winning the gold medal you've got to be kidding yourself. These teams are built to win and they're built to train and they take months off and they go to Canada and they work with the coaches here.
BRAD: From a logistics standpoint, in the short term, it's thought that most of these players are going to be coming from North America. ■

Skill saved lives in the Holocaust

Backstory

ALLAN LEVINE

The death in February of Holocaust survivor Alice Herz-Sommer at the age of 110, the subject of this year's Academy Award-winning documentary *The Lady in Number 6: Music Saved My Life*, is a poignant reminder of two basic facts about life and history.

The most obvious is that within the next two decades or less, there will be few Holocaust survivors still alive. Most were teenagers or in their early 20s when the war ended almost 70 years ago. Now in their late 80s and 90s, they have also left their most significant legacy: their visual and oral testimonies of their wartime experiences.

Collected by the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and hundreds of Holocaust organizations in Canada and around the world, these testimonies will be used by historians and students for generations to come and will refute those misguided propagandists who still inexplicably question or deny the Holocaust ever occurred.

A second factor in the life of Herz-Sommer is that her survival for two years in the Theresienstadt (Terezín) concentration camp owed much to her skill as a pianist.

"People ask, 'How could you make music?'" she commented in a 2006 interview with the *Guardian*. "We were so weak. But music was special, like a spell, I would say. I gave more than 150 concerts there. There were excellent musicians there, really excellent."

In truth, while Jewish parents have long taken great pride when their children become doctors, lawyers, accountants and other professionals, during the war, it was often possessing skills – whether as a musician, electrician or tailor –that made the difference between life and death.

At the end of 1942, as the war in the east gradually turned against the Nazis, and German leaders faced labour and supply shortages, there was a momentary pause in the "Final Solution" to make Europe Judenrein – free of Jews. In the devastating irrationality of the Holocaust, this "pause" kept thousands of Jews alive – a classic example of the rule of unintended consequences.

Just as bizarre, it now seems Jewish survival for a select group was contingent on the basic economic principles of supply and demand, as well as the Gestapo and SS's appreciation of high-quality goods. Thousands of skilled tradesmen – tailors, carpenters, bricklayers, glaziers, electricians, airplane technicians, and textile experts, among other artisans – were highly useful to the Nazis, and in some cases even respected and admired. Their lives were, therefore, protected and saved. In the euphemism of the day, these were the *Wertvolle Juden*— the valuable Jews.

Among many others, there were Solomon Weiss in the eastern Polish city of Drohobycz, whose wife and three children owed their lives to Solomon's skills as a master tailor; Jacob Frank in the dreaded Lipowa labor camp run by the SS in Lublin, whose ability to produce fine leather coats desired by Himmler and other top Nazis, not only kept him alive, but also secured him unheard of medical care when he was mistakenly shot; and teenager Elly Gotz, now 86, who has lived in Toronto since 1964 and who survived in the Kovno ghetto from 1941 to 1944 by learning to be a locksmith. Gotz later saved himself and his father because of his extraordinary skills as a metal worker and mechanic in the construction of a massive cement bunker adjacent to the Dachau concentration camp.

> *People ask, 'How could you make music?' Music was special, like a spell.*

Gotz obtained his skills thanks to Dr. Elchanan Elkes, the wise and compassionate head of the Kovno Judenrat (Jewish council). Elkes' most creative ploy was obtaining Nazi consent to set up a ghetto trade school for youngsters older than 12 years of age. Elkes arranged for master craftsman from the ORT School to teach the boys a variety of trades and the girls how to sew and cook. Elly attended classes given by the best locksmith in Kovno and quickly became his star pupil.

During the war, Jewish businessmen, intellectuals, lawyers and other professionals were deemed expendable by the Nazis and perished quickly. Those with skills, on the other hand, were the fittest to survive. Rather than feeling dejected and hopeless as did so many Jews who were trapped in the Nazi tentacles, the skilled artisans sustained a deep self-respect and inner strength that made them feel that life was worth fighting for.

Or, as one survivor has put it, "skill is a strength that heals the soul." In short, skill was a potent force and weapon in these courageous acts of self-preservation. ■

Historian Allan Levine's next book, Toronto: A Life and Times, *will be published in the fall.*

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Honey (Anita) Wise	Apr 1/14	25 Marhall Street
Kurt Seidler	Mar 30/14	10 William Morgan Drive
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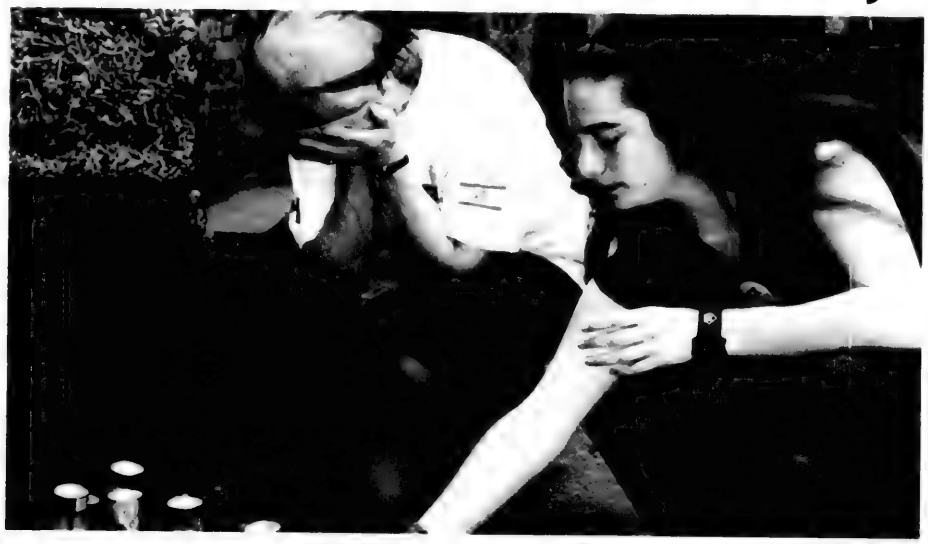
Who will tell the Holocaust story?



Holocaust survivor Eva Gelbman of Ottawa, left, and a a younger March of the Living participant light memorial candles at Auschwitz. ROSEMARY GOLDHAR PHOTO

LILA SARICK
lsarick@thecjn.ca

The Grade 8 students sit there, rapt, as Gershon Willinger describes his improbable survival as a Jewish child born in Holland during World War II.

"We talk about resistance fighters. To me, the resistance fighters are also the parents who selflessly placed their children in care of other people, not knowing if they will see those children again… Just put yourself in the place of parents who were expecting the worst, but hoping at least their children would survive. Think about your parents doing that. It's almost impossible to imagine."

For 40 minutes, the students are forced to imagine the unimaginable, as Willinger describes how, as a five-month-old infant, he was hidden by a Christian family, and then, as a toddler, was deported to the concentration camps of Bergen-Belsen and Theresienstadt after an informer revealed his true identity.

His very first memory is of liberation, he tells the youngsters, when Russian soldiers came to the camp and gave him candy.

Willinger has no memory of his parents, who were murdered in Sobibor. He spent the postwar years shuffled from foster families to orphanages, until he was placed with a childless Jewish couple who, like him, were broken and scarred by the war.

After his speech at Toronto's Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, the students' questions reflect their struggle to comprehend the depth of Willinger's experiences. "Do you hate the Dutch for destroying your childhood?" "Do you hate the Germans?" And most telling, "Why do you want to talk to us about your experiences?"

"I never thought I had a right to talk, because I was so young. I was a survivor who didn't know very much. Once I started talking about it, I felt I had something to contribute," he answers.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Inside

It may cure what ails you

Markham and Israeli firms partner to produce medical marijuana. PAGE 12

Toronto Jewish Film Festival

There's something a bit scary about the offerings being shown this year.

PAGE 37

Sabbatoes

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	7:53 p.m.	9:01 p.m.
Montreal	7:35 p.m.	8:44 p.m.
Toronto	7:55 p.m.	9:01 p.m.
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WHAT TODAY'S WHITE SUPREMACISTS ARE WEARING AND THINKING

'I'm not racist. My customers are.'

Britain's watchdog on anti-Semitism protested after a shop selling clothes popular with neo-Nazis opened in a heavily Jewish area of London. The Thor Viking store opened recently in North Finchley, just steps from the office of the British chief rabbi, and is selling the Thor Steinar brand favoured by neo-Nazis in Europe and beyond. "This shop is not welcome here, and the sooner it moves on, the better," a spokesperson for the Community Security Trust told the *Jewish Chronicle*. The shop's owner insisted he's not racist and only catering to eastern European people living nearby who like the brand.

Mayor agrees with supremacist

The new mayor of the Missouri hometown of white supremacist Frazier Glenn Miller said he agreed with some of the views of

Scarlett Johansson doesn't care for anti-Semitism or her ScarJo nickname.

the accused killer of three people at a JCC and Jewish retirement home near Kansas City before Pesach. Daniel Clevenger endorsed Miller in an interview with *KSPR* news. He said he "kind of agreed with [Miller] on some things, but I don't like to express that too much." Witnesses said Miller shouted "Sieg Heil" after his arrest. Miller has published anti-Semitic texts online and belongs to the Ku Klux Klan. Clevenger gave a more robust endorsement of Miller in a letter to a local paper several years ago.

Call her Scarlett, please

Scarlett Johansson apparently doesn't like her media nickname ScarJo. "I associate that name with, like, pop stars. It sounds tacky. It's lazy and flippant," she said in the May issue of *Glamour* magazine, adding, "There's something insulting about it." Meanwhile, speaking to *Vanity Fair*, the Jewish actress, 29, blamed anti-Semitism for some of the criticism she got after becoming a spokesperson for Israel's SodaStream. She ended up resigning from her longtime advocacy role with anti-poverty group Oxfam because of the controversy. ■

Inside today's edition

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By The Numbers

50,000

The number of people who crowded beaches along the Sea of Galilee on the first day of Chol Hamoed Pesach.

30

The number of people requiring medical assistance because of heat and dehydration after thousands packed the Western Wall plaza April 17 for the traditional priestly blessing ceremony held every Passover and Sukkot.

Quotable

"The reason [Islamic] machines, Islamic states, can function is not [because] they are out there [because of] bombers."

— Rabbi Issamar Ginzberg, Chassid and strategic business adviser. See full interview on p. 50

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Letters to the Editor

BDS: A prof's response

I was very impressed by the article written by Marc Newburgh and Raphael Szajnfarber ("Why we must fight BDS on campus," *The CJN*, April 10) outlining clear reasons and the rationales for opposing the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigns that are being supported by student groups on many university campuses. As a professor at the University of Toronto (where the Graduate Student Union has endorsed BDS), I am ashamed that Canadian students would support such tripe without any critical thought or an attempt to gather all pertinent information so that they'd realize that these charges are completely without merit.

Given what is happening, it is time for all right-minded professors who teach in universities where student unions have embraced the BDS movement to begin to withdraw their services, or at least "work to rule." This might seem to be an overreaction particularly since university administrations have virtually universally repudiated any involvement in BDS campaigns. While I recognize and appreciate this support, I would point out, however, that the students who currently support the BDS movement are our future politicians, leaders in business, academics, professionals, and university administrators. Unless the students who support BDS campaigns mature in later life and realize the error of their ways, and I think that this is unlikely, we will find ourselves in a very hostile environment.

I have decided that until this insanity stops, I plan to work to rule. The time has come for professors (and administrations) to react unequivocally and to reject the actions perpetrated by students or staff who support BDS campaigns against Israel. There has to be consequences attached to the support for the racism underlying BDS campaigns, which is why mere rejection of BDS campaigns by university administrators may no longer constitute an adequate response.

Howard Tenenbaum
Thornhill, Ont.

What Trudeau said

Instead of working to build broader consensus around support for Israel, Conservative MP Joyce Bateman is using the Jewish state to play politics ("Did Trudeau really say that," *The CJN*, April 10).

Bateman attacked Liberal leader Justin Trudeau for comments he made to a Persian newspaper, claiming that he wants to "shift away from support for Israel undermine Israel's place in the world by opposing our efforts to defend their right to exist… [and] proclaiming his desire to befriend a radical regime that is determined to destroy the state of Israel."

The problem? Not a word of it is true.

An unedited video of the interview proves that Trudeau never said anything of the sort. He is a steadfast supporter and friend of Israel who has long stood against threats to its security and prosperity, including the dangerous potential posed by a nuclear-armed Iran.

So what did Trudeau actually say?

That "whether it's positioning around Israel or working closely with the United States, [Stephen Harper is] very, very focused on what is going to play well at the ballot box."

He was talking about the Conservative's "megaphone diplomacy" of talking a lot, but doing little. It makes headlines at home, but does not make real progress. This approach has damaged Canada's reputation around the world, undermining our ability to work with others on pressing global challenges like climate change, arms control and refugee settlement.

Trudeau also said that "there are very, very real concerns about the government in Iran that need to be addressed, but one has to make sure that you think about the citizens of Iran and the Iranian government differently. I worry that this is a nuance that this government doesn't actually appreciate or understand."

Indeed, the only way to secure a lasting peace is for Canada to engage with the people of Iran, to let them know that we stand in solidarity with their democratic aspirations.

Marc Garneau
MP, Liberal Party Foreign Affairs Critic
Ottawa

Yasher koach

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Merle Kastner
Montreal

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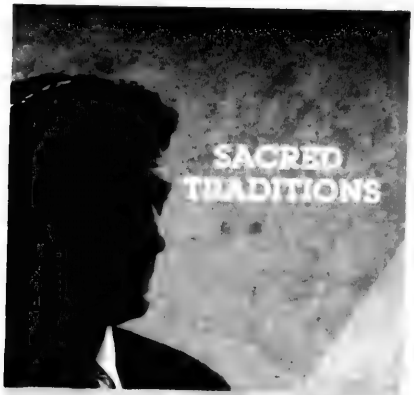
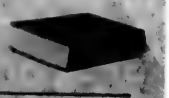


When someone in your family passes away, you want everything to be done right, according to Jewish tradition. When my mother died, I didn't know half of what these things were. Benjamin's spent time with our family, explaining the significance of every sacred ritual. More than that, they made it ours. It was a beautiful way to honour my dear mother's life.

"They thought of everything."



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RABBI-2-RABBI

Being a rabbi is a 24/7 job

But by learning some tricks of the trade and adjusting to the pace, clergy can help bring out the best in their fellow Jews

RABBI MARK FISHMAN
CONGREGATION BETH TIKVAH, MONTREAL

RABBI YAEL SPLANSKY
HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE, TORONTO

Rabbi Fishman: There are some days when time flies by so quickly that the day is over, and I have to ask myself what got accomplished? I begin my morning with a sense of empowerment and drive to positively and courageously change the world. The next thing I know, I'm dealing with the nitty-gritty of human challenges and upheavals. Yet it's after those meetings and conversations that I realize how fortunate I am to be in such a privileged position to be able to lend a hand and a listening ear. Maybe encountering one family at a time we are changing the world?

Rabbi Splansky: When I arrived at my congregation nearly 16 years ago, my parking spot was already labelled. The sign read: "Reserved for Rabbi Splansky. Day and Night." I turned to my husband and asked, "Is this a gracious welcome or a threat?"

Here are a few tricks I've learned along the way. Each one hints at some aspect of our work and time.

- Schedule 15 minutes to get from point A to point B in the synagogue, so that you can visit with congregants, students and staff along the way.
- Any real study, reading or writing has to happen at home.
- Keep a rabbi's prayerbook and a complete roster of congregant contact info with you at all times. You never know when the emergency call will come.
- Designate a pair of "cemetery shoes."
- Accept that for the rabbi, Shabbat begins at about 1 p.m. on Saturday afternoon.
- Sign up to teach something you are interested in, but haven't yet mastered. It'll force you to learn what you wish you already knew.
- Never underestimate Toronto traffic.
- Replace the word "policy" with "our approach."
- Fundraising is sacred work when you believe in the cause and have a good partner.
- Drink coffee and pray.

Rabbi Fishman: There seems to be no guidebook for what it is that we do. I recall the words of advice given to me upon my arrival at Beth Tikvah: do whatever you can. If you will be successful, then you will be really busy.

I recently had the privilege of taking a group of high school teens to New York for a wonderful Shabbaton. During the day, a student told me that the best part of his experience was being able to have real conversations with friends. I emphasized what Shabbat is all about and what we try to achieve on this day. His response was that he felt so bombarded with technology that most of the time his interactions with friends, through texting or Facebook, were just too superficial. His comment gave me the chance to reflect that this moment was what my job is all about.

Rabbi Splansky: The faculty of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion includes many rabbis who chose a life of scholarship over the congregational rabbinate. Over my five years of study there, I heard more than once and from more than one professor: "It's easy to love Judaism. It's not always easy to love the Jews."

I often think of rabbis as matchmakers. Our job is to connect Jews to Judaism, to introduce Jews to sacred texts, to put Jews together with fellow Jews in a setting that will allow for them to be good to one another, to invite Jews to fulfil a particular mitzvah that they are uniquely capable of fulfilling. We are in a rare position to make successful matches. And when we do, we see our people at their best. It is easy to love Judaism, and sometimes it's easy to love the Jews, too.

Rabbi Fishman: I love the idea of rabbi as matchmakers. I think a lot about this in my quieter moments. I tell myself that although there's a rich and vast array of classic wisdom to be learnt, chesed projects to be engaged with and holidays to celebrate, our community (each individual?) has to be willing to "take the plunge" and come out to be counted.
I think our job is to offer the best of what Judaism is and present it in a way that is both enticing and meaningful. People will then make the choice for themselves as to whether they wish to be involved. ■

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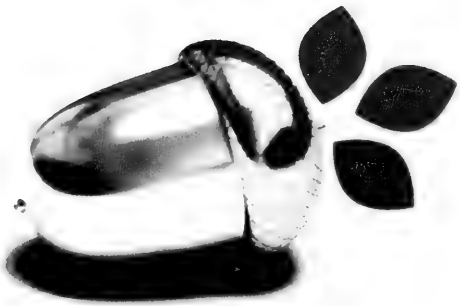

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CJN

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SeeJN | Bike-riding Cantor

Mark Geldzaeler rides a bicycle, circa 1895. Born in Austria, Geldzaeler was a cantor at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto in the 1890s.

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES

SeeJN | Kaifeng Seder

JASON SHUO PHOTO

Some 100 members of the Jewish community of Kaifeng celebrated their first traditional Passover seder this year on April 14. The seder was sponsored by the Jerusalem-based organization Shavei Israel, which supplied them with all the traditional Passover items.

From Yoni's Desk

A valuable lesson about tzedakah

As a rule, I don't think it's my place to tell you where, when or how to give tzedakah (charity). But rules are meant to broken.

Recently, *The CJN* received a letter from Emma Siegel, a 16-year-old from Thornhill, Ont. Emma's touching note informed us of a charity drive she and her friends have undertaken. Maybe it's best I let her fill you in.

"For seven years of my life, I have being going to Camp Gesher [a sleep-away camp near Cloyne, Ont., associated with the Habonim Dror movement], a place where I made friends that I'll keep forever," Emma wrote. "This year my group and I are supposed to be going to Israel… It's a chance to really understand our roots and meet other Jewish teens our age. Most of the people in my group who want to go on the trip have never even been to Israel before, me included.

"The problem is that the trip is very expensive, and many people from my group cannot afford it, including me.

"There's something my group never ever stands for: leaving someone behind. We're working together and crowd-funding… to raise money for those who can't afford the cost of the trip.

"We started doing this in the middle of February and had high hopes of raising enough money. We are now in the middle of April, and people are starting to give up and embrace the fact that they aren't going to be able to go. But I am absolutely not standing for that.

"These are the people who get me through the school year… These are the people I turn to when I need help of any sort, and vice versa. Now I want to repay the favour and show them the bright side that they always showed me.

"Even if the fundraiser doesn't end up reaching its goal, I would give my spot to someone else in a second, because this group of people deserves happiness more than anyone else. To me, if they're happy, I'm happy and I know that going to Israel would mean the world to them."

Camp Gesher's Machaneh Bonim Israel (MBI) is a five-week summer program in Israel for campers who have completed Grade 10. MBI comes with a hefty price tag: more than $7,000 per person. Emma and her camp friends have set up a website at www.buildingcampinisrael.com, which includes information on how to donate to their cause. They hope to raise $36,000 so at least 15 of them can go to Israel for the summer. But time is running out. MBI 2014 starts July 2.

These teens are living proof of the importance of Jewish camps in nurturing young Jewish souls. A summer in Israel might just seal a lifelong bond between them and their religion. And in the meantime, they are learning a valuable lesson about tzedakah through their fundraising campaign. That's worth getting behind.

So if you've got a few bucks to spare, you might consider spending it on this important initiative. If not, you can still contribute by spreading the word on Facebook and Twitter. Emma will thank you, and so will I. ■ — **YONI**

Book Excerpt

Egypt's Jews accept their fate

Mark Lavie

Two elderly ladies dressed in black, one behind large, dark sunglasses, sat quietly in the front row of chairs set up in the courtyard of Cairo's downtown synagogue.

The coffin of Carmen Weinstein, their leader for the last nine years, the force behind the tiny Jewish community of Cairo, had just been carried past them on its way to burial at the cemetery she had worked so hard to preserve.

The two old ladies, part of the community and symbols of its demise, appeared to realize what this meant. They spoke to no one, not even to each other. What could they say?

Their new leader had the courage to express what most people do not want to think about – more than 2,000 years of continuous Jewish life in Egypt is coming to an end. Magda Haroun herself is "only" 60, one of the youngest of the 40 or so remaining Jews of Egypt. No Egyptian Jewish men attended the funeral. There may not be any left in Cairo. Likewise, no children.

Where Carmen Weinstein's quest was to preserve Jewish life in Egypt dating back to the Bible, Magda Haroun stated a different goal.

"I promise to take care of you until God receives us," she told the two old ladies and the rest of the 200 people, almost all of them non-Jewish guests, seated in the courtyard, as she starkly acknowledged the dim future of this "unfortunately dying community."

The battle is over what will be left behind.

Carmen Weinstein, who died in her Cairo home at age 82 on April 13, 2013, was a fighter. She fought Egyptian governments to restore ancient synagogues and won. She fought for restoration of the ninth-century Bassatine Cemetery south of downtown and won that fight, too, until Egypt defeated her. Now the cemetery is overrun by seeping sewage, garbage and squatters.

Carrying Carmen Weinstein's coffin

Her mother is buried there, but years ago she stopped trying to take care of the grave...

Egypt overwhelmed her and her community and her cemetery. Most recently the population explosion, collapse of the economy and absence of effective government undermined her quest to preserve the place where Jews have been buried for 1,300 years.

But not even the cruellest of Egypt's often ruthless rulers over the last 20 centuries managed to defeat the Jews of Egypt the way that one modern leader did.

Gamal Abdel Nasser drove Egypt's Jews into exile in the 1950s. Part of the context was the creation of the State of Israel and Egypt's wars – its humiliating defeat at the hands of the new and poor Jewish state in 1949 and Israel's participation in the ill-conceived French and British attack aimed at restoring the Suez Canal to foreign control in 1956.

In a whirl of nationalist xenophobia, Nasser responded by expelling foreigners from Egypt. British, French, others – and 65,000 Jews. The difference was the Jews were Egyptians. They were there before Islam was born, long before modern Egypt was created.

Today there are Egyptians who mark the start of the slow but steady deterioration of their nation with Nasser's expulsion of the Jews. For 20 centuries, leaders of all persuasions had incorporated Jews into their governments and economies, and they benefited. Nasser threw them out, and the cosmopolitan, quasi-European cultural element of a crucial part of Egyptian society exited with them.

A few hundred, perhaps a few thousand, managed to stay behind despite Nasser, but not enough to form a critical mass. The yeshiva named for its teacher, the great twelfth-century Jewish scholar Moses Maimonides, the Rambam, deteriorated into a roofless ruin. The Ben Ezra synagogue, home of the unique Geniza repository, with its documents describing Jewish life in Egypt for more than 1,000 years, suffered from neglect.

And the cemetery, already in use for 300 years when Maimonides moved to Cairo from his native Spain, began to disappear under the weight of slums, thieves and unregulated urban sprawl.

Carmen Weinstein set out on a rearguard, last-ditch campaign to preserve Jewish heritage in Egypt. Though she never admitted it, the abrasive, aggressive yet cultured leader must have known that her quest was only to guard the physical remnants of a Jewish life that was slowly disappearing.

She had the synagogues and cemetery restored. She battled organizations of Egyptian Jews in the United States and France who wanted to "rescue" the sacred books and ornaments of the Egyptian Jewish community by taking them out of there. She adamantly refused.

Magda Haroun promised to carry on that battle, while admitting that it's a fight over things, not over life itself...

The message was clear to the two old ladies in the front row. It was clear to everyone.

It's over. ■

Excerpted from the ebook Broken Spring *based on Mark Lavie's two years in Cairo as a foreign correspondent.*

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ROMSPEN

Holocaust must remain relevant

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

That contribution is becoming increasingly rare, as eyewitnesses to the most traumatic events of the last century grow older.

Of the 40,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors who came to Canada after the war, between 12,000 and 15,000 are still alive, says Carson Phillips, assistant director of the Holocaust centre.

As the malevolent chorus of Holocaust denial grows louder, the survivors feel an increasing urgency to bear witness to the horrors they endured.

"These children are very privileged," to have heard about the Holocaust first hand, Willinger says about the students he has just spoken to.

But everyone is well aware that these students are the last generation who will have that privilege.

Eli Rubinstein, national director of March of the Living Canada, has 20 survivors accompanying 800 high school students from across Canada this year on the arduous journey to Poland and then Israel. "Many of our survivors have passed away. We have a decade left of people who remember their stories. It's a very sad topic to talk about."

Their loss is immeasurable, Rubinstein says.

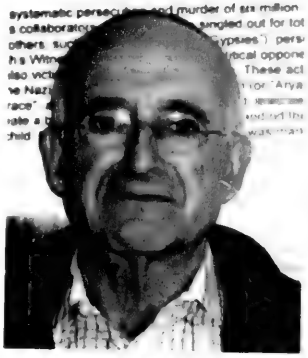
"Nothing is going to replace a survivor telling his or her story in a barracks in Auschwitz, saying, 'This is the last time I saw my mother.'"

Eyewitness testimony has played a central role in Holocaust education, says Adara Goldberg, education director of the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. The challenge now is to transition to telling their story without them.

One approach the Vancouver centre is exploring is to let its extensive collection of artifacts speak for themselves. A tiny recipe book, compiled secretly in a concentration camp, is among the items in their collection. The Jewish woman who created it has died, but the nephew she raised as her own child can speak about the book and the woman who risked her life to write it, Goldberg says.

At Toronto's Holocaust centre, staff are using the 50,000 testimonies, some of them Canadian, recorded by the U.S.-based Shoah Foundation. For the generation of digital natives at home with technology, "that's an automatic point of access," Phillips says.

Educators are also wrestling with how to convey the emotional impact of the Holocaust, that moment students instinctively grasp when they hear Gershon Willinger's profound sadness and his pride when he shows them pictures of his grandchildren.



Gershon Willinger LILA SARICK

"The Holocaust can never become the study of facts and figures. It needs to remain something that's relevant to our students' lives," says Daniel Held, executive director of Toronto's Henry and Julia Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education.

Increasingly, he says, schools are turning to Holocaust novels and memoirs to give students multiple perspectives of the war.

But students need to go beyond reading and listening to "snippets of testimony," Held says. "We need to look at the totality of their life, before and after the war. If we only look at a narrow slice of someone's experience, it's not the totality of who they were."

In Atlantic Canada, where few survivors settled to begin with, it has become increasingly difficult for survivors to travel to smaller communities for programs such as Yom Hashoah, says Jon Goldberg, executive director of the Atlantic Jewish Council.

This year, the council has commissioned a play about the St. Louis, the ship carrying Jewish refugees who were denied permission to land in Canada in 1939. A travelling exhibit about the ship has also been to smaller museums throughout the region.

Paradoxically, as the ranks of the survivor community dwindle, attendance at Yom Hashoah ceremonies and Holocaust Education Week is increasing, says Mira Goldfarb, executive director of Toronto's Holocaust centre.

There's a "recognition of this being an important moment in time, when we're on the precipice of losing survivors and we've engaged young people in the process of commemoration itself."

Toronto and other communities now include youth choirs and young people speaking and reading, as well as recognition of survivors and their rescuers.

"Nothing can replace the voice and presence of a survivor, nor should it. The challenge is to honour them with integrity and vigilance, and that's best done through education," Goldfarb says.

The city's Holocaust Education Week attracts 35,000 participants, and programs take place in churches and mosques as well as Jewish institutions. Ultimately, both Jews and non-Jews will continue to commemorate Yom Hashoah, "not only as a Jewish imperative but as a civic one, and that's why Holocaust education is key," she says.

Another approach to the void being left as survivors die is to embed Holocaust remembrance firmly into Jewish ritual. While Yom Hashoah ceremonies tend to be communal and secular in tone, there's a role for ritual and the synagogue as well, says Rabbi Philip Scheim of Toronto's Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation.

A decade ago, Alex Eisen, a Holocaust survivor who was a member of Rabbi Scheim's shul, proposed the idea of a megillah to be read annually, in much the same way Tisha b'Av is commemorated. With the co-operation of the Conservative movement in North America and Israel, a six-chapter book, titled *The Shoah Scroll*, was written in Hebrew and English.

"Historic events are remembered in Judaism only if they are anchored in religious rituals. The kindling of six torches by survivors in the courtyard of Yad Vashem is a meaningful ritual, but will it last when there are no survivors?" Rabbi David Golinkin, president of the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem asks in a foreword to the megillah.

Religious ritual still has a powerful attraction, even for Jews who define themselves as secular, Rabbi Scheim says. Witness the numbers who rarely enter a synagogue, but wouldn't miss a *Yizkor* service for a deceased parent.

The megillah may not become the defining ritual throughout the ages, but it is critical for Yom Hashoah to be commemorated as part of Jewish liturgy, Rabbi Scheim says. Ultimately, Yom Hashaoah must become a national day of mourning, when Jews feel it is disrespectful to go to a restaurant or to the movies, he says.

For his part, Gershon Willinger is confident that the Holocaust will be remembered, even in the absence of survivors such as himself.

"It's important that we focus on education after this is all over," Willinger said in an interview. "Very serious events in history are being remembered and taught... We don't forget about the Inquisition... and the destruction of the Temple. I would hope that we are teaching about the Holocaust.

"This is only the icing on the cake, that you have survivors speaking." ■

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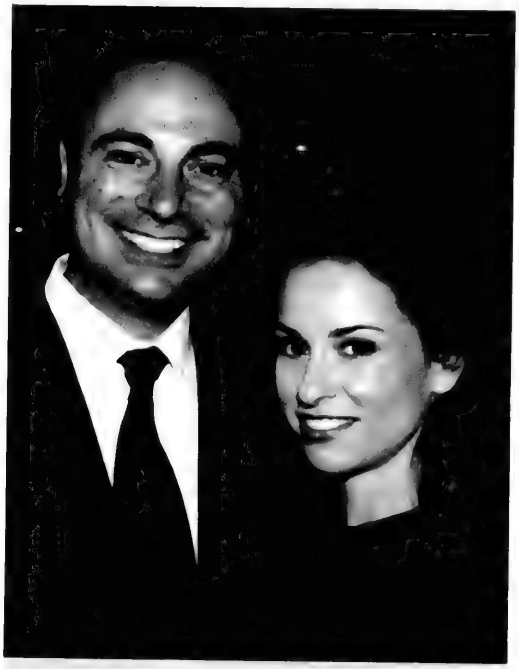

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OPINION

Correspondent gives nuanced account of Arab Spring

Paul Michaels

Many *CJN* readers may still recall the distinctive bass voice of a reporter from Israel during the mid-1980s to almost 2000: "For *CBC News*, this is Mark Lavie in Jerusalem" as he typically concluded his stories, almost all of them for radio news.

Lavie, a name quite a few listeners assumed was of francophone origin, is in fact an American Orthodox Jew from Fort Wayne Ind., who made aliyah in the early 1970s, and, in addition to his journalism, often serves as a chazzan in his shul.

No one hearing his *CBC* broadcasts would have had a clue about his ethnicity. He was scrupulous about his craft as a reporter, always committed to impartiality and accuracy. When his time with the CBC concluded, Lavie moved to the *Associated Press* (AP), still in Jerusalem, where he became a senior editor.

Naturally inquisitive and adventurous, Lavie eventually decided that he needed a change of scenery. So he landed a spot in *AP*'s Mideast regional desk in Cairo.

His timing could not have been more auspicious. He began his work in Egypt's bustling capital in 2009, a year before the "Arab Spring," ending his stint four years later at the time of its bitter collapse.

From that experience has emerged an immensely enjoyable and informative book, *Broken Spring* (Gefen Publishing House, Israel), available from Amazon as an ebook or paperback.

A 600-page academic tome about Egypt and the Arab Spring provides nowhere near the detail, intimacy and immediacy of Lavie's vivid, insightful observations captured in this fascinating 220-page book.

Each of the 40 brief chapters is an account of Lavie's experience in Cairo during this tumultuous, singular period in the history of Egypt and the Arab world.

After four decades of reporting from a region Lavie thought he knew well (he also reported outside Israel), he soon discovered just how much he still had to learn about living and working in Cairo.

To be sure, Lavie had long understood that common assumptions – the staple of many Mideast correspondents – including the notion the web-savvy, English-speaking youth of Tahrir Square were representative of Egyptian society, or that "resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the key to solving the region's problems," were false.

What he came to understand were the nuances and complexities of everyday life where half of the 80-plus million Egyptians live near the international poverty line of $2 dollars a day. That much is well known. What's less well understood but critical to grasp is that, "In Egypt's cash economy, only about 10 per cent of the people have bank accounts, much less checking accounts or credit cards… just about everybody pays cash for just about everything. So tax collection on transactions is nearly impossible."

In what may be a surprise, Lavie notes: "The vast majority of Egypt's 82 million people are happy if they have enough cash to provide food and shelter."

Yet, in another chapter, Lavie shows (in one of the book's many photos) a rickety, hand-turned 10-foot ferris wheel in a Cairo market where everyone, including the kids, appears glum under the strain of the Arab Spring rebellions. Lavie writes: "One overriding characteristic of the Egyptian people is their friendliness. Simply put: they smile a lot. They banter. They joke. They're comfortable, laid-back people who chat while they sip tea, help each other, display a positive attitude."

Yet, "It turns out there are limits."

Numerous other observations make for gripping reading: the widespread appeal in Egyptian society of anti-Israel conspiracy theories: "The wildest conspiracy theories blossomed, most with the Mossad at the centre. Food shortages? Internal conflicts? Scandals? Bribes? Just blame the Mossad."

Lavie's visit to Alexandria's beautiful but abandoned Eliahu HaNavi synagogue stands as a sorry reminder of the tragic loss of the once-thriving Jewish community of 40,000 with 17 synagogues.

For an accessible insight into life in one of the most populous countries in the Middle East, Lavie's nuanced, sensitive account of life today for Egyptians – and all it tells us about what we may expect in the years to come – is highly recommended. ■

Impact of the Shoah revisited after family discovery

Maharat Rachel Kohl Finegold

As the grandchild of a Holocaust survivor, I never heard the story of the murder of our family members directly from my grandfather – he never liked talking about it – but it was told and retold to me by my mother. She pursued graduate work in Holocaust studies, she lectured on the topic, she chaperoned hundreds of teenagers on visits to the camps and crematoria. So immersed was she in Holocaust literature that our bookshelves brimmed with the classics.

As for me, after all this exposure, I had somehow reverted to my grandfather's silence. Not that I wasn't willing to talk about it, but the fact was simply that the Shoah was a closed piece of my history, sealed and far away. The schools I attended did such a good job of Holocaust education, as did the summer camps – which would not let a Tisha b'Av go by without showing images of gas chambers or talking about the destruction of European Jewry – that I somehow felt saturated. I didn't need to talk about it anymore.

Until now. My second cousin received an email from a gentleman in Israel. He had heard there were members of a Chanowitz family (my mother's maiden name) in the United States. Since this man's mother was a Chanowitz, he thought perhaps we were distant relatives. He knew his mother was the only survivor of her entire family, which had included nine children. But perhaps this was a cousin through his mother's distant family.

He proceeded to tell his mother's lineage and all the details of the family. As my mother read me the original email over the phone, I was in shock. This man's mother, was none other than Asna Mera, who figured prominently in our family's story, the story I had heard so many times growing up.

Asna was the eldest sister of my grandfather's family. She was taken away in the first of the roundups, along with many of the leaders of the community. The story I had heard (and details are now being clarified) was that when the Jews had heard that there was danger, the entire Chanowitz family barricaded themselves in their home for protection. Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. Asna insisted that they should open the door despite the danger, because it could be a Jew in need of protection. And so the other family members barricaded themselves into the back of the house while Asna opened the door. It was a German soldier, who immediately took her away. Asna was shot and buried in a mass grave in the forest, along with the rest of the group. She was just a teenager when she was murdered.

And now, we hear that Asna actually had somehow escaped and had made a life for herself in the former Soviet Union, that Asna had children and grandchildren, a family. My family.

And suddenly my family's history, and my own, opened up again. Suddenly the tales of the Shoah were happening right here and right now. I felt the strange feeling of gaining family, of reviving the dead, of repairing a broken chain of my identity and of my family. It felt like a world reborn.

And then the realization hit: if this entire branch of my family could suddenly reappear, and could elicit such a feeling of rebirth and of hope, what of all the branches that never got to be? All the siblings who were, in fact, brutally murdered? Where are their descendants now? Where are all my dear cousins who should now be raising families of their own, as I am? And for the first time, I understood the loss. For the first time, I felt like a survivor.

The third generation is a strange place to be. It is the point where it is easy to step aside and allow the family story to be just that – a story rather than a living, breathing reality. For all these years, the Shoah was tucked away like a family heirloom. Now, it was suddenly dusted off and bequeathed to me, along with the loss and the void. It is my loss, too. ■

The writer is director of education and spiritual enrichment at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim in Montreal.

OPINION

Leaders must be of strong moral character

Rabbi Jay Kelman

What is it about leaders that so many of them seem to be embroiled in ethical controversy? We in Ontario have a gas-plant scandal that won't go away, as new revelations come forward. Even sadder than the original waste of more than $1 billion of public money – and Jewish tradition teaches that it's next to impossible to properly atone for stealing from the public – are the repeated attempts at covering it up. Sadder still is that no charges will be brought against former premier Dalton McGuinty, and his successor may be able to avoid asking voters to pass judgment on whether she should be given a mandate to govern.

For all of his weaknesses, at least Toronto Mayor Rob Ford has not been involved in financial scandal and has a reputation as someone concerned about the public purse. Earlier this month, a former prime minister of Israel was convicted of bribery. The CEO of General Motors has been busy lately trying to figure out how and why the company failed to recall vehicles, even though it was aware of an ignition defect that caused at least 12 deaths.

As I was taught when studying Talmud, the simplest explanation is usually best. Money and power means more than the public welfare or even the lives of individuals. Of course, no one can or would admit to that, and if you were to talk to these same people one on one, you'd find that they don't believe it either, which explains why investigations are set up, often wasting more money, so that other explanations that avoid the obvious can be proffered. Admitting that money and power trumps morality is too painful and leads to cognitive dissonance.

Yet acting on our more noble beliefs is most difficult. The temptations are too high, the potential rewards are too great and the culture of entitlement and political deal-making too strong. I recall a most insightful comment by Robert Kaplan (my MP for many years) that people generally have great respect for individual politicians, but it's politicians in general whom they distrust and dislike.

Almost all who enter public service in all its many manifestations do so because they want to serve others and make a positive contribution to society. And I would say most do exactly that, working long hard hours often at less pay than they could earn elsewhere.

Yet these very same people often are the ones to perpetuate a system where doing what's right takes a back seat to doing what's expedient. They may feel playing by the system is the only way to accomplish other goals, and they may be right. Such is the sad reality of group dynamics. And if such is true regarding those who enter public service, it's likely even more so for those who enter the private sector, where there are philosophical debates as to whether there should even be any concerns other than making money.

As I write these words a week before Pesach, perhaps an insight (which I trust is valuable even after Pesach) into the "four children" is instructive. "When your child will ask you," which the Haggadah identifies as the question of the wise child, is written in the singular, whereas the question of the wicked child, "and when your children will say to you," is written in the plural. Wrongdoing thrives when one is part of a larger group, where each individual can evade responsibility. A collection of well-motivated individuals can fail miserably when working as a group. And it takes a rare individual who can stand up against the many.

Newton taught in physics that every action has an equal and opposite reaction, and we have a similar idea in the moral world. Those same qualities – ambition, intelligence, vision – that produce greatness are the very same ones that can produce moral failure. This is why the fundamental quality we must seek in our leaders is that of character. Considering the opportunities they have for moral failure – opportunities most others don't face – this is most crucial. These many, often anonymous, people can act in the best interest of others who are the true leaders of society. ■

Remembering Rivka by keeping up the sacred fight

Norma Baumel Joseph

We just finished celebrating Pesach, but my friend and colleague, Rivka Haut didn't live that long. How can she not be here when she taught so many of us about the transcendent Passover themes of liberty and justice? She fought for agunot and created vehicles for their liberation from the shackles of dead marriages. She was a teacher, mentor and adviser. She struggled to establish women's tfillah groups and she introduced us to prayer at the Kotel in the women's section.

It began for me with a laugh.

Rivka leaned over and suggested that we go to the Kotel on a Thursday to daven (pray,) and I just laughed. It was laughter filled with unexpected joy and a great deal of incredulity. (Was this what Sarah felt like?) As the days passed and plans developed, both feelings remained, but fear emerged. Could we really do it?

Never could we have imagined the long-term commitment we were about to make. Never could we have dreamed of the network of friendships and the layer of betrayals we were about to experience. But for me, the most astounding message was the realization the feminist community wasn't interested in us, and when they got interested, they misunderstood the issues completely. Even feminist Orthodox leaders have misconstrued the concerns.

In December 1988, for the first time, women prayed with Torah at the Kotel. It was a most incredible moment, to be the first women ever to pray together as a group *b'kol* (voice) with Torah at the Kotel. An emotional Rivka proclaimed: "We redeemed the Torah for women."

Later in 1989, we formed a legal entity in conjunction with our Israeli sisters to fight the government injunction that forbade us from going as a group with Torah, tallit and voice to the Kotel. Again another first: this was the first time Jewish women's rights as Jews were to be argued in a court of law – on religious grounds. At first, we didn't win. Then, in 2003, we won theoretically, but not practically, until the Sobell decision in 2013 confirmed our practice and said the police should not arrest the women, for they were not violating public order. The men were the violent ones.

Today, in order to appear to satisfy a growing public that seeks opportunities for diverse religious expression, the government of Israel is forging a deal that will change the nature of the Kotel. (In reality, they don't care about the diversity of Jews.) As I've written before, the compromise will allow services in a small area of an archeological site at Robinson's Arch. Some women representing themselves as Women of the Wall will agree to move there. Some of us who were with Rivka at the founding of Women of the Wall won't agree.

We fought for the right to pray at the holy heritage site called the Kotel, not some other distant place. We want to pray in the women's section, as is our custom. We've been doing so for 25 years. We are pluralist and respectful of our diverse approaches to Jewish prayer. We should be upheld as a model of group collaboration.

Robinson's Arch is not the Kotel. Just look at the map. It's the back of the bus – literally. It's not the sacred space carved out by generations of men and women who stood at that place and prayed. How dare they make it into a haredi shul? It's not that and never was.

We won the legal battle. Why should we step back from full acceptance of our presence? Why allow Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to make this deal and give in to the haredim? Why should Orthodoxy in Israel to be branded as haredi-only? If this agreement goes forward, the Kotel will belong to one segment of the Orthodox world only. The term Orthodox will belong to the haredi world only!

No one has the authority to surrender Jewish women's rights in the Ezrat Nashim. We won't agree. Women's rights aren't a bargaining chip that can be traded by politicians making deals. Israel is the guardian of religious holy sites and must assure freedom of access as confirmed in our court cases.

We will continue this sacred battle in Rivka's name. ■

News GTA

Markham and Israeli firms partner to produce medical marijuana

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@cjnews.com

Back in the day, people who smoked marijuana did so to get high, but it turned out the cannabis plant possessed some beneficial side effects as well. It could reduce nausea, it was an anti-inflammatory, and it helped people suffering from spasticity.

The medicinal use of marijuana, or marihuana, has a pedigree that goes back thousands of years across a variety of cultures, from China to South America.

Although marijuana-use is illegal in Canada, there are exceptions. Permission has been granted for those with medical needs to grow their own or to hire someone to grow it for them.

The cultivation of cannabis became something of a cottage industry, a mom-and-pop-scale operation, but recently the government of Canada opened the doors wider to better serve the tens of thousands of patients who are helped by the substance and to control the quality of the product.

Enter MedReleaf, a Canadian corporation which operates a 55,000-square foot cannabis cultivation facility in Markham.

Inside the pristine facility, branches are clipped off a "mother plant," nourished for a short period and replanted in greenhouses where temperature, humidity and lighting are controlled. To enter the high tech grow op, you need to don a surgeon's gown and get daubed in alcohol, to prevent you transmitting any foreign substances that might taint the weed. "We're operating the facility at the level of sterility akin to a hospital operating room," said Neil Closner, CEO of MedReleaf.

Adding an interesting twist to the brand new enterprise – MedReleaf started growing its first plants in February and will make its first deliveries in June – is the involvement of an Israeli partner, Tikun Olam.

In fact, said Closner, six of the company's 12 varieties of marijuana originate in the Holy Land. The partnership along with the exclusive Canadian rights to the plants gives MedReleaf a leg up on its competition, said Closner. There are a dozen Canadian companies currently licensed by Health Canada to sell medical marijuana as of April 1, plus a host of small scale mom-and-pop operators who grow it for personal use or for a handful of others.

Tikun Olam has been operating for some time and has developed a unique expertise in tailoring varieties of marijuana for specific illnesses, said Closner.

For instance, its Avidekel variety is low in THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the chemical agent that makes users high, but is loaded with CBD (cannabidiol), which is an anti-inflammatory. It works best with people suffering from conditions such as arthritis.

Another, Erez, has been shown to be effective for addressing nausea and is often dispensed to cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy.

Ma'ayan Weisberg, director of public relations and marketing for Tikun Olam, said the company grows its cannabis in a state of the art greenhouse near Safed, in Israel's north.

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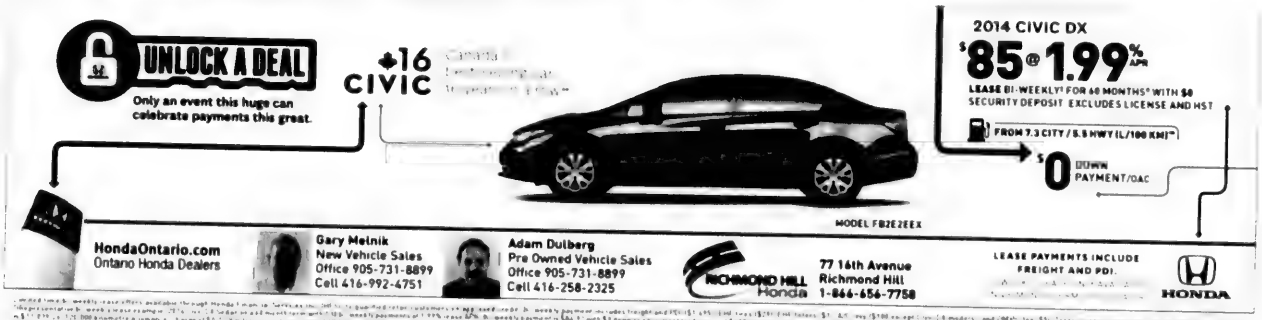

URJ Camp George director Jeff Rose

Camp George staffer identified as bone marrow match

CARA EDELL
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Two summers ago, as part of a North American initiative, Jewish camps were encouraged to hold bone marrow drives for people over the age of 18.

Last month, URJ Camp George director Jeff Rose was informed that one of his own staff members was identified as a match for a 62-year-old man suffering from myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS).

MDS is a disorder of the hematopoietic stem cell in the bone marrow. Patients with MDS can develop severe anemia and require blood transfusions. In some cases, the disease worsens and the patient develops low blood counts caused by progressive bone marrow failure.

"I was shocked and in awe of the power of our community," said Rose, after hearing the news. "I imagine that the feeling is akin to having won the lottery. I was so proud of our community for having supported this initiative in the first place and then to have found a donor amidst our young leaders is spectacular."

Rose said he likes to encourage his staff and camp community to take part in various tikkun olam projects. "This is a pillar of Reform Judaism and one of the values that we espouse throughout our camp program."

He said he invited the Gift of Life organization to Camp George to facilitate the bone marrow drive in 2012. He was told the names of participants would stay in the registry for a long time.

"It came as no surprise when the majority of our age-eligible staff lined up to do their part. Two years later, here we are."

The process at this point is anonymous, Rose said. "I have tried to get some information, but out of respect to the donor and family, we are not privy to too much information at this time. As I understand, the potential donor is currently being contacted to have the process explained to him or her. Following this, I believe there are a series of tests that will be performed to ensure viability of the donation. Once this is done, I am told that if all goes forward, I will receive an email after the transplant occurs."

Rose said tikkun olam projects are always interwoven into his camp's planning. Other examples of volunteer initiatives have included car washes to raise money for the local fire department, food drives on visitor's day to support the local food bank and camper performances at seniors' residences. ■

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Action plan needed to address needs of First Nations: Paul Martin

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@cjnews.com

When former prime minister Paul Martin visited the Leo Baeck Day School's south campus earlier this month, he told the students that it is up to their generation to right the wrongs that have been inflicted on Canada's First Nations people and pave a better future for all Canadians.

Martin chose to speak to the 250 middle school students from both of the Jewish day school campuses after he learned that the Union of Reform Judaism, with which Leo Baeck is affiliated, had passed a resolution focusing on addressing the plight of First Nations people in North America, said head of school Eric Petersiel.

"The resolution acknowledges our history as a Jewish People that suffered from discrimination, making it incumbent upon us to make the plight of the First Nations people in Canada a priority," Petersiel said.

In what was more of an informal conversation than a lecture, Martin engaged the students in a discussion about Canada's growing Aboriginal community.

"While First Nations are a minority, they are today the youngest and fastest growing segment of the Canadian population," Martin said.

"They are growing, right now, four times faster than other Canadians. And they are of your generation. There are more members of the First Nations and Métis under the age of 15 than any other segment of the Canadian population."

Martin said this growth will lead to a "fundamental shift" in Canadian society.

"My generation – and it was wrong for it to happen – but we ignored it. Your generation will not. These will be the young men and women you will be working with," he said.

"The only way that we are going to build a strong society is if we look at some things differently."

Martin acknowledged the failure of the government-funded residential schools where Aboriginal children were abused and marginalized in an effort to assimilate them.

"Imagine if you were taken away from your home and your parents were given no choice… You went to the school, you were not allowed to practise your religion, and you were not allowed to speak your language…

Former prime minister Paul Martin talks to students at Leo Baeck Day School.

> *They are growing, right now, four times faster than other Canadians. And they are of your generation. There are more members of the First Nations and Métis under the age of 15 than any other segment of the Canadian population.*

And if you tried to speak your language, they would wash your mouth out with soap. That's what we did to the First Nations people for 150 years. And there are, today, literally thousands of people in this country who went to those schools," he said.

"That means that the entire time I was in primary school, secondary school, college, law school… we did all of this, and these residential schools were going on, and we paid no attention. We paid no attention, and the last school only closed in 1996."

He said that while the last residential school was closed in 1996, those schools were replaced with "a vastly inferior kind of education. That's why we need to go to an action plan."

He said promoting an action plan to address the needs of our aboriginal communities "is a responsibility of your parents to talk to you about it, but it is also your responsibility to talk to your parents about it. It's the responsibility of your teachers to talk to you about it."

Ignoring the growing Aboriginal community is no longer an option, Martin said, adding that in Saskatchewan, 45 per cent of all students going into Grade 1 next year are Aboriginal.

"I'm not going to be around when they are ready to take their place in this country. Who is going to be around when these students, who are now in Grade 8, who's going to be around in this country when they are twice the population they are now and when no one who lives in Toronto will not have met an indigenous Canadian? Your generation," Martin said.

"All of you have a tremendous opportunity to make this country a better country for your generation. Not for my generation, not for my parents' generation, but for your generation, and you owe it to yourself."■

Strengthening Jewish identity through environmental education

VICKY TOBIANAH
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Jewish outdoor, food and environmental education (JOFEE) programs help develop Jewish leaders and foster a deeper connection to Jewish identity, a new report has found.

The *Seeds of Opportunity* report, released in early March, is the first national research study on the impact of JOFEE programs on Jewish identity, education and Jewish life for Jewish adults (specifically, programs that last four days or longer, such as weekend retreats or hands-on workshops).

The results? Jewish environmental programs foster a greater connection to Judaism, and allow alienated and disconnected Jews to reconnect to their Jewish roots while engaging in issues they're passionate about, such as sustainability and the environment.

The report also found that many participants and educators of JOFEE programs – about 70 per cent – consider themselves leaders in their communities.

While many Jewish organizations fight to attract young professionals, people often feel disconnected from the Jewish community. In fact, the report found that 63 per cent of respondents felt disconnected from Jewish life (the main reason was a negative experience with Jewish religion or community), but 32 per cent reported that a JOFEE program was the main reason they reconnected.

Based in Toronto, Shoresh Jewish Environmental Programs is an example of a Jewish organization that's centered on sustainability and environmental education grounded in Jewish wisdom and practice. At its annual food conference, for example, speakers explored the Jewish year of shmittah (the year the land lies fallow) and what it means for environmental preservation. They also spoke about practising sustainable farming and whether kosher should also mean ethical.

Shoresh program at the Kavanah Garden SABRINA MALACH PHOTOS

"The beauty of Jewish environmental education is that it's a unifying aspect of Jewish tradition. No matter where you stand on the religious or political spectrum, very few people can disagree on the beauty and sacredness of nature. Especially today with the environment being a hot topic in general, everyone knows that it's essential to our life. And the very first job of the first humans (Adam and Eve) in the world was to watch over and care for their environment," said Tamar Maerim Yunger, interim executive director of Shoresh.

"Shoresh is the only Jewish organization in Toronto and Canada with a mission that focuses on food and environmental issues to build a more sustainable and connected Jewish community."

Shoresh's flagship program, its Kavanah Garden at the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, Ont., embodies the organization's goals. Participants can go on a nature hike, read education signs in Hebrew or English, smell the spices in the Havdalah garden, visit the outdoor kitchen and learn about more than 100 varieties of fresh food.

The site was voted by *Slingshot: A Resource Guide to Jewish Innovation* as one of the 50 most inspiring and innovative Jewish programs in North America.

Most recently, Shoresh opened Bela Farm, which will become fully operational in 2016, in rural Ontario, where it runs educational programs and workshops based on Jewish principles of ecology, nature and tikkun olam (repairing the world).

"The hope is that it will create a more sustainable and healthy Jewish community," Yunger said. "Without a doubt, Jewish environmental programs are connecting and reconnecting Jewish young adults to their Judaism in a new, meaningful way, when otherwise they would have disconnected in some cases entirely or remained marginally involved." ■

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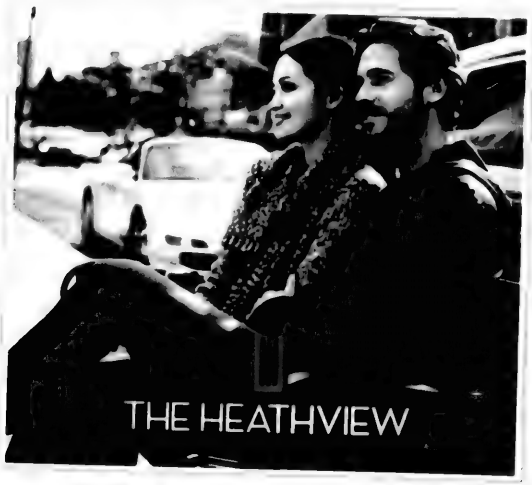
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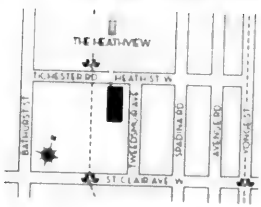

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Zachary Winkler, right, and his sister Maya present a cheque to Ryan Baillie from the Sick Kids Foundation.

Teen raises $11,000 by doing something sweet

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@cjnews.com

He only just celebrated his bar mitzvah last week, but 13-year-old Zachary Winkler is a seasoned philanthropist, having raised $11,000 in his annual Do Something Sweet fundraiser.

Every November since he was six years old, Winkler has invited people to his Thornhill home for a street party to raise funds for the Hospital for Sick Children.

"We have a silent auction, balloon animals, face painting, cotton candy and inflatable games," Winkler said.

"We do it the first Sunday every November and every year we try to raise more money than we did the year before."

Winkler said that he was inspired to raise money for Sick Kids when he came across a newspaper article about a little girl who had a brain tumour.

"I didn't know who she was, but I asked if I could raise money and my parents said, 'sure,'" he recalled.

"I wanted to raise money in general and I asked my dad if there was a hospital for sick children, and he said, 'Yes, that's what it's called."

In its first year, Do Something Sweet pulled in $515, but every year the event has grown in size and scope.

"It started on my parents' driveway, but since the fourth or fifth year, we've also used our neighbours' driveways for the silent auction and the inflatable games," Winkler said, adding that this year, between 400-500 people turned out for the event and he surpassed his $10,000 goal by a little more than $1,000.

He explained that he came up with his $10,000 goal after having visited the Sick Kids website that has a kind of wish list for electronics and machines that the hospital needs.

"We saw that for $10,000, you could get a machine called a Snoezelen Therapy machine. It's for kids with autism mostly. It helps them relax and lights flash everywhere and it plays music."

Richard Winkler, Zachary's father, explained that the machine his son raised money for enables the kids to enjoy light, sound, and video imaging, to keep young patients distracted during medical procedures.

"Needless to say we are very proud of him. He is extremely humble about his initiative and to date he has raised just over $40,000," he said.

Winkler was also awarded the 2009 Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year Award for his fundraising efforts, and last year, Sick Kids named him the top individual fundraiser in the under-18 category.

"The hospital has just informed me that after tabulating all donations from kids events in the year 2013, he has just won this award from the hospital for the second consecutive year," his father said.

Winkler, who was inspired by his late grandfather who led by example by donating to many charities, said he has every intention of keeping his annual fundraiser going indefinitely.

"Generally, it's never good for a kid to be in the hospital and I think if you know someone who is, it's terrible and it's always good to help." ■

Mitch Krystantos

Health

Boxers will fight to end cancer at upcoming gala

CARA EDELL
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Mitch Krystantos, an active volunteer in the oncology unit at the Hospital for Sick Children, knows that beating cancer is not an easy battle.

After attending more funerals than weddings in the past year, he said he felt obligated to become even more involved in helping those who are suffering from the disease.

When Krystantos heard about Fight to End Cancer (FTEC), he immediately agreed to take part in the event.

Held on May 31 at the Old Mill Inn, FTEC will feature business leaders from across the city pitted against each other in boxing matches. The Las Vegas-style black-tie affair will also include a gourmet dinner and celebrity entertainment.

The third annual gala will raise funds for high-priority research at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre as well as for What Are You Fighting For – a program that provides opportunities to exceptional youth in the community.

"I decided to get involved for many reasons, one of which was to see how far I could push myself," said Krystantos, vice-president of operations and marketing at Las Vegas Connexx.

"The main reason was to fight for those who have lost their battle to cancer and the ones who are still fighting. I want them to know that the fight will continue until a cure is found."

Krystantos said his experience of volunteering for 15 years at Sick Kids has been very humbling. "These kids did not ask to have cancer. They are stuck with it. Yet they are some of the most positive people I have ever met, always smiling.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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Shinshinim to screen Israeli film at Temple Har Zion

Part of Yom Hazikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut awareness and fundraising project

FRANCES KRAFT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Young Israeli emissaries Oded Goffer and Stav Zelniker will screen an Israeli movie at Temple Har Zion May 3 as part of a Yom Hazikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut awareness and fundraising project.

Yom Hazikaron, which falls on May 5, commemorates Israel's fallen soldiers, and Yom Ha'atzmaut, on May 6, is a celebration of Israel's independence day.

The teens are among 19 shinshinim who've deferred IDF service for a year to work here at synagogues and Jewish schools, through UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. The acronym "shinshin" denotes "shnat sherut," the Hebrew words for "a year of service." Goffer and Zelniker, natives of Haifa and Tel Aviv respectively, work at Temple Har Zion and the Montessori Jewish Day School.

They wanted to create a program that would have "a big impact" and promote understanding, Goffer said.

As of April 3, the pair had raised more than $400 from donors at Har Zion after launching their initiative four weeks earlier. They hope to raise $600-plus by Yom Hazikaron.

Shinshinim Stav Zelniker, far right, and Oded Goffer, second from right, with students.

The funds will be used to purchase fleece neck warmers for Unit 50, a frontline combat unit in the IDF, which has 170 soldiers. Goffer, who will join the unit when he enters the IDF on his return to Israel, and Zelniker, who has a friend in the troop, wanted to provide something the soldiers wouldn't receive otherwise, and they wanted to be able to give something to each soldier in the unit, Zelniker said.

As well, Goffer added, "We wanted to give them the feeling that someone cares about them, even outside of Israel... No one here knows any of the soldiers, but still they appreciate what the soldiers are doing."

If the shinshinim exceed their target goal, they would like to help more units, or perhaps buy sweaters instead of less costly neck warmers to keep soldiers warm on cool evenings.

At Montessori, the shinshinim have worked with children from preschool to Grade 8 on Yom Ha'atzmaut projects ranging from dance to artwork and creative writing. Older children have learned about IDF soldiers as part of activities organized by the two Israelis. Parents will see their children's work at a Yom Ha'atzmaut exhibit at the school. "And, by the way, if they want to donate money, they are more than welcome," Zelniker said.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Program for young children offered

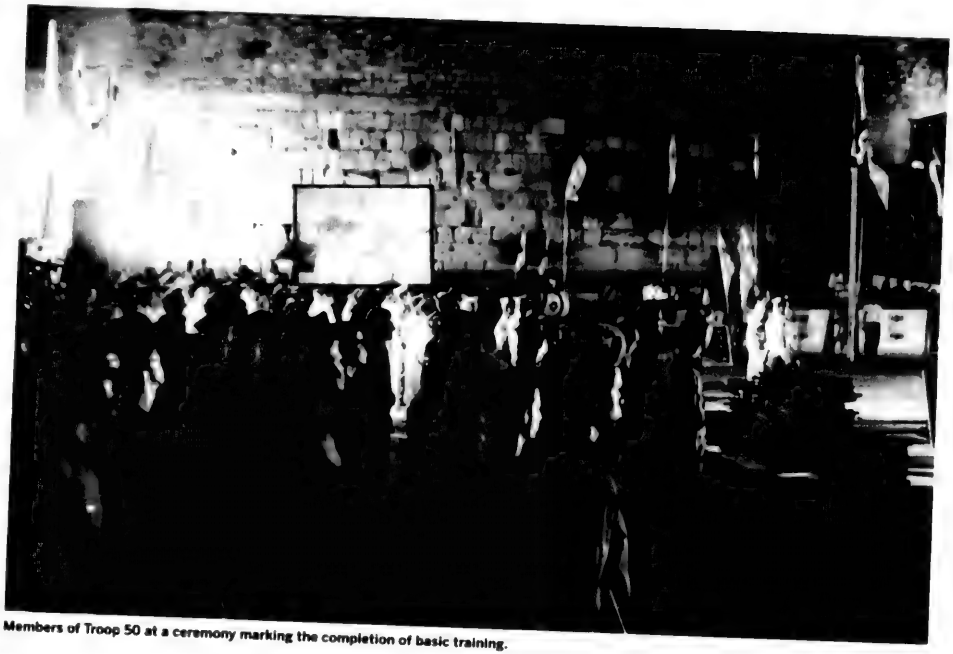
CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

At Har Zion, at 7:30 on the Saturday evening preceding Yom Hazikaron, Goffer and Zelniker will screen the Israeli movie *Broken Wings*, about a mother and her four children dealing with the loss of her husband/their father. The movie, which will have a concurrent program for young children, will be followed by a discussion focusing on how common it is in Israel to know someone who died during the wars, Goffer said. Admission is $5 for adults, $2.50 for students.

Goffer noted that his uncle lost a hand in the Yom Kippur War, and Zelniker added that she has a friend whose family died in a terror attack.

"It's very close to us, and we wanted to pass this feeling to the community," Goffer said. "We go from Yom Hazikaron to the Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration, because we're very thankful for whatever the soldiers are doing."

All the Toronto shinshinim are working on projects at their own placements, as well as a Yom Hazikaron ceremony for federation staff. ■



Members of Troop 50 at a ceremony marking the completion of basic training.

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Produces a dozen varieties of cannabis

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

It's guarded like a military facility and its product is delivered in Brinks-like trucks.

Altogether, Tikun Olam produces a dozen varieties of cannabis, she said.

Tikun Olam, which is Hebrew for repairing the world, operates its own clinic in Hadarim, north of Tel Aviv. Patients who are prescribed cannabis by their doctors consult with Tikun Olam intake workers, who are trained nurses. They are interviewed and matched up with the best marijuana for their illness, Closner said.

Follow-up calls to check on the patient's progress come a month and six months later. Doctors are kept informed about the specific marijuana that was employed.

Canadian regulations prevent MedReleaf from offering a retail service of that kind, Closner said. Instead, patients, once they've got a physician's document, similar to a prescription, send in the original document. They later visit the MedReleaf web site, register, and receive a user ID. They place their order online and a MedReleaf staffer, who is a nurse, contacts them to discuss their case. Based on their condition, and relying on the expertise developed in Israel, the appropriate variety is sent to the patient via courier.

Like its Israeli partner, MedReleaf follows up with patients.

Israel's Ministry of Health granted its first license to cultivate cannabis in 2007, and in 2010 it set the maximum price that a patient could be charged at 370 shekels ($117) a month. (In Canada, licensed producers charge between $5 and $13.50 a gram, though some offer lower prices in compassionate cases.)

Tikun Olam went into business shortly after that. It opened the first store in Israel for the sale and distribution of medical cannabis on Ibn Gabirol Street in Tel Aviv.

Israel's more liberal laws permit Tikun Olam to dispense dosages in the form of capsules, in a vaporizer or as drops of oil. In Canada, only the leaves can be used, requiring patients to roll their own marijuana cigarettes, hardly the healthiest way to ingest the product, Closner said.

Closner, who has been involved in health-care businesses and startups for 20 years, said he first heard about Tikun Olam through MENA Investment Network, which "looked to export Israeli technology outside of Israel."

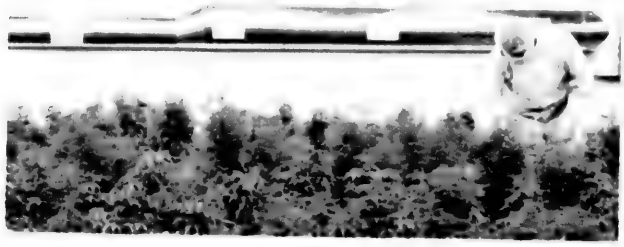
He admits he was skeptical at first, but a visit to Israel changed his mind.

He visited the Hadarim Geriatric Home where he saw medical marijuana put to use.

Israeli patients suffering from Parkinson's disease, dementia and chronic pain were being helped by cannabis. In one case, he saw an elderly Holocaust survivor, who loved to paint but who suffered from uncontrollable shaking, regain control of his limbs and enjoy his hobby once again.

"I left after a few hours in complete awe at what I'd seen. I left feeling this really is legitimate," he said. ■

Neil Closner



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Primary responsibilities include:

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- Development of appropriate advertising and management of graphic design process
- Management of all social media profiles, in-depth knowledge of social media marketing
- Writing of all internal and external communications materials, including but not limited to letters to parents, weekly newsletters, press releases
- Basic website and mobile app maintenance

Candidates for the position of Marketing and Communications Manager will have:

- University degree in communications, marketing, journalism or equivalent work experience
- Minimum of 3 years experience in marketing and communications/public relations
- Superior written and verbal communications skills, coupled with highly developed interpersonal skills
- Excellent project management, time management, and organizational skills
- Familiarity with Jewish day schools and the Jewish community

UJA Federation

Please respond electronically, in confidence, with a letter of introduction and resume to hr@bialik.on. Put "Marketing & Communications Manager" in the subject line.

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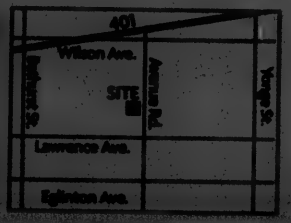

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 24 2014

Toronto student creates successful film festival

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@cjnews.com

When high school student Rebecca Baruch decided she wanted to create an outlet for students who, like her, had a passion for filmmaking, she remembered the lesson her parents instilled in her.

"My parents, Ron and Sharon, are very generous people, and they always taught us that whatever you do, whatever you're passionate about, you should use it to repair the world," said Baruch, a 17-year-old student at Toronto's Bishop Strachan School (BSS), who founded the Spotlight Charity Film Festival, which successfully ran at the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema earlier this month.

"I've always been interested in film. It's a passion of mine and I think BSS instilled that because I didn't know a lot about film. Then I took one film class and I fell in love," she said.

"I'd always seen art around my school, like paintings and sculptures, but I never felt there was a place to show my work as a filmmaker."

But giving aspiring filmmakers a creative outlet and showcasing young talent was only part of her vision.

"I think it's important to make art, but I also think you should do something with your art because I was always taught about tikkun olam and tzedakah, so I wanted to take the art and use it for charity."

After forming a committee of her peers in younger grades and collecting submissions from students at other same-sex schools in Toronto, including Upper Canada College and St. Michael's College School, Baruch and her committee worked on fundraising.

"A lot of the money was raised through ticket sales. We reached out to our friends and family," she said, adding that they raised almost $4,000.

The funds raised were divided between the three winners of the festival, as well as the festival committee.

Baruch said she chose to donate her portion to an organization called Sketch, which helps homeless people through art therapy classes. The other organizations receiving a donation include Covenant House and the Hospital for Sick Children.

Baruch, who is enrolled in the Newhouse School's film, television and radio program at Syracuse University, explained that the submissions had to be narrative pieces, and each of the three winners produced a unique short film.

Rebecca Baruch

In the Grade 9-10 category, Faiz Khwaja won for his film *Strange Love*, Mary McNee won the Grade 11 category for her film called *Girl Come To Me in a Dream*, and Julia Thompson won the Grade 12 category for her film *Breakthrough*.

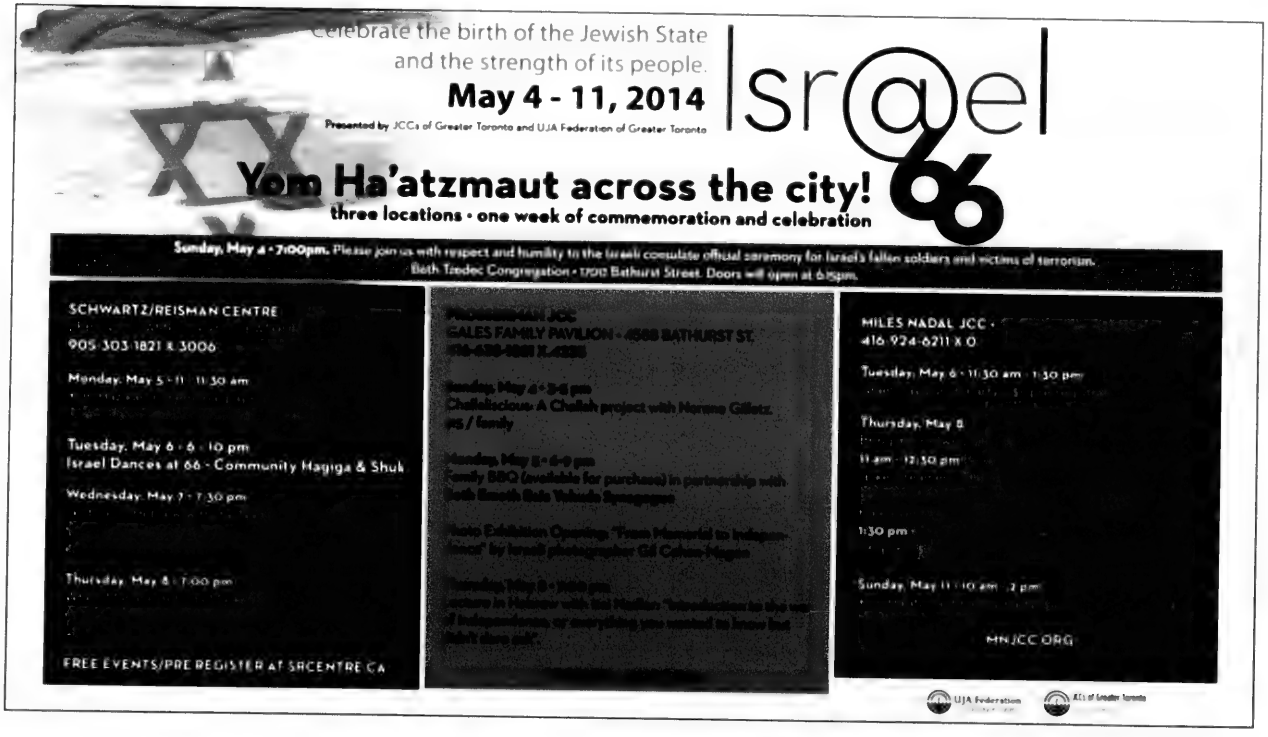
"The winner for the Grade 9-10 category was actually a Grade 8 student. He did a really cute video that was like Spike Jones' movie *Her*, where there was a man who fell in love with a pepper shaker... The next one was by a girl on our committee, and her film was a stop motion animation film about a stuffed animal bunny who wanted to find his other half... It has a happy ending, which was good," Baruch said.

"The winner of the Grade 12 category, which I think was the most competitive category, was Julia Thompson, and she also made a stop motion animation film. She is very interested in fashion, so it was an Andy Warhol piece, sort of, where this girl, who is schizophrenic, kind of walks through her house and goes through her day, and everything she sees is coloured and different. There were designs everywhere, it had edgy music and it was really cool."

The films were judged by a panel that included film director Larysa Kondracki, and film critics including Peter Howell and Liam Lacey.

Baruch said she hopes the younger members of her committee will keep the festival going and continue to pass the torch to their peers for years to come.

"The festival is about letting new artists shine." ■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Dancer struts her stuff with Toronto Raptors

BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Dani Kagan

Dani Kagan has been dancing for most of her life. She began participating in competitive dance when she was in elementary school and continued through university.

She has performed in many different venues across Ontario, but this year Kagan, 23, is dancing on the biggest stage of her career.

She is a member of the Toronto Raptors Dance Pak. Her stage is the basketball court at the Air Canada Centre (ACC).

"It's almost surreal to be on the NBA court," Kagan says. "It's really so cool to be dancing in such a big venue. Some nights there are 20,000 people."

She says she's lucky to be on the Raptors dance team, especially this year. "It's been such big year for the team. Drake became our global ambassador and we're in the playoffs.

"That means my contract gets extended, so I get to dance longer this season."

Kagan auditioned for the Raptors Dance Pak last summer. "I was ecstatic when I made the team. I didn't think I'd make it, because I didn't think I'd fit the niche... I'm curvier than other dancers.

"I was pleasantly surprised at the huge mix of girls on the team. Some are tall and thin, others are curvy and short. The audition was based on talent, not just looks."

She says the dance team members get along very well with each other. "We all share the same passion for dance. That's what bonds us. It's a great experience."

The practice schedule is rigorous, because the dancers need to learn some 30 different routines and about a dozen formations, she says. "We perform a different dance every game. Our coach, Amberley Waddell, is a renowned dancer/choreographer in Toronto. She's been trained in a lot of dance styles and she incorporates them into our routines."

Kagan stresses that the Raptors Dance Pak is not a cheerleading squad. "We're dancers. We're one of the only NBA dance teams that doesn't use pompoms."

The dancers have a hectic schedule on the day of a home game. There's an hour-long rehearsal on the court in the afternoon, and by 6 p.m., they are at the gate greeting fans.

The Pak dances briefly at the start of the game, and then they toss T-shirts and other giveaways into the crowd. Following a costume change, they distribute more giveaways.

After the third costume change, they're on the court with a new dance routine. In the second quarter, the team dances again.

At half time, the dancers bring birthday greetings to specific fans and they get a chance to rest. During the fourth quarter, the girls dance in the tunnels and perform again on the court during the time-outs.

Kagan says when the score is close, there are often more time-outs. "That's fun for me, because we get to dance more out on the court."

She says being in the Toronto Raptors Dance Pak requires a significant time commitment beyond the preparations on game day. There are three evenings of practices weekly and the dancers do appearances throughout the city. "It's more than a part-time job, but it's not a full-time job," she says."

When she joined the dance team, Kagan put school on hold, but she says she's resuming her course work in political science and Jewish studies at the University of Toronto this summer.

She juggles the demanding schedule of the Dance Pak with other dance work. She's the director of operations at LR Productions, a company that hires out dancers for different events. "I get the gigs. I book dancers and I do most of the choreography for the company."

She also teaches jazz, tap, acrobatics and hip hop at two different studios, and she continues to take dance classes. "When you're a dancer, you're always a work in progress. You can always refine your art."

And while she enjoys doing choreography and teaching, Kagan says nothing beats performing. "I love to dance. Being a member of the Raptors Dance Pak, I've really built up my confidence performing in front of so many people. It's an incredible experience." ■

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Let's ensure a promising future for Sephardi Jewry

RABBI ILAN ACOCA

Chachamim (our sages) teach us that during the month of Nisan, we have to think about being freed from the bondage of Mitzrayim (Egypt). Mitzrayim comes from the root metzarim, which translates to strait – a narrow passage. During this month, we have to set our mind to getting out of the narrowness that life leads us into and look at the broader scene.

People often get stagnant and resist change. The sages teach us that we have to welcome change by thinking out of the box and getting out of our mental bondage.

I often encounter Pesach guides that do not represent the Sephardi opinion. It is something that many of my Sephardi colleagues share with me.

A story is told about Chacham Ovadiah Yosef that when he became the Sephardi chief rabbi of Tel Aviv, he was surprised to find out that in the Pesach guide that was sent to the Tel Aviv residents, it was written that rice may not be consumed on Pesach. Rabbi Yosef summoned the rabbi in charge of the guide and asked him to promptly change that.

Due to the vision of Rabbi Yosef, Sephardi communities all over the world are thriving. Sephardim are proud of their heritage because one man freed himself from his mental bondage and built the future of Sephardim worldwide.

We recently had the honour of hosting Yehuda Azoulay for a Shabbaton at our shul in Vancouver. Azoulay is a young, accomplished scholar who is dedicating his life to the future of the Sephardi Jewry. From his youth, he foresaw the lack of information in English regarding Sephardi history. He went to Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, who blessed him and encouraged him to take on the important task of bringing to light the rich history of our Sephardi ancestors. Azoulay has already published five books, written many articles and had an inaugural tribute luncheon in the U.S. Senate honouring Sephardi Jewry.

I was privileged to spend time with him walking around the seawall of Stanley Park. Through the talk we had, I realized how there could be a promising future for the Sephardi community.

The question is, what are Sephardi Jews suppose to do to ensure a promising future? There are three points to answer the question. Point one is to get educated. From my experience, many Sephardi Jews do not know how rich their Sephardi heritage is. Let me give you one example. There is a song titled *Yah Ribon Olam* that is commonly sung in both Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities. I often ask people around our Shabbat table who wrote the song? Most of the time, people have no clue, and when I inform them that it was written by Rabbi Israel Najara who was born in Damascus in the 16th century, people are amazed. Point two is to create awareness and to use any available tool to do so. Point three is to be united as Sephardi Jews and to create a body that will represent Sephardi Judaism.

May HaShem give us the wisdom and conviction to do so. Amen. ■

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
CJN
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The Canadian Jewish News

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Key Responsibilities
- Act as the senior executive of the corporation reporting to the Board of Directors
- Provide oversight and management of all operations
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- Work collaboratively to develop and implement initiatives for growth of readership and revenue on print and digital platforms
- Develop and implement budgets and financial controls and ensure that the corporation and its individual departments meet their financial and editorial goals
- Hire staff and oversee the activities of senior employees and ensure appropriate training, motivation and evaluation to enhance performance of all staff
- Manage key contractual arrangements for print production, distribution, circulation and advertising and oversee the activities of all suppliers
- Manage the operations of the company's head office in Toronto and satellite office in Montreal
- Build and maintain strong links with key community and professional organizations of the Jewish community

Education and Experience
- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in business management or 10 years of equivalent business experience
- Experience in newspaper or print publication management, particularly advertising sales development, circulation and financial oversight
- Experience in online publication and social media applications
- Familiarity and understanding of not for profit operations and the Jewish community

Knowledge and Skills
- Strong leadership, management, team building and decision making skills
- Ability to effect change, negotiate and manage contracts
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- Ability to communicate well (written and verbal) in English with a working knowledge of French
- Ability to network with different people and groups
- Ability to resolve issues creatively and in a timely manner
- Ability to analyse data, extract trends, and initiate appropriate action
- Ability to use Microsoft Office applications at a high level, and familiarity with production software in use within the publishing industry

Interested Parties should submit a resume to Mr. Jeff Chad at Chad Management Group: jeffc@chadman.com. Please reference in the subject line "General Manager CJN Application".
We thank all for their response, but only candidates of interest will be contacted.

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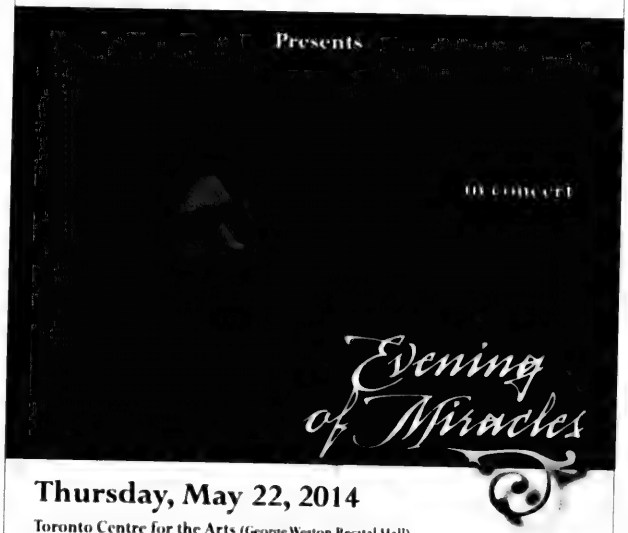

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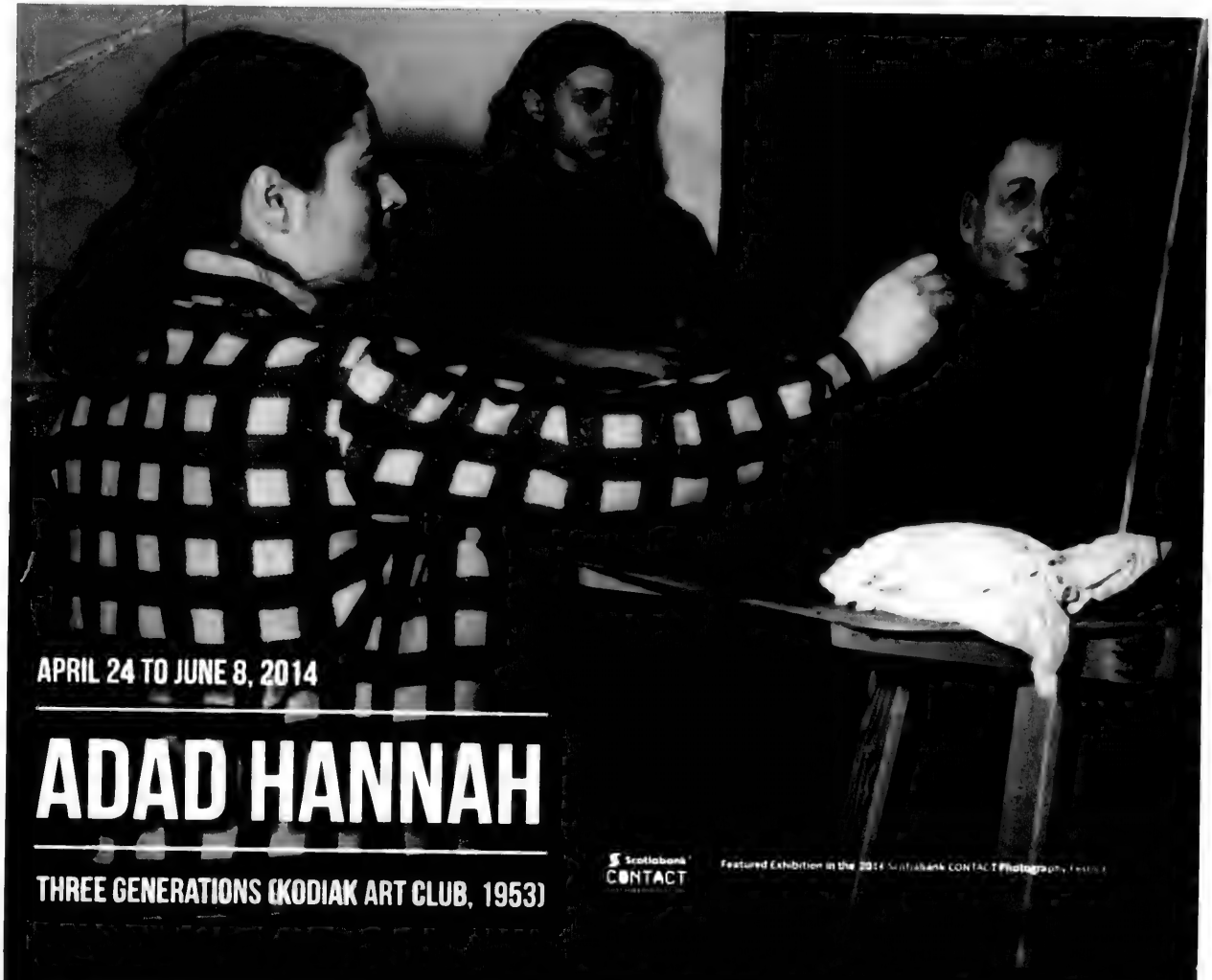

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Vancouver-based artist Adad Hannah has earned an international reputation for his video-recorded tableaux vivants that often reference art history and paradigms of museum practices. In this new body of work, Hannah shifts focus to his Jewish family history, re-animating a "frozen moment" captured eighteen years before he was born. Positioning for the first time a family member – his mother, Barbara Txi Hannah – as collaborator rather than as subject or model, Hannah pushes his practice deeper than ever into the exploration of what has historically been the most popular genre of photography – the family snapshot.

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NATIONAL

Hospital daycare plan fails to get approval

JANICE ARNOLD
jarnold@cjnews.ca MONTREAL

Unions and management at the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) in Montreal are demanding an answer from the Quebec government as to why the JGH can't get on-site subsidized daycare for employees' children.

Management gave its backing to a lunch-hour demonstration in front of the hospital April 4 by representatives of the three unions to which the JGH's more than 5,000 employees belong. The rally was held to raise awareness of the long-standing issue.

Physiotherapist Pierre Allard, president of the Alliance du personnel professionel et technique de la santé, said the JGH has been trying for about 10 years to have a $7-a-day Centre de la petite enfance (CPE).

Staff hold a demonstration outside the Jewish General Hospital to draw attention to the government's repeated rejection of their request for on-site subsidized daycare.

Allard said every other major hospital has a CPE, including the JGH's closest neighbouring institutions, St. Mary's Hospital and Hôpital Ste. Justine, which have had CPEs for years and now have about 150 to 200 spaces at each institution.

Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont has had a CPE even longer, for close to 15 years, he added.

The latest rejection of the JGH's application for a permit came in December – with no explanation, he said.

This occurred even though an expert was hired to see that the application was in order and to present the JGH's case to the Ministry of Families.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

WE REMEMBER - YOM HASHOAH

The Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoir Program collects, preserves and shares the written memoirs of Holocaust survivors in Canada. Our mission is to promote high quality, innovative approaches to Holocaust education across the country. We publish first-hand written accounts in both English and French and make them available free-of-charge to schools, universities, libraries and Holocaust education centres in Canada.

This Yom Hashoah, the following programs will include screenings of the Azrieli Series of Short Films, and copies of the memoirs will be distributed.

Bass River, NS
Veterans Memorial Park
Monday, April 28, 7:00 p.m.

Halifax, NS
McNally Theatre Auditorium
Saint Mary's University Monday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.

New Glasgow, NS
First United Baptist Church
Sunday, April 27, 2:00 p.m.

Moncton, NB
Tikvas Israel Synagogue
Sunday, April 27, 2:00 p.m.

St. John's, NL
Beth-El Synagogue, Sunday, April 27, 7:30 p.m.

Charlottetown, PEI
The Confederation Centre of the Arts
Monday, April 28, 6:30 p.m.

With the Atlantic Jewish Council | www.thejc.ns.ca

Toronto, ON
Yom Hashoah V'Hagevurah
Community Holocaust Commemoration
Lebovic Jewish Community Campus
Sunday, April 27, 11 a.m.
www.holocaustcentre.com | yadvashem.ca

Miles Nadal JCC
Sunday, April 27, 11 a.m.
www.milesnadaljcc.ca

Bathurst & Sheppard Congregations
At Beth Radom
Sunday, April 27, 6:30 p.m.
www.bethradom.com

Mizrahi Hashoah
Beth Tzedec Congregation,
Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am and
the Rabbinical Assembly
At Beth Tzedec
Sunday, April 27, 7:30 p.m.
www.beth-tzedec.org

Montreal, QC
Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jeshurun
Sunday, April 27, 7:30 p.m.
www.nhmc.ca

Regina, SK
Regina & District Jewish Association
Pearl and Max B Herman Centre, Beth Jacob Synagogue
Sunday April 27, 2:00 p.m.
www.bethjacobsynagogue.com

The Azrieli Foundation

For more information about the Azrieli Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs and accompanying resources, please visit.
www.azrielifoundation.org/memoirs

'These kids have fought harder than I had ever had to'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

"These kids have fought harder than I have ever had to. Stepping into the ring on May 31 and getting punched in the face won't be fun, but neither is having cancer. Whatever I have to go through on fight night is nothing compared to what someone with this disease has to go through every day."

To prepare for his boxing match, Krystantos has been training at the Kingsway Boxing Club with coaches Virgil Barrow and Jennifer Huggins, founder of FTEC.

The members of the 2014 fight team have undergone a rigorous six-month introduction to the techniques of Olympic-style boxing – training that culminates in a fight that consists of a rapid three rounds in six minutes.

Currently, FTEC is seeking more boxers, as well as sponsors who want to get directly involved.

To date, Krystantos has personally raised almost $8,000 for cancer research and awareness. The entire fight team has raised more than $30,000, he said.

FTEC tickets range from $225 for a single seat to $2,000 for a 10-seat table.

For more information or to donate, visit www.fighttoendcancer.com. ■

Two women head Montreal's JCF

For the first time this fall, two women – president Brenda Gewurtz and incoming executive director Kathy Assayag – will make up the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal's leadership tag team. The 43-year-old JCF manages the $350-million endowment fund donated through bequests, gifts, and other means. From left, the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal's Kathy Assayag, Bobby Kleinman, and Brenda Gewurtz. See story, cjnews.com.

Mitzuyan Kosher Catering

Mitzuyan is pleased to announce that it has been appointed the exclusive kosher caterer to The Avenue Banquet Hall and The Boulevard Room.

To celebrate, Mitzuyan is offering the following promotional package for all simchas taking place Monday to Thursday in 2014

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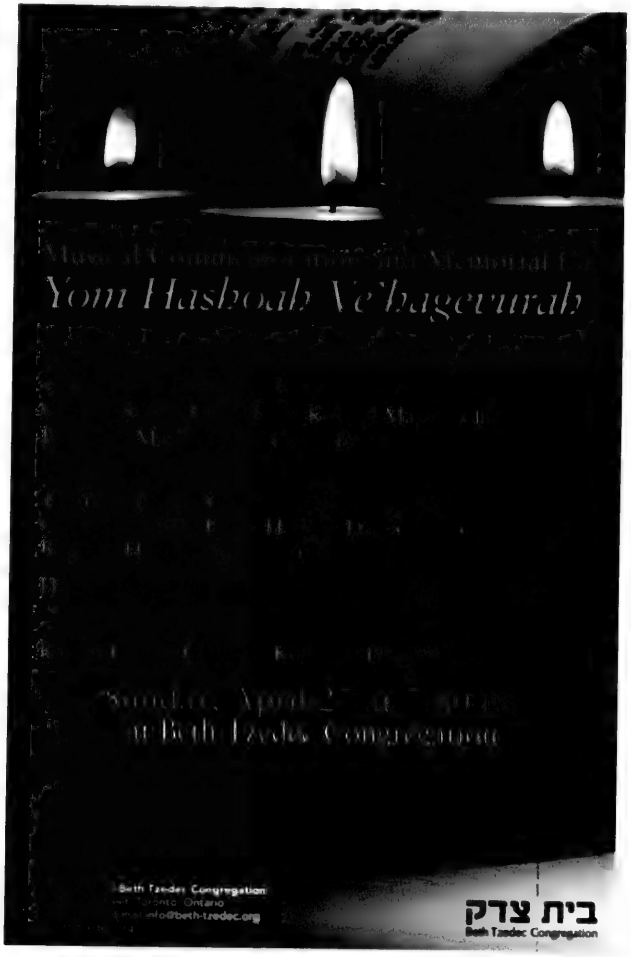

Daycare proposal rejected on numerous occasions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

"When we asked why [it was rejected], we were bluntly told it's none of our business," Allard said.

"We have been doing backflips to try to understand what is missing... At least give us a reason, something substantive, and we could fix it."

Allard said the rejection can't be construed as political, because the response has been the same whatever party has been in power over the past decade. He suspects this may be a case of bureaucratic intransigence – the same public servants, year after year, out of habit, filing the same response each time.

Some years ago, lack of appropriate space was given as a reason, Allard said, but that could not be a serious objection today because the JGH has since acquired property north of its main campus.

The CPE would be located in a two-story building between the former convent the JGH bought on Côte des Neiges Road and the A Pavilion, he said.

Ideally, the CPE would have 100 spaces, but 70 is likely the most the JGH could expect at first, he said.

Allard noted that the CPE would be open to all children, regardless of religion or culture, reflecting the diversity of the staff. In December 2010, the then Liberal government introduced a regulation banning anything deemed to be religious instruction or practice in the CPEs.

"There are other daycares in the area [of the JGH], but they are all full. I know people who have had to quit their jobs and work closer to home," he said.

"The hospital is at a loss as to why the application was rejected and shares the frustration and disappointment felt by its staff," the JGH said in a statement.

Beverly Kravitz, director of human resources and legal affairs, noted that "one of the objectives in the 2010-2015 Health Minister's strategic plan is that all establishments put into place 'employer of choice' strategies to improve the work climate and improve the well-being of staff. An on-site daycare for employees is an important element in attaining this ministerial objective."■

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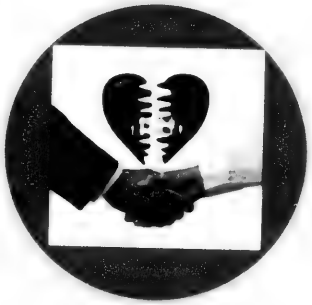

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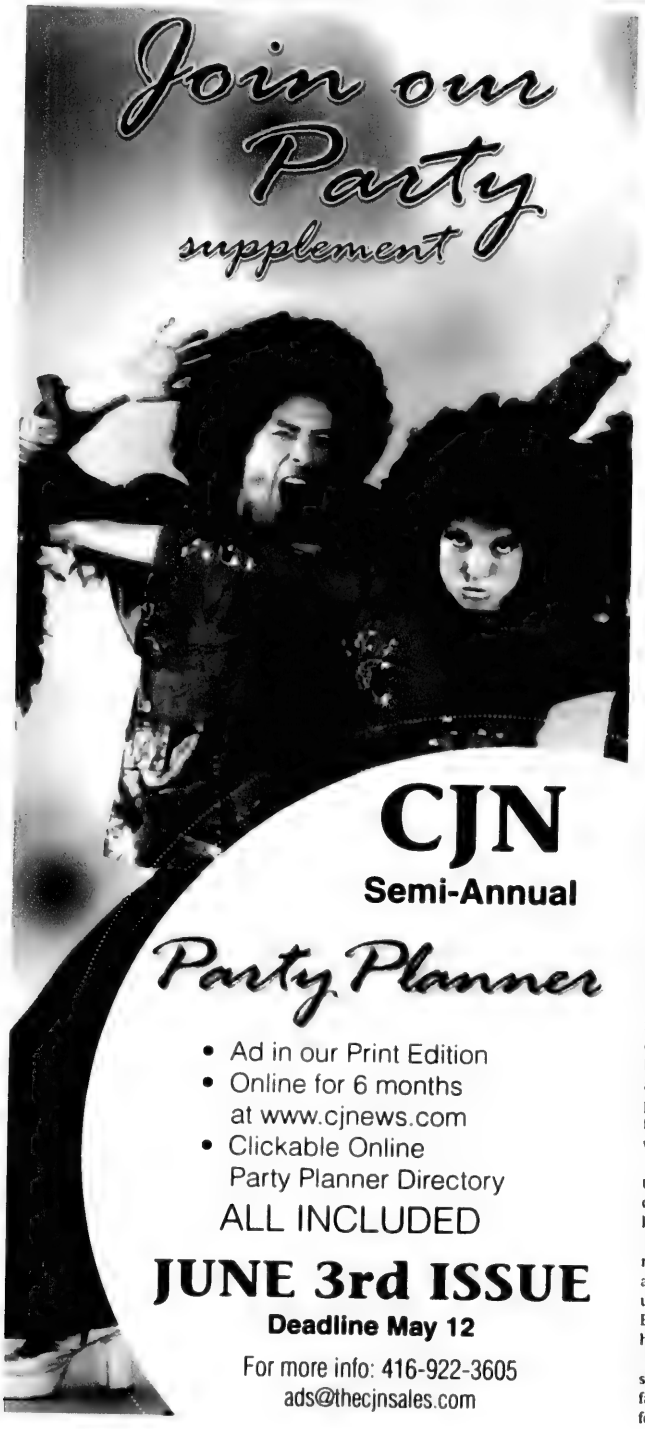

Jeff McLaughlin with Hannah Pick, Anne Frank's best friend

Holocaust educator seeks forgiveness from daughter of survivors

MYRON LOVE
PRAIRIES CORRESPONDENT WINNIPEG

It has been something that has been haunting Jeff McLaughlin for many years, and he has finally been able to exorcise the sense of guilt that he has been carrying with him.

In early March, he was able to get his burden off his back when he apologized to Betty Eisenstadt of Toronto, the daughter of Holocaust survivors Dov and Rachel Eisenstadt.

He recalls that he often went with his mother and older brother to The Bagel Shop, a bakery owned by Eisenstadt's parents on Selkirk Avenue in McLaughlin's hometown of Winnipeg, for bread, buns and donuts. The incident in question happened one time when McLaughlin and his friends – they were 13 or 14 at the time – went into The Bagel Shop for donuts.

"One of them yelled out a very derogatory term for being Jewish and we ran out of the bakery," he said. "This event has haunted me my entire life.

"I should forgive myself – everyone tells me that – because I didn't know any better, and because as kids we all do stupid and unthinking things," McLaughlin emailed Eisenstadt, "but I cannot, so I ask on behalf of your parents for your forgiveness."

While the incident may well be considered of little consequence to some, the fact that he retained a strong sense of guilt for remaining silent while friends insulted a couple of Jewish Holocaust survivors speaks volumes about the kind of man McLaughlin has turned out to be.

"Because I grew up with a speech impediment and was picked on quite a bit myself, I became sensitive to the feelings of others," said McLaughlin, a long time associate professor of philosophy at Thompson Rivers University in Kelowna, B.C.

One of the ways that McLaughlin has been trying to make amends is by helping to raise awareness of the Shoah. For the past 15 years, he has been a visiting professor at University of Graz in Austria during the summer. In Austria, he has been able to pursue his joint interest in the history of World War II and the Holocaust.

"Since I... live in Austria during the summer, where I teach at a university, I am able to do some research, but I don't just leave it at the theoretical level," McLaughlin said. "I also put it into practice."

He reports, for example, that he successfully petitioned the Austrian government to clean up the forgotten Jewish cemetery in Graz, where he teaches. "When I was told by a friend who's a member of the Gusen Concentration Camp Memorial Society that people kept tearing down the direction signs for how to get to the camp, I sent off letters to the city council and they funded the creation of permanent signs," he said.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

McLaughlin tracked down Eisenstadt via the Internet

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"When I was teaching business ethics to students from around the world, I hired a bus and took them to Mauthausen so that they could see for themselves what slave labour involved."

McLaughlin has been to Yad Vashem twice, first for a conference and then last year, when he received a full scholarship to study at its summer seminar, where he says he was exposed to lectures from world-class experts.

"I was the first philosopher to conduct research at the former Spielberg Shoah foundation, and I convinced my department to raise the money to purchase a set of video testimonies from a British Columbia survivor," he said. "We are the only university to have such a set."

One of the courses McLaughlin teaches is called "Ethics and the Holocaust." He said he has visited many of the camps in Europe and conducted interviews with several survivors. He recently had a survivor from Vancouver do a videoconference with his class in Kelowna.

"I was able to arrange with the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre to Skype in a speaker for 90 minutes," he said. "It was a powerful and rewarding experience for my students. Several came up to me after class to thank me."

As well, he was the keynote speaker at a recent genocide symposium for high school students in Kelowna. More than 300 students were in attendance.

McLaughlin said he tracked Betty Eisenstadt down via the Internet. She was so moved by his email apology that she contacted *The CJN*.

"He is an amazing man," she wrote *The CJN*. "I think it's very important to highlight people like this who are not of our faith, especially in these times of rising anti-Semitism." ■

Israeli doctors do cardiology training in Toronto

A kosher reception looking at Innovations in Cardiac Medicine, hosted by Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre recently, focused on the fact that the Schulich Heart Centre at Sunnybrook has become the world's leading centre for training Israeli cardiology fellows. Sunnybrook currently has five cardiac fellows from Israel working in the centre, more than any other heart centre in the world. Dr. Menash Shuvy, a fellow in the Schulich heart program, came to the hospital from Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, and will return to Israel to use the clinical and research skills acquired here. Shuvy moved his family, including four children. Seen, from left, are Dr. Menash Shuvy, fellow in the Schulich heart program; Dr. Bradley Strauss, chief of the Schulich heart program; and Dr. Amit Segev, secretary general of the Israel Heart Society.

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 24, 2014

Düsseldorf remembers art dealer Max Stern

CJN STAFF
MONTREAL

A 12th Nazi-looted painting has been restituted to the university heirs of the late German Jewish art dealer Max Stern, who owned the Dominion Gallery in Montreal for many years.

A rare self portrait of the 19th-century German painter Wilhelm Schadow was formally returned on April 7 to Concordia University, McGill University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem by the City of Düsseldorf.

This act of restitution has special significance because Düsseldorf was Stern's native city and where he ran an art gallery until the Nazi regime forced him to close and forcibly sell off his collection.

Clarence Epstein, who has headed Concordia's Max Stern Restitution Project since its launch in 2002, was present at the ceremony at city hall to reclaim the artwork on behalf of the heirs, along with the Canadian ambassador to Germany, Marie Gervais-Vidricaire.

Under an agreement with the Stern estate, the painting will be loaned to the Düsseldorf City Museum, where it has been on display for several decades, for the public to continue to view.

This 19th-century Wilhelm Schadow self portrait has been restituted to the Max Stern estate but will remain on public view in Düsseldorf. From left are Hans-Georg Lohe, the city's chief of culture; Canadian Ambassador Marie Gervais-Vidricaire; Concordia University's Clarence Epstein; and Susanne Anna, director of Düsseldorf City Museum.
PHOTO BY GÖTTERT/COURTESY CITY OF DÜSSELDORF

At the same time, Düsseldorf Lord Mayor Dirk Elbers announced a project for international scholarly collaboration on the matter of art restitution. Concordia will be one of the lead partners.

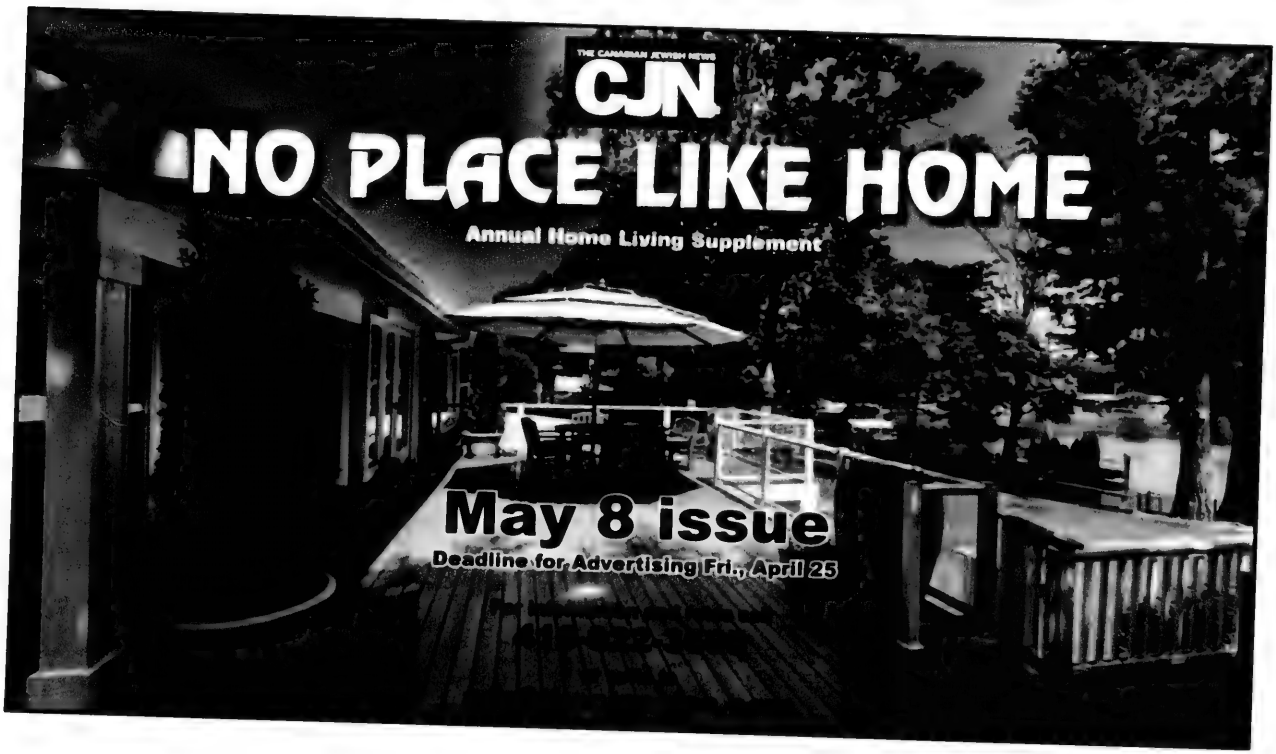
Schadow (1788-1862) was director of the Düsseldorf Academy of the Arts, an art school attended by students who went on to become some of Germany's greatest artists.

"We are very pleased that an unprecedented number of German institutions have finally recognized and acted on our claims," said Concordia president Alan Shepard.

"Adding to the recoveries of paintings from Stuttgart and Cologne in the last year, Düsseldorf and its museum are demonstrating the kind of leadership needed in addressing looted art matters."

The museum is home to a series of drawings by Jewish children and teens from the Nazi era that was the subject of a recent project. An exhibition on Jewish life in Düsseldorf is planned for next year.

A major exhibition is scheduled for 2018 dedicated to Max Stern to be held in the Galerie Stern. The gallery was founded by his father in 1913 and was a landmark of the city's main Königsallee until its forced closure. ■



Canadian OT changing lives in Israel

Hadassah Fortinsky, centre in purple, and a group of Reuth staff on a trip.

JENNIFER TZIVIA MACLEOD
SPECIAL TO THE CJN, TEL AVIV

Inspired by her patients, Torontonian Hadassah Fortinsky is helping push occupational therapy into a leading role in Israel's modern health-care system. When she began working at Reuth Medical & Rehabilitation Center in Tel Aviv 15 years ago, she was the only occupational therapist on staff. "Now, we're up to 20 occupational therapists," she says.

The role of occupational therapy (OT) is far broader than most people know, especially in the busy life of this rehabilitative and chronic-care hospital in Tel Aviv, where Fortinsky is assistant manager of occupational therapy. From 25 beds in 1961, Reuth has grown to a 350-bed modern facility; about 70 per cent of patients live in the hospital permanently.

When she arrived at Reuth, as the sole OT, there wasn't much focus on rehabilitation. "It wasn't an exciting place to work," she says. "Over time, [following] guidelines from the Ministry of Health in Israel… we grew a huge department."

At Reuth, patients are grouped by age, rather than by diagnosis, as in many other facilities. On any given day, an OT may help stroke and cardiac or lung patients, car accident victims, post-surgical patients, severely disabled children and individuals with multiple sclerosis, ALS and other degenerative neurological conditions.

Often, they focus on regaining abilities and independence so patients can return to daily life. But even when that's not possible, OTs work to ensure quality of life. "We'll work with the recreational therapist to find… leisure activities, handiwork, games, access to computers, sports or current events groups, depending on their ability to understand."

OTs also help adapt technology to physical abilities, whether patients can sit up and use a mouse and keyboard or simply use head or eye motions to indicate a yes/no response.

Discovering those responses requires a long-term assessment that may surprise doctors and family members. "It takes a lot of education and teamwork for families and staff to understand that this person can communicate at some level, and what those movements may mean."

"We work with the family and with the patient to increase their level of response, so there can be some sort of meaningful communication."

One common factor in patients' lives is the shock they are in when they first meet Fortinsky or one of her colleagues, she says. Especially younger patients often tell her, "You don't understand, a week ago, I was fine." Then, they broke a hip, had a car accident or a stroke, and suddenly, they're struggling to return to tasks that were simple just a week before: walking, eating, doing up buttons.

When Fortinsky came to Israel, she didn't need to requalify. Today, olim must take a standardized exam before they can work here. Now a member of the Board of Occupational Therapists, Fortinsky translates the national OT exam to make it accessible for English-speaking olim.

"Anybody who studied in North America can definitely pass the local exam; the material is very, very similar, if not identical." With enough Hebrew, it's easy to start working in the field. "The scope of practice is very similar. If you were doing certain things in North America, it's easy to do the same things here."

With the Hebrew she learned at Eitz Chaim Day Schools and the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Fortinsky was well prepared to hit the ground running at Reuth. "The background that I had culturally, Jewishly, language-wise, and OT-wise, I was able to manage very, very well here."

However, there are cultural differences in OT practice, especially in the area of documentation and paperwork. "There's more in North America than there is here, to our benefit." There's still documentation in Israel, just not as much. "Here, it's a reasonable and professional amount."

More than just an employee, she calls herself a "huge fan of Reuth," which she says is "very, very warm… you feel like the patients are really the focus of the organization. The pyramid is not steep; it's a very responsive organization."

Working there, she says, is well worth the 45-minute daily commute – long by Israeli standards – to her home in Raanana, where she volunteers with her synagogue's youth department, and helps brides navigate the Israeli marriage process. Marathons are another hobby; she ran the Tel Aviv marathon in March.

She regularly attends Israeli OT conferences, where she has watched the field expand and progress, particularly in the area of technology. "In the past five years, there are at least two new schools that have opened to study OT." The Israeli Ministry of Health now insists on OTs in all its facilities, and there are "tons of job openings."

As for staying in the profession as long as she has, "it's not easy but I draw inspiration from my patients, especially the older adults who come in following an injury or stroke. They tell me, 'I was able to get around until now; I'm 80… I can handle this as well.' That gives me the motivation to come back here and say, 'if they're willing to try, I'm willing to try.'" ■

> "It's not easy, but I draw inspiration from my patients, especially the older adults who come in following an injury or stroke. They tell me, 'I was able to get around until now; I'm 80… I can handle this as well.' That gives me the motivation to come back here and say, 'if they're willing to try, I'm willing to try.'"

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Ukrainian Jews urged to back Russia

Several anti-Semitic attacks have occurred since November

JTA

Pro-Russian separatists from Donetsk in eastern Ukraine denied any involvement in the circulation of flyers calling on Jews to register with separatists and pay special taxes.

The flyers were distributed in the city last week. Pro-Russian separatists led by Denis Pushilin took over several government buildings earlier this month and declared their secession from Ukraine as the Donetsk Republic, during a standoff with authorities.

The flyers were official-looking documents that carried what was presented as Pushilin's signature, but the news site tvrain.ru quoted Pushilin as denying any connection to the flyers, calling them a provocation.

Oleksandr Feldman, Jewish member of the Ukrainian parliament has expressed concern over the continued violence in Ukraine and fear that Jews might be targeted

FLASH 90 PHOTO

On April 15, the news website novosti.dn.ua reported that the flyers were handed out that day by three unidentified men in balaclava masks carrying a flag of the Russian Federation. According to the report, the men distributed the flyers next to a local synagogue. The website quoted unnamed sources from the local Jewish community as saying that the flyers were an attempt to provoke a conflict and blame the attack on the separatists.

Several anti-Semitic attacks, including a stabbing and the attempted torching of a synagogue, have occurred in Ukraine since the eruption in November of a revolution over the perceived pro-Russian policies of former president Viktor Yanukvych. He was ousted from power in February.

Many supporters of the revolution blamed pro-Russian provocateurs for the attacks.

The flyers in Donetsk said all Jews who are 16 years old and above should register at the government building, which separatist protesters are occupying, and pay a registration fee of $50 by May 3.

"Jews supported the nationalistic gang of [Stepan] Bandera in Kiev," the authors wrote in reference to the Ukrainian nationalist leader who in the 1940s fought with Nazi Germany against Soviet troops before he and his men took up arms against the German occupation.

The flyers also said Jews were hostile to the Donetsk Republic.

They were required to report any real estate and automobiles, the flyers also said. ■

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Amsterdam collected $14M from Holocaust survivors

JTA

THE HAGUE — The city of Amsterdam collected more than $10 million (all figures US) from Holocaust survivors who were charged ground lease fees for periods they spent in hiding or in concentration camps, researchers said.

The team of researchers for the Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, or NIOD, wrote their findings in a still unpublished report they have been compiling since last year at the city's request, the *Het Parool* daily reported Tuesday.

The city, under Mayor Eberhard van der Laan, asked NIOD to look into fines that the city had imposed on hundreds of Jewish Holocaust survivors for properties they owned but for which they had failed to pay ground lease fees after the German army's invasion into the Netherlands in 1940. Nazi authorities in 1942 began the deportation and murder of 75 per cent of the 140,000 Jews then living in the Netherlands.

Many of the houses in question were used by Nazi occupation officers and local collaborators, *Het Parool* reported. The city went after Holocaust survivors for missed payments as late as 1947 and imposed fines on them for missing payments, according to the daily, whose publication on the issue last year prompted the investigation.

The NIOD researchers estimate the city received a total of $14.5 million from fines unjustly levied against Jews during the relevant period, according to Ronny Naftaniel, a former chief negotiator for the Dutch Jewish community in restitution talks and a member of the supervisory committee of the NIOD research.

The researchers have obtained documents that prove the city took $6.76 million from 217 Jews who objected to the fines levied on them, Naftaniel added. The $14.5 million estimate includes cases of Jews who paid and did not object.

Eberhard van der Laan. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

"What has come to light is a scandalous procedure, in which people were stripped of their homes and then made to pay for those who moved [into the homes] in their place," Naftaniel said.

He and other Jewish members of the supervisory committee have called on the city to begin making restitution to descendants of the Holocaust survivors who were made to pay unjustly, or the Jewish community in cases where descendants cannot be traced.

Van der Laan, a son of resistance fighters, and the city council of Amsterdam are expected to decide in the near future how to proceed and on what topics further research is necessary. ■

Russian billionaire books entire hotel

JTA
JERUSALEM

Russian-Jewish billionaire Roman Abramovich booked an entire hotel in Israel for Passover.

Abramovich and his partner Darya Zhukova, a billionaire fashion designer and businesswoman, rented all 111 rooms at the Beresheet Hotel in Mitzpe Ramon in southern Israel, London's *Daily Mail* reported. The cost was estimated at $450,000.

The owner of the top-tier English soccer team Chelsea, was to host family and friends during the holiday, including a seder in a tent specially constructed in the desert, according to the newspaper. The hotel has a view of the Ramon Crater, the world's largest crater created by erosion. ■

Roman Abramovich WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

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OPINION

For us, it's a time of year like no other

Yair Lootstein

This season in Israel is unique. Beginning with the preparations for Pesach and concluding at Shavuot and beyond, this time of year is jam-packed with holidays and days of commemoration. Not even a week after Passover and Mimouna, we somberly observe Yom Hashoah. A week later, we experience the annual catharsis of Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut one day after another. Ten days or so afterward, our kids take immense pleasure in the night-long bonfires of Lag b'Omer, the most environmentally unfriendly day of our yearly calendar, and before we get to Shavuot, we either celebrate or commemorate Jerusalem Day.

To add to this schedule, only a fortnight after Shavuot, school will be out for junior high and high school students, and teachers know they must cram in most of the annual curriculum by Pesach break, as teaching anything substantial during the remaining eight weeks of the school year is almost impossible.

And the weather. If you're here this time of year, you'll certainly enjoy a mostly wonderful springtime climate, but inevitably you'll probably also endure a Middle Eastern meteorological phenomenon known as *chamsin*, from the Arabic, or *sharav* in modern Hebrew. Several times during this season, we're afflicted with strong, dry, hot winds originating from the deserts of northern Africa, bringing with them blistering hot temperatures, often making these some of the hottest days of our year.

That would be bearable, but what these winds also bring with them are inordinate quantities of fine desert sand, which covers huge swaths of the country, creating a thick, orangey otherworldly haze. Infants, old people and anyone suffering from pulmonary or cardiological conditions are warned to stay indoors. The haze severely limits visibility, and even airports are sometimes temporarily closed.

These easterly winds are also the bane of homeowners, for no matter how tightly we seal and shutter our homes, the fine sand seems to permeate everything, leaving exorable layers of dust on everything indoors and out. Invariably, a *chamsin* hits the country just after everyone has finished their Pesach cleaning, adding a plague-like ambience while we prepare for our *one* seder – a definite advantage for those of us living in Israel. I can no longer fathom partaking in two.

Within this seasonal mishmash, next Monday we'll commemorate Yom Hashoah, one of the most significant days of my yearly calendar. Sunday evening, restaurants, pubs, cafés and theatres will close. Flags will be lowered to half-mast. At 10 a.m. Monday, air-raid sirens will sound around the country. Vehicles will stop wherever they are and most everyone will stand for two minutes of silence. Major ceremonies will take place at Yad Vashem and at several other special venues. Schools and military bases will hold assemblies and other acts of observance.

Throughout the day, radio and TV broadcasts will reflect the day's gravity. Documentaries will predominate. I find myself riveted to the stories only now being told on film and in other media. As the generation of survivors becomes smaller and smaller, many are now willing to tell their remarkable tales of suffering, bravery and compassion, before it's too late. Each story adds yet another stratum to the incomprehensible wholeness of the Shoah.

I find myself phoning my dad several times more often than usual on this particular day. He survived the war in Holland as a child, and Yom Hashoah seems more and more difficult for him with each passing year. Scars that have never really healed are reopened on this day – some I will never know, others I will never be able to understand.

And once that sober day is over, we'll begin thinking of Yom Hazikaron and planning our picnics in nature with friends on Yom Ha'atzmaut.

I know you observe all these days in Canada, too, but here in Israel, they're a much more intrinsic part of everyday life, and the transition from one to another is simply more complex. ■

Share your milestones in CJN's Mazel Tov column
www.cjnews.com/mazeltov

Jewish Life

Oshawa GENERALS
PAGE 42

Scary flicks at Film Fest

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

When Mikel Koven was 14, he went alone to the Eaton Centre cinemas in downtown Toronto to watch a re-release of *Hallowe'en*, John Carpenter's iconic horror classic. During the last half of the slasher flick, he said he was curled up in the fetal position, panicking and hyperventilating. Moviegoers sitting nearby asked him if he was okay.

"Like any drug addict, I have been searching for that high ever since," Koven says. "I've been lucky enough to forge [this love of horror] into a career."

Koven is a lecturer and professor of film studies at the University of Worcester in England, but is also a passionate horror movie buff. He will fly back to his hometown for the 22nd annual Toronto Jewish Film Festival (TJFF) next week to lead a program about Jewish horror films.

The program, Golems, Dybbuks and the Jewish Fantastic, will screen horror movies from filmmakers like Sidney Lumet, Roman Polanski and Larry Cohen. Koven will introduce many of the screenings in this program and lead a free talk about what Jewish horror cinema is.

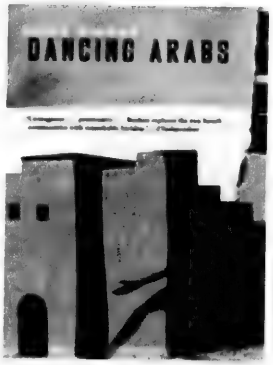
Many American horror films have a religious slant that focuses on Christian theology. However, more genre films are drawing on Jewish mythology and folklore, says Stuart Hands, program manager for the Toronto Jewish Film Festival.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 43

The 22nd annual **Toronto Jewish Film Festival** runs from May 1 through May 11. Tickets are on sale now. Koven will introduce many of the titles. If the films happen to scare viewers to the point that they are in the fetal position, the lifelong horror fan will be satisfied. www.tjff.com

Novel offers window into Israeli Arab life

MARTIN LOCKSHIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN



Dancing Arabs
by Sayed Kashua, translated from the Hebrew by Miriam Shlesinger

Grove Press

Most of us Jews in Canada who support and love the State of Israel rarely think about the 20 per cent of Israeli citizens who are Arabs. I am not referring to Arabs who live in the West Bank and are not citizens, though they are subject to Israeli army law. I refer to the Arabs who live within the pre-1967 borders of Israel and who are full-fledged Israeli citizens. It is often argued that Israeli Arabs have, on average, more rights and privileges and a higher standard of living than Arabs who live in any of the countries bordering Israel. This is almost certainly correct. Arab citizens vote in Israeli elections, serve in the Israeli parliament and enjoy freedom of speech to an extent unheard of in that part of the world – as we all saw in videos of Arab Knesset members heckling Prime Minister Stephen Harper when he recently addressed the Knesset.

On the other hand, the educational and economic gap between Jewish and Arab citizens of the state is significant. Regardless of whose fault this is, many opportunities in Israel are open for Arabs in theory only. To choose a familiar example, Arab citizens of Israel are often subjected to more serious security checks than Jews are, for example when driving into the airport or walking onto a university campus.

As Israel continues to emphasize that it's a "Jewish state," citizens who aren't Jewish naturally feel a sense of discomfort. True, many people around the world live in countries where the official religion is not theirs. Even in my own youth, it was not uncommon to hear the claim that Canada was a "Christian country" and that Jews and other minorities were tolerated but not part of the dominant culture. But some countries are more tolerant of their minorities than others, and Israeli Arabs must deal with widespread suspicion of all Arabs due to the reality of Arab terrorism.

Few Israeli Jews have close friends who are Arabs. Many might not have any significant contact with those 20 per cent of their fellow citizens. One of the best known Israeli Arabs for the Jewish Israeli public is Sayed Kashua, who has been writing a weekly humour/satire column in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* for many years. Kashua also writes the scripts for a very funny sitcom on Israeli television entitled *Avodah Aravit* (*Arab Labour*). He has published three books that shed light on what daily life is like for an Israeli Arab.

His *Dancing Arabs* is a coming-of-age novel written in first person in the voice of a fictional Arab Israeli whose name we never learn. The life of the hero of the novel and Kashua's life overlap. They both come from the Israeli Arab city of Tira. They both excelled in their studies in elementary school and ended up going to an elite high school in Jerusalem (perhaps akin to Upper Canada College in Toronto) where they were part of a tiny number of Arab students in an almost entirely Jewish school. Both Kashua's real-life father and his fictional character's father were arrested on suspicion that they were involved in a terrorist bombing at the Hebrew University. Both fathers were held in administrative detention for a number of years and then released without being charged.

As in all books written in this genre, it's hard to know how much of the book is autobiographical. I hope the fictional narrator's description of the intolerable marital tensions with his wife and his problems with substance abuse are fiction, though I suspect that at least the dependence on alcohol might be anchored in Kashua's real life, since alcohol and drunken stupors play a role in his *Ha'aretz* columns too frequently for my taste.

The book provides a useful window into the life and concerns of an Israeli Arab trying to fit into daily life in Israel. As the narrator grows up, his own family and friends encourage him to be a proud Arab nationalist. But he often wishes he were a Jew, and he looks for acceptance in Jewish circles. He seems crushed when he figures out that his Jewish girlfriend sees their friendship simply as a high school fling and would never consider having a relationship with him after graduation.

In Israel, Kashua is beloved by many but mistrusted by others. Some Jews worry that he is an opponent of Zionism, and some Arabs see him as an Uncle Tom. During operation Cast Lead, Kashua wrote a satirical column in the voice of a right-wing Jew, saying that Arabs only understand force and that they have to be treated without compassion and hit hard until they understand who is boss. Unfortunately, a number of Arab Israeli readers did not realize the column was satirical and started a campaign against Kashua as an alleged traitor to his people. Kashua reacted by saying that apparently Israeli Arabs have not learned to identify cynicism.

This book sheds good fictional light on a serious Israeli social problem. But I must add that you miss something when you read it in English translation (although this translation, by Miriam Shlesinger, is readable and accurate).

Part of what makes Kashua a curious anomaly is that he writes in Hebrew, and in fact in a flowing and readable modern Hebrew. In Hebrew, he sounds like any educated secular Israeli Jew. It's important to remember that modern Hebrew isn't just a "Jewish language," but also the language of more than one million Arabs. ■

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Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

GOLDEN SYNAGOGUES OF TORONTO MUSICAL SERVICE OFFERED AS PRELUDE TO JEWISH MUSIC WEEK

Toronto's downtown Shaarei Tzedec Synagogue (the "Markham Street shul") is the venue for a pre-festival event prior to the opening of Jewish Music Week, May 18 to 25.

A choral ma'ariv and sfirat HaOmer service in the shul will feature **Cantor Simon Spiro** and the all-male a cappella Golden Voices choir. The organizers have titled the special service "Golden Synagogues of Toronto: Recreating a Time Gone By," and have invited the public to "experience one of the oldest Toronto synagogues as it was experienced by its original members." 397 Markham St. Wednesday, April 30, 7:30 p.m., doors open 6:30 p.m. No admission charge but pre-registration required, 416-638-4492.

Jewish Music Week features numerous concerts on various dates and venues, including many free events. There are also film screenings and lectures on musical subjects. For details, please visit www.jewishmusicweek.com.

New Lindzon CD: Jazz pianist-vocalist **Fern Lindzon** is preparing to release a new CD *Like a Circle in a Spiral*, featuring her jazz quintet. The title comes from **Michel Legrand's** song *The Windmills of Your Mind*. The CD features a repertoire from the "great American songbook," Israel, Europe, Brazil and Canada. The launch is at the Jazz Bistro, 251 Victoria St., Thursday May 8, 8 p.m. Cover $15, $10. 416-363-5299.

Lindzon also performs the opening night concert Rhythm & Jews, for the Jewish Music Festival with **David Buchbinder** and klezmer band, Rex Jazz Bar, 194 Queen St. W., Sunday May 18, 7 p.m. 416-598-2475.

Names

Imre Kertesz's novel *Fatelessness*, which tells the story of a Hungarian teenage boy who survives a passage through three concentration camps, has been adapted for the stage. A 75-minute play by *Andras Visky*, adapted verbatim from **Tim Wilkinson's** translation of the novel, was staged this month at the Here Art Center in New York, and featured actor **Adam Boncz**. Kertesz was the recipient of the 2002 Novel Prize in Literature.

Arts in Brief

■ Curtain Call Players presents The new **Mel Brooks** musical *Young Frankenstein*, a musical experience based on the movie. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. $26. Remaining performances April 23 to 25, 8 p.m.; 416-706-6181, www.curtaincallplayers.com.

■ Commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day with a presentation by local survivor **George Stern**, and receive a free copy of his memoir, *Vanished Boyhood*. Co-sponsored by the Azrieli Foundation. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday April 27, 11 a.m. Free admission. 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

■ Art history teacher **Osnat Lippa** presents "Treasures of the Guggenheim", a lecture on the movements of expressionism, futurism and cubism after WWI. Artists include *Franz Marc, Kandinsky, Chagall, Picasso, Mondrian* and more, all featured in the recent AGO exhibit. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday April 29, 1 p.m. Drop in, $12. lisar@mnjcc.org.

■ Author, genealogist and this columnist **Bill Gladstone** gives an illustrated talk on "Jews of the GTA" as part of Jewish Heritage Month. Bathurst Clark Resource Library, 900 Clark Ave. W., Vaughan. Sunday May 4, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

At the Galleries: *Nir Bareket: My Eyes Have Seen, Celebrating 50 Years of Photography*, an exhibition of Bareket photographs from the City of Toronto Archives and the Ontario Jewish Archives, opens April 26, 1 to 3 p.m. at the Market Gallery, St. Lawrence Market.

The photos of **Nir Bareket** reflect a range of subjects and interests including Toronto jails, theatres, the homeless and the March of the Living. A former commercial photographer in New York and Geneva, he also served as chief photographer for The Israel Museum in Jerusalem. He moved to Toronto in 1975. The exhibition runs thru July 19, 2014. ■

Israeli sensation The Gat Brothers performed at Tattoo Rock Parlour recently courtesy of JNF Toronto. The band performed covers of Pink Floyd, Simon & Garfunkel and The Beatles.

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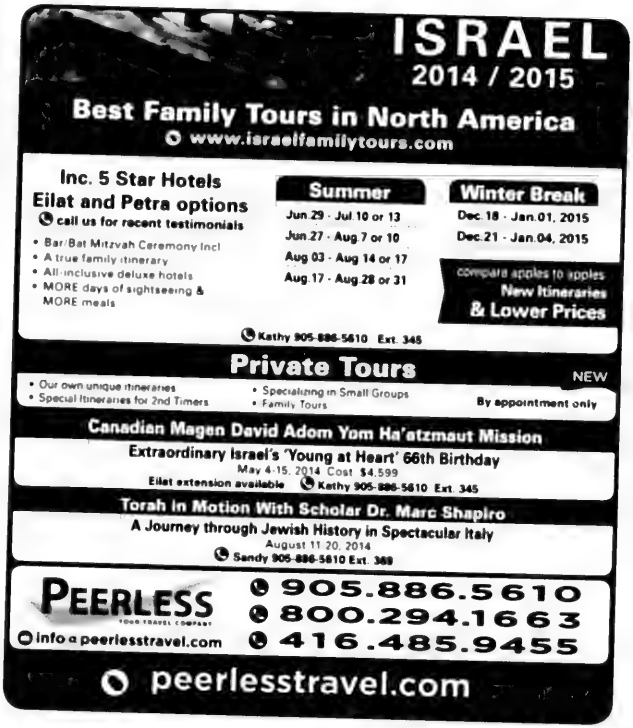

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 24 2014

A taste of Paris at home

DAPHNA RABINOVITCH
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Ahh, Paris, the city of love, the city of lights, the city of memorable food. Whether or not you've actually been to the glorious city, eaten in its haute restaurants or pedestrian cafes, or visited its renowned markets, its gastronomic reputation precedes it. To eat in Paris is to savour one's food, to eat only what is in season, to let the dynamism of a certain ingredient flourish. It can take you back to Proust and transport you to what you can only imagine Escoffier championed.

Its culinary traditions are age old, buttressed as they are by waves of immigration, passing food fancies and trends that have managed to become mainstream. But perhaps I wax rhapsodic. It is true that Paris is now overrun by fast food joints and its cultural purists bemoan the "dumbing down" of French cuisine. But let's face it, that train is global and it's not hard to jump off at any side street and indulge in some authentic potage (soup), daube (stew) or pate (chopped liver, anyone?). There's also no reason to shy away because you think the dishes are wonderful only because they contain gobs of cream or butter. Not true, I say. The three recipes I have included here contain nary a tablespoon of cream or butter and yet still are infused with flavour and gusto. It's the perfect menu, rounded out by a side dish of haricots verts and a green salad, for special occasion dining, whether to impress hungry guests or for that very special Shabbat. ■

Creamy Cauliflower Soup With Parsley Coulis

This luscious creamy soup is velvety smooth and creamy due to the amount of cauliflower it contains as well as the potato. It can easily be made up to a day ahead and reheated gently stovetop. Be sure to cook the onion, celery and garlic slowly to coax out all of their natural sweetness and to avoid getting any colour into the mixture so that your soup will be as white as possible.

- ❑ 2 tbsp. vegetable oil
- ❑ 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- ❑ 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ❑ 3 stalks celery, chopped
- ❑ 1 tsp. dried thyme
- ❑ ½ tsp. each salt and pepper
- ❑ 1 head cauliflower, cut into 1-in. florets
- ❑ 1 small potato, peeled and cut into chunks
- ❑ 6 cups chicken or vegetable broth

Parsley Coulis

- ❑ 1 cup packed fresh parsley leaves
- ❑ 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

Heat oil in a large heavy saucepan set over medium-low heat. Add onion, garlic, celery, thyme and salt and pepper. Cover and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Do not let the onion or the garlic brown or the soup will not be cream coloured.

Add cauliflower and potato to soup, tossing until well coated with the vegetables. Pour in broth. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 25 to 30 minutes or until vegetables are very tender.

Meanwhile, in blender or food processor, finely chop parsley. Add oil. Puree together until finely chopped and blended. Remove from blender and set aside.

In batches, puree soup in clean blender or food processor. Reheat gently if necessary. Ladle into serving bowls. Dollop parsley coulis over, using a spoon or thin knife to make a decorative pattern. Makes 8 servings.

Chicken With Morels And Pearl Onions

I have served this intensely flavoured dish with both dried morels and a combination of porcini, shiitake and oyster and they are both delicious. Dried morels can sometimes be difficult to obtain, never mind expensive, so don't hesitate to make it with the latter variety. If you're having difficulty peeling the pearl onions, blanch them in some boiling water for 1 minute and their skins will easily slide off.

- ❑ 1 1/2 oz. dried morels (or a combination of dried porcini, shiitake and oyster mushrooms)
- ❑ ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ❑ 1 tsp. herbes de provence
- ❑ ¾ tsp. salt
- ❑ ¼ tsp. pepper
- ❑ 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ❑ ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- ❑ 3 bone-in whole chicken legs
- ❑ 2 bone-in chicken breasts
- ❑ 1 bag (10 oz.) pearl onions, peeled (about 18-21)
- ❑ 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ❑ ½ cup white wine

Rinse dried mushrooms; place in a bowl. Pour 2 cups very hot water over mushrooms. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Combine the flour, herbes de provence, salt and pepper in a shallow bowl. Heat oil in a large shallow saucepan, large enough to hold all the chicken at once, over medium-high heat. Brush mustard evenly over chicken pieces. One at a time, coat chicken pieces in the flour mixture, reserving any leftover flour. Sear chicken in hot oil on both sides, about 5 minutes per side. Remove to a plate.

Meanwhile, reserving the soaking liquid, drain mushrooms. Chop coarsely and set aside. Pour the soaking liquid through a fine mesh sieve into a bowl to remove any debris or grit.

Reduce heat to medium heat. Add onions, garlic to saucepan and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in mushrooms. Sprinkle any remaining flour over mushrooms and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Pour in reserved soaking liquid and wine. Bring to a boil. Nestle chicken back into liquid. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for about 45 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink inside. Makes 8 servings.

Brown Sugar Cinnamon Palmiers

Despite what I said, it is well nigh impossible to find a French dessert that does not contain either butter or cream, unless you're looking at a fresh fruit dish or a poached fruit. In place of a traditional tart or torte, I have included a simple recipe for Cinnamon Palmiers that can easily be made up to 24 hours ahead and are sweet enough to stand up to a dark roast coffee and some fresh melon.

- ❑ 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- ❑ 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- ❑ 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ❑ 1 397 mL frozen parve puff pastry, defrosted

Preheat the oven to 450. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.

In a bowl, combine the granulated and brown sugars, cinnamon and salt, mixing until well combined.

Transfer 1 cup of this mixture to a large piece of parchment paper. Place one square of the puff pastry on top of the sugar. Carefully roll out the square to a 12-in. square.

Pour ½ cup of the sugar mixture on top of the pastry. Roll out until it is a 14-in. square, making sure the sugar is pressed into the bottom and top of the pastry. Starting at one side, fold half of the dough so that it covers half of the dough. Repeat on the other side. Again, starting at one short side, roll up the dough jelly roll style, again just to the centre of the rectangle; roll up other side to meet in the middle. Press the sides firmly together. Gently turn over.

Using a sharp knife, cut into ¼ - ½-in. thick slices. Transfer to prepared baking sheets. Repeat with remaining puff pastry and sugar.

Bake in the centre of the preheated oven for 7 minutes. Flip cookies over. Bake for 4 to 6 minutes or until both sides are caramelized. Cool in pan on rack. Remove to rack to cool completely. Makes about 3 1/2 dozen palmiers.

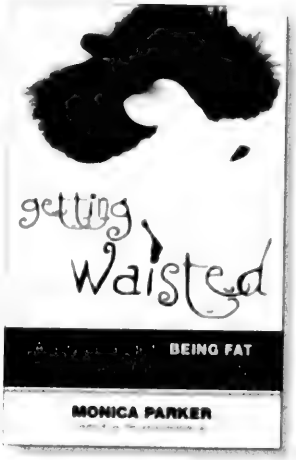
Actress gets waisted in her new memoir

KATHRYN KATES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Getting Waisted is Monica Parker's personal memoir, which takes a candid look into her life as a serial dieter. Parker, an actress and writer, shares tales of growing from a chubby baby into a chunky adult with passion and wit in this book inspired by her one-woman stage show, *Sex, Pies & a Few White Lies*.

Parker moved back to Toronto from Los Angeles almost five years ago. "If I hadn't come back to Toronto, I don't think I would have written the play, because L.A. is a place of distraction, there is always things to do because it is nice outside. It is a town about business, so you are always off negotiating, hustling or doing something.

"When I came back here and faced that first winter in 28 years – I didn't want to go out. I hadn't really settled here. I was a new, old girl. I knew the city but it wasn't in my personal GPS," she said. "I would stand at the kitchen sink and say how did this happen, but I wanted it to happen. I wanted to be here near my family. But, still it wasn't home, so I decided to sit down and write a show."



Monica Parker

The show was a success, and from this, the Scottish-born actress fell into a speaking career. Through that, people suggested that she write a book. Not daunted by the fact that she had never written one, she was up for the challenge. Parker wrote a lengthy proposal, sent it out to three American agents, two of which wanted to represent her.

Parker says writing the book was just a joy. "In the book, every chapter begins with a diet, how much money I spent on it, how much weight I lost and how much weight I gained as soon as I stopped it, including the three that nearly killed me."

Parker says it was fun to rip open her guts and talk about everything that has been her life including her struggle with weight. "What I really got from this book was whatever challenges you are given in life, if you flip that on its head you really see those are the gifts you are given. I believe being a big woman has given me an amazing career, it has always separated me out from the pack. It didn't matter if I got older, I was always going to be a character actor. Being a writer has no age limit, but I also have all this experience of constantly being up against challenges and I know what to do."

She says that she doesn't mind fat jokes, but doesn't want them perpetrated on her. "I don't mind saying things about myself, I find funny. I don't feel that I am diminishing myself of anything. I feel it is a way of learning why we respond the way we do to things and a way of putting it out there so other people get comfortable."

However, Parker said she does not like cruel humour. Parker said she respects honesty in humour and believes if you take pain in your life and put it into the light, then it has no power over you.

She hopes *Getting Waisted* inspires people to be more of who they are intended to be just as they are. To enjoy their lives and stop focusing on the negative and finding the positive in who they are.

"Being Jewish has given me my lifelong love of food," admits Parker with a chuckle. "The activity known as a Jewish family dinner is volcanic. Everyone has an opinion, and everyone says it, all at one time. I would say that has added value to my humour."

Parker divides her time between Los Angeles and Toronto, where she continues to work in film and television. She was also the co-writer of the film *All Dogs Go to Heaven*.

In addition to touring her one-woman show, Parker just completed two features films. She has a recurring role in *Defiance* on the Sci-Fi channel, alongside her husband, actor and fashion designer, Gilles Savard. ■

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 24 2014

Altshuller, Smoskowitz key to Generals' playoff push

PAUL LUNGEN
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Years ago, hockey coach Gene Ubriaco had this to say about the importance of goaltending to a team's success: "Goaltending is 75 per cent of hockey, unless you don't have any. Then, it's 100 per cent."

Truer words were never spoken, whether for the 1980s Pittsburgh Penguins, where Ubriaco was coach, or for the current edition of the Oshawa Generals.

The Generals finished first in the Eastern Division of the Ontario Hockey League (OHL) and in the first round of the playoffs, swept the Mississauga Steelheads 4-0.

In the second round they kept the brooms out and swept the Peterborough Petes 4-0, winning the deciding game in overtime. Of the eight playoff games the Generals have played, three were shutouts posted by Nepean-born netminder Daniel Altshuller.

Altshuller has been pretty close to flawless. He's been in the Oshawa net for all eight wins, registering an impressive 1.50 goals against average (GAA) along with a .939 save percentage. Them's Carey Price numbers.

So far, Altshuller has been giving the Generals the kind of puck stopping that wins championships. He shut out the Petes in games one and two in Oshawa, and then in game three, despite a Peterborough push in which he was peppered with 37 shots, allowed only one goal. The Generals won 3-1 and Altshuller was named first star, as well as OHL Player of the Week for the week ending April 6. The Generals advanced to the OHL Eastern Conference finals.

His teammate, Dylan Smoskowitz, has been busy too, but not that busy. In the first eight OHL playoff games, he had two goals and three assists and was +2 on the stats sheet.

Pretty good, considering he could have been stretched out on a big La-Z-Boy recliner for round two, watching the games streaming on the Internet if not for a fortuitous mid-season trade.

Smoskowitz started the season with the Steelheads, where he played 40 games and recorded 20 goals and nine assists. He was traded to the Generals just before the trade deadline, giving him "the chance to play longer in the season," he said. He finished the year with 29 goals and 17 assists.

"I was so happy," he said just outside the dressing room at General Motors Centre in Oshawa. "It's not that I wanted to leave. I liked playing for Mississauga. The city loves the team." But the opportunity to play for a first-place team was too good to be true.

When he got to Oshawa, he was told the team was expecting him to do what he'd always done in junior and before – score some goals.

Smoskowitz, an overage junior who was undrafted, plays right wing on a line with Aiden Wallace and Joe Manchurek.

"We feed off each other," he said. "We all work down low and find the open holes for an opportunity to score."

He's seen some power play and penalty killing duties, as well.

The differences between the eighth-place Steelheads and first-place Generals are noticeable. "Every shift, there's no gliding. No waiting. It's 100 per cent, go, go, go. We play in-your-face hard-nosed hockey. That's the reason for our success," he said.

"We go to war for each other on a nightly basis."

"The whole team is playing well," said Altshuller, whose regular season GAA of 2.56 was fourth in the league. His .917 save percentage also placed him among top goalies in the OHL.

Clearly however, he's upped his game for the playoffs. "I expect that from my teammates and they expect the same out of me," he said.

Altshuller watches videos to learn the other team's shooting tendencies. He knows the Petes pretty well from matching up with them eight times during the regular season. They're good off the rush, their defencemen have heavy shots and they like to use the one-timer, he said.

Daniel Altshuller GOODALL MEDIA PHOTOS

Dylan Smoskowitz

For Altshuller, who was drafted by the Carolina Hurricanes in the third round of the 2012 NHL entry draft, "it's all about consistency. You have to be consistent in your movement so it becomes second nature.

"I try to play like Carey Price. That's the guy I try to imitate. He's patient and efficient in all his movements."

With the Generals closing out the series before Passover, Smoskowitz now has the chance to make the short trek down the 401 to his home in Richmond Hill for the first seder.

Altshuller, who signed a three-year entry level contract with the Hurricanes earlier this season, will stick around Oshawa. Last year his billet family, who are Jewish, hosted a seder. This year, his mom has already filled his freezer with Passover delicacies.

Though Altshuller and Smoskowitz are teammates on the Generals, they came close to playing on the same team last summer as well. Both were recruited to play for Canada at the Maccabiah Games in Israel.

Altshuller, rated the Canes' top goaltending prospect by *Hockey's Future*, was ready to go to Israel until he got the schedule for the Hurricane's rookie camp, which coincided with the tournament dates in Israel.

Smoskowitz did go and enjoyed every minute.

"It was an unbelievable experience, winning the gold medal for your country," he said.

He smiles broadly when describing getting off the bus at the rink in Metulla with an equipment bag full of hockey gear in 100 degree weather.

It was fun playing with guys he'd played with, and against, in Toronto growing up. And the looks on the faces of the Israeli kids when they watched the tournament games was something to see.

"The kids at the rink were really in awe when we played the United States or Ukraine, when they saw how fast the game was," he recounted.

"It was cool to be part of that."

"You're there for the hockey but you take in the land and all it has to offer. It was two weeks of pure enjoyment for me."■

Legends fress bagels at SRO sports breakfast in Montreal

Legendary Montreal Alouettes quarterback and the event's personality of the year Anthony Calvillo, left, receives his award from honorary chair Morden "Cookie" Lazarus at Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors Foundation's Sports Celebrity Breakfast. Looking on is Gazette sportswriter Herb Zurkowsky. To read story, go to cjnews.com.

RINA FRIEDMAN PHOTO

HORROR: Dybbuks, zombies and vampires

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37

"You don't automatically think of horror films when discussing a Jewish film and what's at a Jewish film festival," Hands says. "But there's been a lot of scholarship related to Jewish horror, lately."

Hands and Koven spoke last summer about making a program devoted to scary movies. Hands had read an essay Koven wrote on his blog about this cinema, entitled "*Golems, Dybbuks and other Movie Monsters: The Search for a Jewish Horror Film.*"

In the article, Koven writes about how many horror films that are directed, written or produced by Jews focus on a Christian-centric story. For instance, William Friedkin directed *The Exorcist*, a film that deals explicitly with Christian elements.

"In order to be considered a Jewish horror movie... it has to occupy a Jewish cosmos," Koven tells *The CJN*. "It has to be a mythology that puts Jews at the centre rather than Christianity."

In his essay, he writes about Jewish characters standing on the fringes of a Christian-centric world in horror classics like *An American Werewolf in London*. In horror cinema, Jewish characters are often outsiders from the community.

The story of Frankenstein's monster draws back to Judaism, as well, since it recalls folklore about the golem, a creature made from clay that is brought to life. In several versions of this story, the golem is responsible for protecting the Jewish community from attacks.

"The real monster in that story is the doctor who defies God," Koven explains. "If we consider these stories to be golem stories, this is man's hubris in trying to create life where we shouldn't, which is why it becomes monstrous."

Israel is also beginning to release very popular horror films. One of them is *Goldberg & Eisenberg*, a dark psychological thriller that will screen as part of Koven's program.

"Now, with the technology being such as it is, you don't need state money to make a film," Koven says. "That's allowing [Israeli] filmmakers, those fans who are dedicated to the horror genre, to do things their way."

Hands says that from the films in the TJFF program, he is most excited to watch Roman Polanski's 1967 horror parody *The Fearless Vampire Killers* with an audience. Meanwhile, Larry Cohen, director of *God Told Me To*, will be present for a Skype Q&A after a screening of his 1976 horror classic.

Another high-profile title from the program is *The Dybbuk*, an English-language adaptation of Sholom Ansky's play of the same name. Sidney Lumet (*Dog Day Afternoon, 12 Angry Men*) directs that 1960 film version.

Variations of the dybbuk story – where a spirit possesses one's soul and tempts them away from a righteous path – have also appeared in many contemporary American horror films, such as *The Unborn* and *The Possession*.

Organizers of the TJFF have been trying to screen more horror films over the last few years, Hands says. Although the horror audience is outside the core demographic of the festival, recent screenings of Israeli genre films like *Rabies* and *Poisoned* drew big crowds.

Poisoned features IDF soldiers turning into zombies, blending genre elements with a political subject matter. Hands says that the growth of horror cinema in Israel is tied to filmmakers reacting to vengeance and violence in Israeli society.

"With genre films, you're allowed to communicate and critique in a way that's a bit disarming," Hands says. ■

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KEEPING JEWS JEWISH

What's New

APRIL 24 - MAY 1

By LILA SARICK

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Start your spring cleaning. For tips, go to Temple Har Zion at 8 p.m.			Yom Hashoah		Meet author Jennifer Weiner, dancer Karen Kain and other women at Weizmann fundraiser.	

Thursday, April 24

WARSAW UPRISING REMEMBERED
The 71st anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising will be commemorated at Toronto Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W., 7:30 p.m.

FAMILY LAW WORKSHOP
Family law lawyer **Victoria Starr** discusses "Parental Alienation." For more information, call the Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women at 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org

SPRING CLEANING
Vicky Riley Keyes discusses how to downsize your home and de-clutter your life. Temple Har Zion, 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 26

PARSHAH TALK
Abe Birnbaum discusses the parshah of the week at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Sunday, April 27

YIDDISH CULTURE
Explore Yiddish Culture, a 6-week session for intermediate Yiddish students, Sundays, starting today. 10 a.m., Beth David Synagogue. Register by email: bbarak@ujafed.org or 416-631-5843.

FIND YOUR TRUE LOVE
Frank Maloney, life coach and author, discusses how to live an authentic life, with Singles in the Park, Earl Bales Community Centre, 7:30 p.m. Doors open 7 p.m. $15/$18. RSVP debbygo@rogers.com or 416-631-0005. Singles in the Park is open to single, divorced and widowed Jewish men and women over 50.

KEEPING YOUR MEMORY SHARP
Dr. Gillian Rowe, Baycrest Centre, discusses "Keeping your Memory Sharp as you Age," 11 a.m., Temple Har Zion. $3/$6.

SOCCERATHON
Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro holds a soccerathon at Trio Sportsplex, 601 Cityview Blvd., Woodbridge. Email gilad.epstein@lorexcorp.com or cfobis@rogers.com.

Monday, April 28

BOOK CLUB
Cathy Tile reviews the book *The Street Sweeper*, Beth Tzedec Congregation, lunch at 1 p.m., review at 1:30 p.m., $20. Call 416-781-3511.

WOMEN AND THE HOLOCAUST
Sara Horowitz discusses "Women and the Holocaust," today, May 5 and May 26, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation.

YOM HASHOAH LECTURE
Rabbi Lauren Berkun discusses "Where is God in the Midst of Suffering," 7:30 p.m., First Narayever Congregation.

SPRING LECTURE SERIES
Katherine Barber discusses "Bachelor for Rent: Surprises in Canadian English," 2 p.m., Temple Emanu-El.

Tuesday, April 29

PARENTS OF LONE SOLDIERS
Parents of lone soldiers serving in the IDF meet at 7:30 p.m. in Thornhill. Guest speaker, psychologist **Nina Josefowitz.** To RSVP email **Vivian Max,** vrhan2001@yahoo.ca or call 905-881-7963.

MAXIMUM MEMORY
Dr. Angie Troyer discusses "Maximum Memory: What memory changes are a normal part of aging," 1:30 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple.

Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah

Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, is marked on April 27 with services and ceremonies across Canada.

LUNCH AND LEARN
Robert Rotenberg discusses the crime fiction novel, at Beth Tikvah Synagogue Lunch at 12:15 p.m., lecture at 12:45 p.m. Call 416-221-3433 to register

WONDERFUL WOMEN
Weizmann Canada's Women and Science Committee presents a panel of accomplished women discussing how they became front-runners in their fields 6:30 p.m. at Casa Loma. For tickets, call 416-733-9220, or go to wonderfulwomen.weizmann.ca.

Wednesday, April 30

JEWISH HISTORY
Hana Werner discusses "Ezekiel: Empowering the Judeans," first in a series of 5 lectures, 2 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Thursday, May 1

ALAN BOROVOY
Toronto Workmen's Circle presents a conversation with **Alan Borovoy,** 7:30 p.m., 471 Lawrence Ave. W.

COMING EVENTS

DANI CONFERENCE
DANI holds a conference May 4 with keynote speaker **Rabbi Michael Taubes** discussing "Beyond the Illusion of Inclusion." Register by **April 25.** Call 905-889-3264, or email info@dani-toronto.com.

MORASHA CLASSES
Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum teaches a class on "When the Bible is confusing," Part II. **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner** teaches a class on "The Jew and her Food, from Sinful to Sacred." Classes start May 7, at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Call 416-789-7400 to register.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Deadline Reminder:
The deadline for the issue of May 8 is April 28. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

YOM HASHOAH

- Yad Vashem-Neuberger Holocaust Centre commemorates Yom Hashoah **April 27** at Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St. at 11 a.m. Guest speaker: **Leslie Meisels.**
- Temple Sinai marks Yom Hashoah **April 27,** 3 p.m. Featuring the story of Cantor emeritus **Severin Weingort.**
- Beth Tikvah Synagogue marks Yom Hashoah **April 26,** 7 p.m. featuring a presentation by **Gerda Frieberg.**
- The Atlantic Jewish Council and Azrieli Foundation present a Yom Hashoah program **April 28**, McNally Auditorium, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, 7:30 p.m. Guest speaker: **Helena Jockel.**
- Sgoolai Israel Synagogue, Fredericton, N.B., marks Yom Hashoah **April 27,** 3 p.m. Guest speaker: **Hedy Bohm.**
- Beth-El Synagogue, St John's, Nfld., marks Yom Hashoah, **April 27**, 7:30 p.m Guest speaker: **Dr. Michael Paul** on "Medical atrocities carried out by the Nazis during the war."

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **Mind-Body Connection for Women:** A 7-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 29, Lebovic JCC, 7 p.m.; May 1, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.
- **The Challenge of Anger for Women:** A 6-session group for women to learn how to express anger. Starts May 6, 35 Madison Ave, 3 p.m. or Lipa Green Centre at 7:30 p.m.
- **Widow/Widower Under 60:** A 6-session group for people under 60 who have recently lost a spouse. Starts May 6, 7:30 p.m.
- **Living with Teens:** A 6-session group for parents. Topics include dating, alcohol and setting limits. Starts May 6, 7:30 p.m.
- **Life Skills for Today's Woman:** A 6-session group. Topics include time and stress management, self-esteem. Starts May 6, at 7 p.m.
- **Parenting the Child/Teen with ADHD:** A 4-session group for parents. Starts May 7, at 7 p.m. Call for pre-group assessment.
- **Adult Children Losing a Parent:** A 6-session group for adults who have recently lost a parent. Starts May 7, at 7:30 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

- Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m 905-889-4975
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Paul Hyman** discusses "Brain Fitness," April 24, 1:30 p.m., doors open at 1 p.m
- **Osnat Lippa** discusses "Treasures of the Guggenheim," April 29, 1 p.m. For all programs, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. April 29, **Jordan Klapman** discusses "Rodgers, Hart & Hammerstein," 10 a.m.; May 1, **Sue Woods** discusses "Eye Care and Vision Loss," 1:30 p.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine April 30 (register in advance); Dance with live music, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise starts May 6; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.
- **Day Centre for Seniors** provides a friendly, secure place for seniors with dementia. Transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.
- **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

Prosserman JCC

- Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.
- The book club discusses *Matadora*, April 28, 1 p.m.
- The Yiddish group holds a Yom Hashoah program, April 28, 1:30 p.m.
- Musician/educator **Jordan Klapman** hosts a two-part musical journey through Jewish popular songs, April 24 and May 1, 1 p.m.
- **Iain Scott** discusses opera star Enrico Caruso, May 5, 1 p.m.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of J.M.W. Turner and David Hockney, May 13 and 20, 1 p.m.
- **Amnon Zohar** hosts "Israeli Hot Topics," Thursdays, May 1-29, 10 a.m.
- **Norene Gilletz** gives a workshop on making challah, May 4, 3 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

- 750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org
- *Young Frankenstein*, presented by the Curtain Call Players is at the Al Green Theatre, April 23-25, 8 p.m. For tickets, call 416-706-6181
- Yom Hashoah commemoration, April 27, 11 a.m
- **Adam Nayman** looks at the impact of **David Lynch**'s films, April 28: Shorts and *Eraserhead*, 7 p.m.
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition (male voices needed) July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug 18-22, ext. 250
- Harmonia, a Jewish choir for youths ages 8 to 18, directed by **Yonah Sienna**, meets Sundays at 4 p.m. Email harmonia@mnjcc.org
- Photos by **Rafael Goldchain** are at the gallery, April 27-May 19.
- **Vernal Benton** discusses "Power of Attorney, Wills and Trusts," May 3, 1 p.m.
- The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.
- **Robert Freedman** discusses how Tel Aviv's urban design shapes the city, May 6, lunch served at 11:30 a.m., lecture at noon
- Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays, until May 6, 7 p.m.; Wednesdays until May 7, 11 a.m. MELT Method – hand and foot, Mondays until May 12, 2:30 p.m. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays until June 18, 12:15 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

- Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821
- Zen kids art for children age 4 to 6 starts May 1. Karate club for children aged 7 to 10, starting April 29. To register, **Jennifer** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275
- Vendors wanted for an Israeli market for Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration, May 6 Email **Andrea** at adaiam@srcentre.ca.
- Join the SR Centre for a trip to see *Hay Fever* May 28 in Stratford. ■

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 24 2014

Ask Ella: When worlds collide

Ella Burakowski
eb@thecjn.ca

Dear Ella,

I've been dating Ben for over six months, and we've fallen in love. It's time for our parents to meet and I'm very nervous, as our families couldn't be more different. My dad works in the sports world. He's around men's locker rooms, and abrasive conversation is part of his personality. Ben's family is traditional and fairly observant, where everything is polite and formal. I see disaster ahead!

Worlds Collide

Dear Worlds Collide,

Your two families already share some kind of harmony. They have produced two human beings who have found enough common ground between them to have fallen in love.

Let's just get one thing straight: even if your families had come from the same background, neighbourhood etc., you would still be nervous, because this meeting is so very important to you. You've built up this incredible disaster in your mind without giving the parties involved much credit.

What you haven't realized is that, in a way, both sides already know a bit about what to expect. Every time you told your dad an anecdote about Ben and you, or mentioned his parents in any way, your dad drew a mental image of them. The same is true for Ben and his parents.

When your dad meets Ben's parents for the first time, it won't be in a sports locker room. Give him some credit to know when to turn off that gruff language and be respectful.

Brief your dad about Ben's family and their lifestyle. He knows how important this day is for you. Do you really think he doesn't want to make a good impression?

At the same time, Ben should set the scene at his end. Make sure his parents know a bit about your background and your dad's profession. There's nothing wrong with prepping everyone so that there are no surprises. Believe me, all involved want to make a good impression – that's just human nature.

If everyone came from the same place, we would be living on a pretty boring planet. You and Ben can get the conversation started and then just let it take off. Take a deep breath and relax. Trust that your families love you enough to understand the importance of making this meeting work.

Dear Ella,

A dear friend of mine just spent a fortune to make herself look younger. Unfortunately, I couldn't contain my shock when she strutted into my home yesterday. She truly looks odd. Everything on her face is over-defined and looks wrong. I can't get over it, and my facial expression didn't lie. Why do people do this to themselves?

Cosmetic Surgery Gone Wrong

Dear Cosmetic Surgery Gone Wrong,

You don't have a right to judge what pushes someone into making a decision to do a little nip and tuck. It's their body, their mind, their life.

At the same time, you're entitled to your feelings, but keep in mind that she can't undo what she's done at this point. It's not like disliking a dress and returning it for a better fit.

Perhaps plastic surgery is not for you. It certainly isn't for everyone, but most people certainly do everything they can to retain their youthful appearance using creams, facials, spas treatments.

Of course, the most drastic step is reconstruction. There are so many ways to look younger without resorting to that last step. Simple things such as smiling, walking with confidence, keeping your hair coiffured and your clothes fitting well and updated. Sleep, relaxation, exercise and not smoking also goes a long way, but in the end, time will begin to show.

Don't be embarrassed or upset about those lines, because each and every one represents your life. Your triumphs and tragedies, your children and grandchildren.

You should wear those lines with pride. You earned every one of them, and in my opinion, they should not be erased from time. ■

Ella's advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

Family Moments

Stephen & Lori Morton announce the birth of Brayden Riley Feb. 21. Big brother Alex is excited! Overjoyed are Bubbie Beverly Smordin and Zaidie Manny Morton.

Mazal tov to Dana Gold & David Hodgins on your engagement! We wish you a life of happiness together. With love, your family and friends.

Mazal tov to the Gallen and Sarner families on the engagement of Joanna & Jamie. An early November wedding is planned.

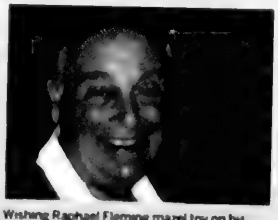
Danielle, Benji and Paige Sucher welcome Cole Henry on March 18. Grandparents Lynn & Harvey Chaiton, Coby & Rolanda Sucher and Great-Bubbe Tillie Newman.

Mazel tov to Jessica Sapos-Kocsis & Zack Teitel on their recent engagement. Proud parents are Livia Sapos, Peter Kocsis, Karen & Jay Teitel.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on **"Family Moments"**

Mazel Tov!

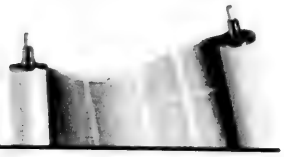
מזל טוב



Wishing Raphael Fleming mazel tov on his 80th birthday. We love you very much. Ellen Joy, Mark, Shari, Sonic, Basho, Dean, Mason and Finnegan.

Parshah

Kedoshim | Leviticus 19:1 20:27



Rabbi Ilan Acoca reveals two different views of the meaning of kedushah
Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl on a religious life defined by polarities
Rabbi Catharine Clark implores us to treat all Jews as holy

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Parashat Kedoshim starts with a startling statement commanding us to be holy.

I often ask myself, what is kedushah (holiness)?

Rashi and the Ramban have different views in their understanding of the concept of kedushah.

Rashi interprets kedushah as separation from anything that is prohibited. The Ramban's interpretation is that we are responsible for elevating the mundane to a spiritual level. By doing so, he says, a person will reach the level of kedushah.

I believe that as human beings, we have to ensure that, as we elevate ourselves, we cannot separate ourselves from the rest of the world. We have to be confident in our beliefs and come to the level of the people, understanding where they are coming from and bringing meaning into their lives.

It is a known fact that our chachamim, our sages, exemplified this idea.

Chacham Haim Palagi (1788-1869), who was the chacham bashi, the chief rabbi, of Izmir writes in his book *Moed Lekol Hai* that his grandfather, Chacham Yosef Refael Ben Haim Hazan instituted an edict against buying eggs during the month of Nisan because eggs were affordable, making it feasible for the entire community to buy them for Pesach.

The merchants realized this, and elevated the price of eggs during the month of Nisan, bringing sorrow to the less fortunate people who could not afford them. The chacham respected his people's dignity by stating that no one could buy eggs during the month of Nisan.

The chacham had great vision. He understood the pain of his flock and put himself in their shoes. He did not sit in his office or home, oblivious to his surroundings, but rather he taught the message of kindness and sensitivity to Am Yisrael, the nation of Israel.

Let us all take the example of Chacham Hazan and bring God's message closer to our nation. ■

Rabbi Ilan Acoca is rabbi at Congregation Beth Hamidrash in Vancouver.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl

My teacher, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, taught that the Torah tradition expresses significant ideas as polarities: awe and love of God, justice and mercy, transcendence and immanence. His books, *God in Search of Man* and *Man's Quest for God*, articulate the dynamic polarity of the religious-spiritual experience.

The Torah and haftorah readings for Kedoshim express a similar dynamism between the transcendent Creator who embraces all existence and the intimate relationship of God with the People of Israel.

"You shall be holy" (Leviticus 19:2) is the imperative that begins this weekly section. It is directed to the entire People of Israel, summoning them to distinguish themselves from others through ritual and ethical conduct. It is an aspiration, calling us to follow the mitzvah mandates of Leviticus and the other four books of the Torah.

Earlier in the Torah, just prior to the encounter at Sinai, the covenantal ideal was articulated: "You shall be my particular treasure from among all people… a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:5-6).

Yet the prophetic reading from Amos tells us: "You are like the Ethiopians to me… Have I not brought up the Israelites from Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor and Aram from Kir" (Amos 9:7)? Other people have experienced the transition from slavery to freedom. God has created all people and cares for them all.

My religious life is defined by a similar polarity. I am placed on this planet, which I share with all humanity, concerned for its environmental and social sustainability. I am also a passionate Jew, committed to the land and people of Israel, as well as to the mores and mitzvot (Shabbat and festivals, kashrut and daily prayer) of our covenant.

The rabbis who organized our liturgical calendar were wise to bring together the voices of priest and prophet, Leviticus and Amos. We are continually challenged to listen and live up to these twin ideals that point us toward a holy life. ■

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl is senior rabbi at Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto.

Rabbi Catharine Clark

Five times in Leviticus laws are given to the Israelites. Parshat Kedoshim, however, begins by specifying that the laws that follow should be given to the entire community of Israelites (Leviticus, 19:2). Many commentators have questioned what makes these laws so special that they must be given to the entire community all at the same time. For most other laws, various groups of Israelites were taught separately.

Rashi, quoting Torat Kohanim, gives one common answer to this question. According to him, the entire community must be together to hear these laws because most fundamental principles of the Torah depend on it. Nechama Leibowitz, the 20th-century Bible scholar, objects to this answer – if these laws are so important, they should have been taught to each group of Israelites separately to maximize understanding.

Another reading is to connect the emphasis on giving the laws to the entire community with the rest of the verse which states, "You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy." In this understanding, we are holy only when the entire community understands each other as holy.

This approach is not an easy one, but it is well worth pursuing. Imagine a Jewish community in which women who wrap tfillin are not impugned as egotists, and in which Chassidim are not dismissed as meshugene.

Without considering what you think other Jews need to do to treat you as holy, think about what you need to do to treat all Jews as holy. For instance, do you need to stop regarding parents who send their children to Jewish day schools as unable to recognize the value of a multicultural society? Or, do you need to stop thinking of parents who choose supplemental Jewish education for their children as Jewish lightweights? Do your part to create a Jewish community of holiness for all Jews. ■

Rabbi Catharine Clark is spiritual leader of Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ont.

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The grandest hotel in the east

NANCY WIGSTON
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The Jewish Cemetery in Penang NANCY WIGSTON PHOTO

Wes Anderson's *The Grand Budapest Hotel* recently charmed filmgoers with a nostalgic look at the glory days of a mythical grand hotel in an unnamed country. Travellers in search of a genuine grand hotel experience can still discover special hostelries that deserve the appellation "grand." One such gem is the Eastern and Oriental Hotel, in George Town, Penang, Malaysia, sister hotel to The Raffles in Singapore and The Strand in Yangon.

Amid the island's tropical heat and lively cultural scene, the E&O – as it's always referred to – looms elegantly at 10 Farquhar Street, an oasis of elegance and calm since 1885. Its new extension, the Victory Annexe, is a colonial-themed five-star establishment, but for historical hotel buffs, the original wing (restored in 1996) is the place to stay.

Entering the marble lobby with its interior dome, bouquets of fresh flowers, and welcoming staff effectively closes the door on the world outside. We're home. Some visitors may feel more at home than others, naturally. London architect Ben Grand, born in Penang in 1935, used to visit the hotel when his parents took him here for a haircut. For three E&O visits running, we've chatted with Ben and his wife Ria, as we sun by a pool tucked in an enclave symbolically guarded by two cannons from Fort Cornwallis, a 1788 British fortification.

On a recent February morning the *Star*, a local tabloid, carried a story ("Keeping the Jewish Heritage Alive in George Town") featuring the visit of Abraham Jacobs, a 90-year-old former fighter pilot, who left Penang 40 years ago, but returns each year to pay his respects at the Jewish cemetery, resting place of both his father and eldest son.

"It's like paying respects during qing ming," the *Star* quoted Jacobs as saying as he swept the graves – a reference to an annual Chinese festival of "tomb-sweeping."

The Jewish cemetery's oldest gravestone dates back almost 180 years, with the burial of Mrs Shoshan Levi who died on July 9, 1835. Three years ago, David "Mordy" Mordecai, longtime and much-loved general manager of the E&O, was laid to rest here, the last of Penang's resident Jewish community.

"We all went to his funeral," says Loh-Lim Lin Lee, who, with her architect husband, Lawrence Loh, is renowned for the passionate restoration of Penang's heritage properties, especially the Cheong Fatt Tze or "Blue Mansion," on Leith Street, not far from the E&O.

This Penang landmark, a former tin millionaire's home, is now an upscale bed and breakfast and appears on everyone's must-see Penang list for its rare Chinese art motifs and perfect feng shui.

Founded by the English, Penang has a population today that's largely Hokkien-speaking Chinese, but the former Free State's original cultural mix included Armenians, Jews, South Indians, Malays, Thais, Burmese, Eurasians and a unique group called Peranakan (baba-nonya), formed by intermarriage. This unique subculture has its own distinctive customs, dress and cuisine.

The Jews are visitors now. The old synagogue is a photography studio. The community's last representative, David Mordecai, was fondly called "Uncle Mordy" by Ben Grand, although he was in fact a second cousin. In the lobby of the E&O's new wing, we discover the hotel's museum, a treasure trove of memories of glory days, when everyone who could afford it celebrated their special occasions at the E&O. Three-year-old Ben is there, in one of many vintage photos. His father was also Penang-born (the family originally came from Austria) and he married a woman of Iraqi Jewish descent, achieving success as the agent for Phillips radios, until the postwar Communist insurgency cut him off from his clients for five long years.

Like so much of the island, the E&O was created by newcomers. It was the brainchild of four Armenian brothers, the Sarkies, who built their hotel overlooking the Straits of Malacca. It boasted a fancy dining room, a bar, and a ballroom. Naturally British high teas were served (they still are). The stone sea wall, at 275 metres, was the longest in the world. When the youngest Armenian brother, bon vivant Arshak, took over, the E&O had few rivals.

The hotel not only attracted colonials – rubber planters and the like – in search of an elegant evening, but also travelers such as writer Hermann Hesse, who called the E&O "the most beautiful hotel for Europeans that I came across in the East Indies." Noel Coward – inspired by his colonial travels to write *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* – famously appeared on the E&O terrace in his silk tennis whites. Joseph Conrad, Somerset Maugham and Rita Hayworth were also among the legendary guests. Booker winner Peter Carey is a big fan of Penang.

Hot and bustling, George Town is so rich in history that in 2008 it was awarded (along with Melaka), UNESCO World Heritage status. Its warren of charming streets, wealth of British colonial architecture Chinese clan houses, jetties, and temples – together with what's been called the best street food on the planet – has made the city a tourist favourite. The UNESCO designation has lately led to an infusion of chic: coffee houses, a camera museum and high-end eateries. ■

More information: Penang Heritage Trust, www.pht.org.my, offers information on all aspects of Penang Heritage, plus walking tours; Eastern&Oriental Hotel, www. www.eohotels.com; The Blue Mansion, www.cheongfatttzemansion.com.

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
APRIL 24 2014

Rabbi Issamar Ginzberg: Living in two worlds

DAVID LAZARUS
dlazarus@cjnews.ca

Brooklyn-born Jerusalem resident Rabbi Issamar Ginzberg, 34, a chassidic rabbi, is a "strategic business adviser." He is invited to speak before corporate honchos, including Google and Yahoo, consults with business entrepreneurs and politicians, and pens a weekly column for *The Jerusalem Post*. He met recently with *The Canadian Jewish News* in Montreal.

How would you explain exactly what you do?

I teach people how to apply proven psychological principles and proven marketing techniques from the off-line world and update them to the online world, such as social media. I provide them with a new way of thinking about everything they've been doing using principles like consistency, authority, reciprocity, and others. The more elements you can put into everything you do, the more successful you will be.

But what is unique about how you do that as opposed to others?

I never use PowerPoint, just a screen and a Magic Marker. I try to convey concepts. I don't talk about tools, how to use this or that, but about things like how to use social media. There's a quote I really like: "social media is only free if time has no value." Some people think they don't have to advertise and they then spend four months on social media to earn $50. They get so excited and think that social media works. But what does that work out to, a nickel an hour? So I explain how to use social media profitably, about who belongs there and who doesn't.

Are there other haredim who do this type of thing, who are strategic business advisers for both Jews and non-Jews?

There are other "Jewish stars" in the business world, but from a purely business standpoint, I have not come across [another haredi who is invited to consult on business with non-Jews]. I use my picture in my logo and I write "Rabbi Ginzberg." It is not because I need the rabbi "kovod." It's so people know what I look like before I get there. I don't want that major surprise. And when I start, they stop looking at what I look like and start hearing things that makes sense.

Do you think you are ever perceived as being this "exotic" figure doing a presentation for non-Jews?

Rabbi Issamar Ginzberg

> *I teach people how to apply proven psychological principles and proven marketing techniques from the off-line world and update them to the online world, such as social media*

When you have a guy who's a principal at [the computer technology company] Oracle, a guy with a $2 billion company on the New York stock exchange, endorsing me, writing testimonials for me, it's not seen as a circus. It's more like you can be a chassidic Jew and still make it, a role model kind of thing.

How did a Brooklyn boy from a chassidic family end up speaking to movers and shakers at Google?

I don't really know how this all happened is the real answer. I was at a bar mitzvah in 1998 and I met somebody who was advising public companies on marketing. He didn't have any formal training. I realized after speaking with him that there was money to be made here. I was 19 when I first did business consulting. I always had an entrepreneurial spirit. My parents encouraged me very much. I sold jellybeans in third grade. I was born with the ability to take some random piece of knowledge and use it someplace in a very amazing way.

What has recognition been like for you?

The reason HaShem gave me these talents is so I can do this. It's not true chassidic Jews are out there begging for handouts. There are plenty of hardworking chassidic people who work very hard to make a living. But you don't see that. You only see newspapers talking about the poverty line, and too many children.

When did you first realize you had this talent?

I always wanted to make money. When I was 15, a friend of my brother's had a shirt company and gave me a job packing shirts, and he mentioned that he wanted a new shirt brand so I went home and made him a brand, with the logo and packaging and whole thing, and he paid me three hours, the same rate as if I was packing shirts. So I didn't make much money on the deal, but that was probably my first real entry into retail. I also made shareware [software] for the Macintosh computer custom icons, which got me into *Mac Addict* magazine.

You were that good with computer technology?

Yes. My father invented the first Hebrew font for Mac.

Why is there the perception that within the haredi world, the use of computers is discouraged?

The use of computers in the home is [discouraged], not in business. What we're saying is that if you're in a home, with children around, and Wi-Fi everywhere, if you want to protect your children from [the corrupting influence] of computers, that's what you do.

How did your career evolve from the shareware?

When I did the shareware, I would get cheques from all over the world and one of the cheques was from Apple. I came up with this concept that I would charge $10 [to license the shareware for] one computer and $35 for an entire company. I did it as a novelty to make things look more professional. When companies started to send me $35 for the rights to use my icons, I realized: wow, the Internet can help you, and second, that you never know where things can lead, and if you give people two options, some people are going to choose the more expensive option. That was a major Aha!

How did that lead to speaking at Google?

One thing led to another. I'm comfortable meeting people and networking in general. One of the things I do is see how to build a story of a brand and how to communicate it to the media. I ended up speaking for an organization called the Israel Translators Association about four or five years ago. I knew when I spoke there that these people had no real money, but one of the people listening was a Tel Aviv University teacher who had lectured at Google Israel. She went to Google and told them about me. So one day I get an email from Google inviting me to speak. Now there's a picture of me kissing the mezuzah at Google. I thought to myself, even if my speech really flops, I got the picture. It was at this presentation that I knew the cognitive dissonance of a chassidic rabbi and Google together would help this brand and would help my reputation.

Do you prefer consulting with individuals or corporations?

I prefer dealing with entrepreneurial people, people who are interested in their own future instead of being a little cog in a big wheel.

In business and advertising, you often hear about how important it is to "brand" a product. What do you think about branding?

Advertising for small businesses has to be targeted, to get a response from every ad. You cannot bombard people with advertising or shove it down their throats. You should be educating them. It's because they read something about it that has actual value to them. If they want to reach out, it's from their own free will, not because it's being shoved down their throats. I don't believe in branding in the sense that the people who spend three months on a logo and then three months on a website think they have a company. They don't have a company. They have a logo and a website that hasn't done any business. Marketing is not branding, advertising is not branding. It's just not. ■

Departures to Montreal: Jews from Arab lands

Backstory

YOLANDE COHEN

In the three decades following World War II, almost all the Jews from the Maghrib (North Africa) and Machrek (the Middle East) left the countries where they had been living for centuries. Mapping the specifics of this exodus has led to several findings, and questions remain as to how this displacement occurred and how the individual and collective stories of displacement contribute to the construction of a new set of narratives for Sephardi Jews settled in Montreal.

The departures have been set against the backdrop of the ongoing humiliation attached to the Jews' status as "dhimmi" that is, an ethno-religious minority recognized as a legitimate religious community, but one subordinated under Islamic law to the Muslim majority.

Historian Michel Abitbol explains the departures as the result of the establishment of the European colonial empire in the 19th century in the countries involved. In its wake, Jews were invariably led to abandon their traditional ways of life and leave their countries of birth to follow the promise of emancipation. The form taken by their departures depended in large part on the nature of the conflicts opposing the colonial powers in the Muslim majority.

Coerced or not, the departure of Jews from the Maghrib-Machrek occurred in a different context in each country. The displacement of Jews from Egypt is especially striking. Of the 50,000 Jews living in Egypt before World War II, 40,000 left the country in 1956-1957, and another 5,000 departed by 1967. Many factors were at play in the disappearance of Egypt's Jewish community, including its members being stripped of their citizenship, making them stateless.

In North Africa, the migration of Maghribi Jews took place after the violence of colonization and during the process of decolonization. The feeling of insecurity was the context within which their departure occurred.

In recent research, Martin Messika, Sara Cohen Fournier and I, conducted, in-depth interviews with Montréal Jews, and found that their departure from Arab-Muslim lands was fuelled by political and memorial issues. Comparing the migrations from Machrek and those from Maghrib sheds light on two types of displacement.

In the first case, departure is perceived as an expulsion. Strong emotions are still present in recollections of the events. Fear and angst within the narratives reveal a possible sense of insecurity about the present, as well as a continuation of their anger that could affect a possible reconciliation with their own past. Hence, it becomes essential to try to identify the factors of denial or forgetting. This aspect is a central element in some of the interviews we conducted, and some of the interviewees who came from Machrek, particularly those from Egypt or Iraq, emphasized the forced dimension of their departure.

In the second case, that of the Maghrib, most interviewees professed that their departure stemmed from their own will, or was linked to another aspect of their lives (familial or professional) that had no relationship to any form of coercion. Indeed, the situation of Jews in Morocco was entirely different from that of Jews in Egypt. Moroccan independence in 1956 did not lead to discriminatory measures concerning Jewish Moroccan nationality.

The conflicting memories between voluntary or forced displacements of Jewish populations from the Maghrib-Machrek, although largely connected to the specifics of national histories, are thus embedded in a larger history of conflict between the religious majority (Arab-Muslims) and the minority (the Jews), which came to a head with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The post-Shoah and post-colonial contexts have raised this issue to its most extreme level: Jews as the ultimate victim.

Paradoxically, during much of the five decades since their first departure from Arab-Muslim countries, our interviewees wished to erase this history and its image of victimization and replace it with a plurality of stories, more typical of post-colonial, free-floating migrations.

The ability to become the agent rather than the victim of events legitimizes departure as a collectivity. This narrative enables departees to construct and reconstruct their history, and to show themselves as adaptable. If it undermines certain emotions that have been collectively ignored or marginalized and that remain conflicted within individuals' inner lives, the construction of a global historical narrative that includes their frustration and residual fear, as well as their fond memories of their past, is now what could allow reconciliation between the individual's past and the group's history. ■

Yolande Cohen is a historian at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

OBITUARIES AND RELATED NOTICES

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Burke, Jeffrey Lorne	March 19/14	133 Torresdale Ave
Justitz, Ernestine	April 1/14	1925 Steeles Ave.E
Levson, Max	April 1/14	4266 Bathurst St
Tishbi, Michael Mayer	April 2/14	
Puritt, Jean	April 2/14	Montreal, Quebec
Hirchberg, Jimmy	April 3/14	343 Clark Ave W
Unger, Belle	April 4/14	718 Sheppard Ave W
Mintz, Marge	April 4/14	23 Deerwood Cres
Koffler, Dorothy	April 5/14	333 Clark Ave W
Mirlas, Slava	April 6/14	7440 Bathurst St
Mendlowitz, Esther	April 6/14	77 Huntington Park
Jakubovic, Gabriella	April 7/14	44 Regina Ave
Zriben, Albert	April 7/14	5 Fisherville Rd
Grossman, Joseph	April 7/14	3636 Bathurst St
Eliahou, Shoshana	April 8/14	205 Hilda Ave
Margolin, Yosef	April 9/14	Private
Richter, Henry	April 9/14	
Leibov, Irina	April 11/14	3560 Bathurst St
Kreitzer, Sharron	April 11/14	35 Balmuto St
Smith, Eric	April 12/14	18 Maroon Millway
Rivkis, Sheva	April 12/14	

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Belle Gruenberger	Apr 4/14	147 Elder Street
Beatrice Kuretzky	Apr 3/14	65 Skymark Drive
Vivian Frankel	Apr 5/14	268 Ridley BLvd.
Joy Muter	Apr 4/14	30 Greenfield Avenue
Dr. William Spring	Apr 6/14	2 Neptue Dr.
David Gorbet	Apr 6/14	65 Robingrove Road
Evelyn Stone	Apr 7/14	55 Ameer Ave.
Benjamin Elliot Zeligson	Apr 6/14	1659 Bathurst St.
Ross Hochberg	Apr 8/14	1066 Avenue Road
Angela Fior-Perl	Apr 9/14	28 Crimson Court
Harry Jack Stuart	Apr 9/14	3560 Bathurst St.
Mike Klodawski	Apr 12/14	333 Clark Ave.W.
Stan Collins	Apr 11/14	46 Aileen Rd.
Dora Mysior	Apr 11/14	55 Ameer Avenue

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Shiva Catering

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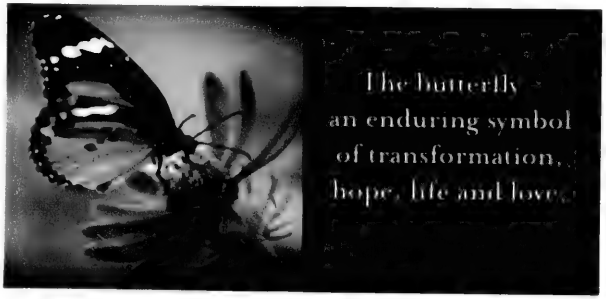

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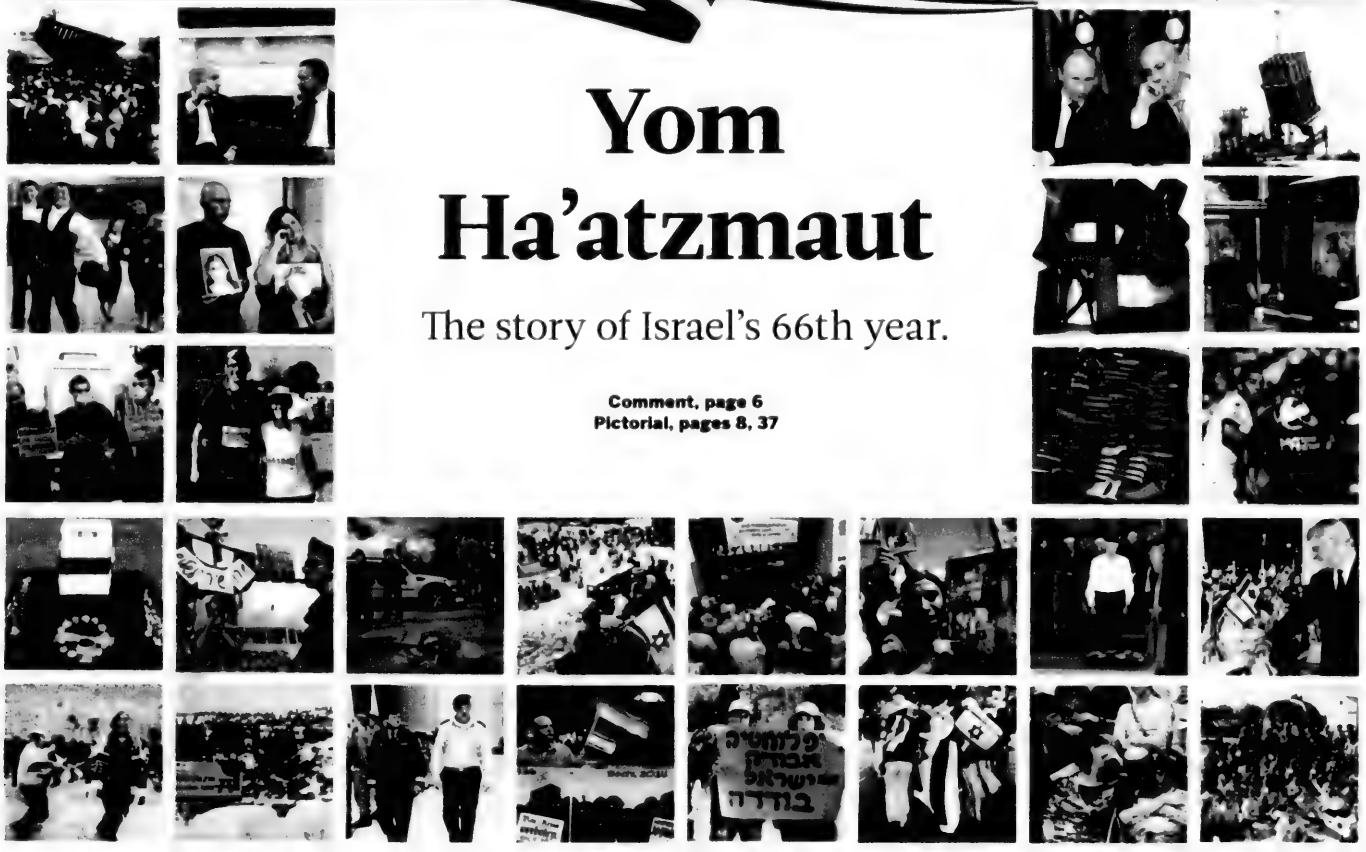

Yom Ha'atzmaut

The story of Israel's 66th year.

Comment, page 6
Pictorial, pages 8, 37

Backstory

Irving Abella remembers Herb Gray **PAGE 51**

Obituary: PAGE 25

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:02 p.m.	9:11 p.m.
Montreal	7:44 p.m.	8:54 p.m.
Toronto	8:03 p.m.	9:11 p.m.
Winnipeg	8:30 p.m.	9:47 p.m.
Calgary	8:42 p.m.	10:01 p.m.
Vancouver	8:12 p.m.	9:28 p.m.

The groom who went to war

An IDF soldier survived an explosion with 500 shrapnel wounds. Today he's living proof that you can overcome anything you set your mind to. **PAGE 12**

Kids mental health a growing issue

Often-invisible illness claims the life of a Toronto teen. **PAGE 18**

Artist recreates old family photo

Jewish Life: Adad Hannah opens video exhibit at the Koffler Gallery. **PAGE 38**

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WHO IS A JEW? THE NEW HEAD OF FORD MOTORS, THAT'S WHO

Jewish grandchild for Bill and Hillary?

News that Chelsea Clinton and her Jewish husband Marc Mezvinsky are expecting their first child triggered much debate whether the first grandchild of former U.S. president Bill Clinton and presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton will be Jewish. Reform and Reconstructionist Jews would recognize matrilineal descent if the child was raised as a Jew, while the Orthodox and Conservative movements would require a conversion. Meanwhile, the anti-Semitic website Stormfront made it clear where it stands with the headline: "Chelsea Clinton pregnant with Jew spawn." Nice.

Will Chelsea Clinton's baby be part of the tribe? Discuss.

Henry Ford might do backflips

Ford Motor Co. is reportedly set to name its Jewish COO, Mark Fields, as the successor to CEO Alan Mullaly, 68, who is credited with turning around the struggling automaker and steering it successfully through the recession without government assistance since taking over in 2006. Mullaly is said to be planning to retire at the end of the year. Fields, 53, has been COO of Ford since 2012 and is widely seen as his replacement. One wonders what Ford's founder, notorious anti-Semite Henry Ford, would think about a Jew heading his company. Of course, today in Detroit, Ford and the Ford family are major contributors to Jewish causes, and members of the family and top executives have been honoured by Jewish groups.

Israeli tourism hums along

Israel continues to be a tourism magnet, despite ongoing efforts to isolate the Jewish state. After a record year in 2013, during which 3.54 million tourists visited the country, the Israel Government Tourist Office in Toronto reports that 284,000 tourists arrived in Israel in March, a 13 per cent increase over the same time last year and a new all-time high. The number includes 6,330 Canadians, a 12 per cent increase over last year and also a record. Overall, more than 700,000 tourists have come to Israel so far this year, 17 per cent more than last year at this time. ■

Inside today's edition

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By The Numbers

10%

The stake in Israel's SodaStream that Starbucks reportedly wants to buy. SodaStream made headlines when actress Scarlett Johansson became its spokersperson and defended its factory in the West Bank.

25

The age of Rabbi Gabriel Negrin, who will take over from Greek Chief Rabbi Isaac Mizan when the latter retires in five months.

Quotable

"

There may come a point at which there just needs to be a pause.

— U.S. President Barack Obama on Mideast peace talks after the Hamas-Fatah pact.

Exclusive to CJNEWS.com

Jodie Shupac writes about spending Passover in Georgia. Jonathan Kirshblum discovers a seder in Cambodia.

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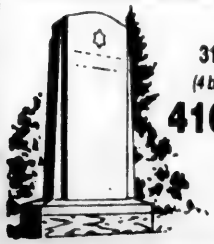

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Letters to the Editor

Setting the Israel trap

Adam Goldenberg laid the Israel trap, baited it, and then fell in himself ("The Israel trap," *The CJN*, April 17). Jews are the same as all Canadians, even though the anti-Semites do not believe it.

Canadian Jews put Canada first, and if Prime Minister Stephen Harper does Canada harm, they will not vote for him, regardless of his support of Israel.

Murray Rubin
Toronto

Harper does not speak for all

Michael Taube ("Canadian Jews will remain in the Tory camp," *The CJN*, April 17) claims that "Jewish values and Tory values have a great deal in common." If he is right, then I am ashamed to be Jewish.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative values include defunding charitable and social service organizations, attacking many honourable, dedicated public servants with false libel claims, denying and suppressing rational, scientific evidence, ignoring democratic votes, stonewalling criminal and judicial inquiries, subverting the institutions of parliamentary democracy, and using public funds lavishly to reward partisan supporters and to pay for partisan activities.

And, oh yeah, uncritical support of Israel, whatever its human, fallible government might say or do. No government, not Harper's, not Israel's, deserves mindless, uncritical support from an entire community.

My own Jewish values ensure that I will never support the Harper Conservatives.

Elaine Bander
Montreal

Peace talks doomed

The CJN's April 10 editorial, "Where do peace talks go from here?" argues that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is "completely ineffective" and suggested that President Barack Obama find a new diplomatic mediator, and it questions whether Obama "has the fortitude to orchestrate" a peace agreement.

The editorial pinned blame for the current impasse on Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas because he does not comprehend reciprocity.

How can Abbas accept a "Jewish homeland" with no boundaries? To where – the Euphrates River? Because, according to our Israeli religious Jewish zealots, who are dictating the turn of events on behalf of the moderate majority, the border is open-ended and Israel can gingerly manage the conflict.

These are the facts: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (and Knesset parliamentarians to his political right) have consistently resisted a peace process for decades, which would acknowledge the borders of 1967 with minor territorial exchanges; sharing the capital of Jerusalem for both Jews and Muslims; and resolving the issue of compensation for Palestinian refugees.

And lastly, can you tell us which U.S. president or secretary of state including their envoys reached diplomatic success with the mighty "Teflon" Netanyahu?

Smadar Meiri
Thornhill, Ont.

Disputed vs. Occupied

For the second time recently, Bernie Farber has continued using "occupied" territory rather than "disputed" territory ("Two-state solution: nightmare or reality?" *The CJN*, April 10).

Israel is not the "occupier" of the West Bank. Instead of "West Bank," he should call it what it is, Judea and Samaria.

As far as the Arab birthrate exceeding the Jewish birthrate, this is a fallacy. The Jewish birthrate now exceeds the Arab birthrate, and the chances of their becoming a larger population are questionable.

Ian Franklin
Toronto

Don't mess with the plan

Kudos to Joannie Tansky for celebrating having been created a Jewish woman, with all of our awesome rights and responsibilities, instead of whining for not having been created a Jewish man ("Let's be the best Jewish women we can be," *The CJN*, April 3). The Creator of all living beings knows what He is doing, so why try to mess with His plan.

Karen Boloten
Montreal

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*

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RABBI-2-RABBI

Congregational pulpit or teacher?

The two roles might seem quite different, but the common thread is Torah study

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RABBI PHILIP SCHEIM
BETH DAVID B'NAI ISRAEL BETH AM CONGREGATION, TORONTO

Rabbi Scheim: One of my earliest memories in my role as a congregational rabbi is my very first funeral. At that point in life, I had attended very few funerals, and now I was expected to take charge, to help the mourners through their grief. Somehow I overcame my sense of cosmic inadequacy, got through the service, satisfied the family's needs and settled into what would become a major piece of my congregational rabbinate.

My entire three-plus decades in the rabbinate have been based in one congregation. I have named babies whose mothers I had also named, and on many occasions, have witnessed the fulfilment of the prayer recited at a baby naming when those babies, having grown into adulthood, have stood under the chupah. But longevity in a congregation has its sadder moments as well, as those who were in middle age and at their intellectual peak when I arrived, reach old age and infirmity. Losses in the congregation, as time passes, have become more personal.

Rabbi Finegold: I always assumed that pulpit rabbis were generalists, akin to GPs in medicine, who knew how to do enough of everything to be the go-to person for everything Jewish in a community. My role, on the other hand, was to be a specialist, the person who is contracted to help congregations take their Jewish learning to the next level.

Do you think that this difference might be denominational? Are there fewer halachic queries in Conservative Judaism and a bigger emphasis on rituals that move us from one phase of life to another? Are there parts of your training that are underutilized?

Rabbi Scheim: True, my most meaningful memories of my rabbinate are life cycle related. It is in these interactions with families at their moments of greatest vulnerability (simchahs as well as sadness) that moments of greatest meaning are achieved. But you are correct in assuming that a congregational rabbi is somewhat of a GP, because we do a lot of different things, which for me, was the attraction.

My regret is not that aspects of my training are underutilized, but rather, that the multiplicity of commitments my daily schedule entails limits my personal *Torah Lishmah* my own study of Torah for its own sake (literally, for its name), not in connection to sermon or class preparation. I know that this lament is shared by many congregational rabbis.

Rabbi Finegold: While I empathize with your regret, I find my specialty containing *Torah Lishmah* in it as its greatest strength. I find there is no better way to learn something than to learn it well enough to teach it.

Sadly, many people do not see this as an important value. Sometimes I wonder if communal rabbis could be better allies. In my experience, many rabbis are too busy to develop high quality adult education programming in their congregations, and even those that do, usually deplete the interests and specialities they developed in rabbinical school within a few years and begin to recycle them. I wish more rabbis would begin to use specialists to bring robust programming to their congregations, and use the pulpit to address the value of lifelong learning.

Rabbi Scheim: Ideally, a full-time rabbi/educator who specializes in adult learning would be part of a synagogue staff. I would welcome such a hiring, as would the vast majority of my colleagues, but tight synagogue budgets usually preclude such appointments.

I am not sure we have confronted the consequences of the pace of technological change in today's world. Will millennials attend classes in the synagogue, no matter how inspiring and how erudite they may be, when their leisure world is centred on Facebook and Twitter?

Rabbi Finegold: I actually think you underestimate so-called millenials. They are, after all, the segment of our population that have most recently left universities. They are the most used to sitting in a lecture and learning from a teacher.

As an educator, my takeaway from seeing so many Jewish learning resources online is that none of them are really about the medium. While I agree with Marshall McLuhan about the medium being the message, looking at the content of these sites, I am struck by the depth of learning that they convey to the user. My drash on McLuhan is that great messages often gravitate to the best medium available. ■

How to reach us

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SeeJN | Rumkowski in Lodz

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES PHOTO

Chaim Rumkowski, the Nazi-appointed head of the Lodz Ghetto, asks mothers in the crowd to give up their children to the Germans.

SeeJN | Cotler Marches

Liberal MP Irwin Cotler carried a Torah at the climactic March of the Living march from Auschwitz to Birkenau April 28, which marked the 70th anniversary of the deportation of Hungarian Jewry. Earlier, Cotler attended a special March of the Living Hungary conference.

From Yoni's Desk

A look back at Israel's 66th year

With Yom Ha'azmaut just a few days away, this week *The CJN* looks back on the state of Israel's 66th year in existence. It's been a busy 12 months, punctuated by some truly major political and social events that could very well alter Israeli history forever.

The ultra-Orthodox conscription law is a fitting example. The bill, which terminated many of the draft exemptions that traditionally allowed haredim to avoid army service, presents a prime opportunity to incorporate the ultra-Orthodox into greater Israeli society. The question now is how many will accept the invitation.

While the haredi community fulminated against assimilation, African migrant workers gathered in Tel Aviv to demand integration, pleading with the government to address asylum requests. Foreign Ministry employees took issue with their situation, too, going on strike for better pay, while the Women of the Wall's demonstrations for recognition finally appeared on the way to achieving a desirable outcome, with the creation of a new egalitarian section at the Kotel. And actress Scarlett Johansson dealt a blow to the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement when she stood up for SodaStream.

The year also included a healthy dose of Canadian content: Prime Minster Stephen Harper made his first state visit to Israel, where he was welcomed as a loyal friend. Many, though certainly not all, Canadian Jews feel the same. Meanwhile, Israelis got a taste of our winter when a brutal storm blanketed the country in snow last December.

Two men who played crucial roles in Israel's trajectory passed away in the last 12 months: Sephardi spiritual leader Rabbi Ovadia Yosef on Oct. 7, and former prime minister Ariel Sharon on Jan. 11. In death, as in life, both were praised and pilloried.

But, of course, the biggest story was the peace process (or lack thereof) with the Palestinians. Negotiations began in July, with Israel agreeing to release 104 Palestinian prisoners and the Palestinian Authority committing not to seek international recognition for a state. Neither side fulfilled its promise, and the talks stalled.

If there was any hope the two sides could be brought back to the table in the near term, it vanished last week when the PA announced a unity agreement with Hamas. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responded by doing the only thing he could: suspending peace negotiations.

On Saturday, PA President Mahmoud Abbas told reporters the new Palestinian unity government would be composed of technocrats rather than Fatah and Hamas officials, though it's difficult to envision how party politics won't seep into the government – if it is ever constituted, which is far from a given. Abbas also promised the government would recognize Israel, but if Hamas is involved, even remotely, how could anyone trust him?

And, in any case, Abbas also reiterated Saturday that the Palestinians will never recognize Israel as a Jewish state. One hopes he and his people can be convinced to change their minds, or that some future Palestinian leader will adopt a different approach, because otherwise there is no hope for a peace deal, in Israel's 67th year or beyond. Failing to recognize Israel's inherent Jewishness is akin to not recognizing Israel at all. There is no difference. ■ – **YONI**

OPINION

The great switch

Danielle Kubes

No one was surprised when Eglinton-Lawrence Tory MP Joe Oliver, with his long list of Bay Street accomplishments, became finance minister in March.

The surprise was that Oliver managed to be elected MP of Eglinton-Lawrence in the first place.

To understand how a Tory was elected in a riding that had been Liberal since its creation in 1979 is to understand how Prime Minister Stephen Harper successfully targeted and captured the Jewish vote.

All of the four most Jewish ridings in Canada, according to recent census data – Thornhill, Eglinton-Lawrence and York Centre in Toronto and Mount Royal in Montreal – had been easy Liberal wins since their inceptions. But, starting with the 2008 election, many Jews who had always voted Liberal started putting an X in a different square on their ballots.

By the 2011 election, the great switch was on, with only Liberal MP Irwin Cotler retaining his Mount Royal seat, but by his slimmest margin yet.

It's strange, because Jews *are* liberal – cosmopolitan, concerned about social inequality and uninterested in what goes on in the bedrooms of the nation. Yet it's easy to see why many Jews paid so little attention to their convictions and crossed the floor. As former Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff writes in his political memoir, *Fire and Ashes*, only a single political question matters: "Is it good or bad for the Jews?"

Jews may possess other voting identities but like all minorities, they allow their ethnicity to move to the fore if they feel threatened. And Jews always feel threatened. The deepest and most neurotic Jewish fear is that we are David and the world is Goliath, and if we let our slingshot rest for a second, we will be crushed.

Harper zeroed in on this fear with a carefully crafted, two-part communication plan, positioning himself as the true defender and champion of Israel and setting up the Liberals as his foil.

Regarding the former, he did so mostly through loud rhetoric, with his most tangible action being changing the way Canada votes at the UN. The real-world effect on Israel is nil, but it's a show of support that's easy to feed to people starved of this sort of strident advocacy.

What actually helps Israel is Canadian foreign policy, which has remained unchanged since Harper took office.

The Department of Foreign Affairs website calls Israel an "occupying power" and refers to the territories captured in 1967, including east Jerusalem, as "occupied territories," and Canada continues to fund Palestinians generously.

Regarding the second part of his plan, Harper went on the offensive, and it's not to our credit that we fell for it so easily. It's our weakness that we're sensitive enough to see any space between praise and a pause as criticism.

In 2006, for example, the Tories mailed flyers to houses in Jewish ridings citing every scrap of out-of-context, half-factual information that implied the Liberals hated Israel. One bullet point on the flyer stated that the Liberals "willingly participated in the overtly anti-Semitic Durban I" UN anti-racism conference. The reference was to Cotler, a former president of Canadian Jewish Congress whose daughter had served in the IDF and who told the *Toronto Star* he stayed at the conference as an observer at Israel's request.

Another bullet stating that "Michael Ignatieff accused Israel of committing war crimes" was true, although Ignatieff immediately retracted and amended his statement, which referred to Israel's bombing of Qana during the 2006 Lebanese conflict. Ignatieff writes of this blunder in *Fire and Ashes*: "I questioned whether a democratic state's legitimate rights entitled it to violate the laws of war. This shouldn't have been the issue. Why should a politician take it upon himself to rule on an embattled state's compliance with the Geneva Convention?"

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has zeroed in on the neurotic Jewish fear that we are David and the rest of the world is Goliath. FILE PHOTO

Shhhhh Michael! This is politics – there's no room for measured comments on controversial issues – it's too confusing. Best to stick to talking points.

Harper and his communication team excel at staying on message. Notice that he and his ministers never stray from talking points but simply repeat short, simple phrases riddled with synonymous keywords such as "shared values" "allies" "friend" and "special relationship." The Liberals' official positions on Israel are equally supportive but they're less focused on making us believe it.

Harper's real political genius lies in how he presents his support of Israel as a passionate love affair – as *authentic*. We are blinded to his machinations, because we believe that Israel is the homeland of his heart. This may be true, but we must not forget that he's also a political animal, able to sniff out where votes are hiding.

And with only a few ridings short of a majority government in 2011, he saw opportunity in certain districts. A leaked document, titled *Breaking through: Building the Conservative brand in cultural communities*, explained exactly how the Tories planned to woo ethnic votes. As it said: "There are lots of ethnic voters. There will be quite a few more soon. They live where we need to win."

A bar graph displayed 10 targeted ridings: three were "Jewish," the others Chinese, South Asian and Ukrainian.

Readers should remember two things. One is that the Jewish population isn't too small to be courted for votes. Because of Canada's first-past-the-post system, a concentrated group of voters can become a tipping point that translates into seats. We became a tipping point.

Second, authenticity generally emerges by accident, like when York Centre MP Mark Adler begged to pose with Harper in front of the Western Wall this past January.

"This, it's the re-election," he said crassly, within range of a microphone. "This is the million-dollar shot." ■

Danielle Kubes is a freelance writer in Toronto.

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The images that defined a year

1. Israeli President Shimon Peres, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and PA President Mahmoud Abbas shook hands at the World Economic Forum in Jordan in May 2013.
2. An Iron Dome battery stood near Jerusalem as Israel prepared for a possible Syrian attack in September 2013.
3. Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper was greeted by children upon his arrival at the Knesset in January.
4. Relatives of Israelis killed in terror attacks held photos as they demonstrated outside the Supreme Court in Jerusalem in August 2013.
5. Weapons captured from an Iranian arms ship were put on display in March.

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OPINION

The social media dilemma

Sammy Unterman

Our smartphones and computers have opened up our world. With this comes the need to share information. Many of us upload the details of our lives to social networks like Facebook and Twitter on a regular basis. In a rapidly changing and often confusing world, our hand-held devices and computers may feel as if they keep us closer together, but many more people feel that connection than we care to believe.

It is becoming increasingly important to understand what information we share, how it is collected and what is done with it, and to take action to control what we share. Although you may believe your information is insignificant, the truth is that it is an important piece in the puzzle. By sharing some information, you may be doing yourself or others great harm.

We "check-in," sign up for events, share with the world what we like and dislike, and take photos. Every check-in shows the world where you are, and every event you sign up for shows where you are going to be and when. When compiled with all your personal information, this gives any wrong-doer a lot of information that can be used against you. In addition, did you know that every time you snap an image with your phone, not only is a time-stamp invisibly added, but also a geotag, which shows the exact GPS co-ordinates of where the image was taken? The image and data are then uploaded to your social network, and provide one more complete intelligence picture.

Any would-be terrorist with a laptop and a basic understanding of Internet security can go and collect this information and establish a high-value intelligence image in order to carry out an attack. For example, it is known that the Tsarnayev brothers who perpetrated the Boston bombings used Facebook and other social networks to collect and analyze intelligence, allowing them to be in the correct place and time to maximize damage. If a terrorist wanted to carry out an attack against Jews, a simple Facebook search would reveal a host of events, their patrons, locations and times. All that is left for them to do is buy or build a weapon and go into action.

Although it is incredibly difficult to remove information already put online, as much of our uploaded material has become property of the social media companies, what we can do is attempt to limit the future flow of information to these websites.

Here are some guidelines: 1) Don't be impulsive and quick to share everything. 2) Make sure to close the "share location" features of your gadgets and applications in order to stem the flow of vital location data. 3) If you want to share information about where you are going, try to be vague, especially about your itinerary. 4) Don't add people you don't know to your social networks. 5) Turn your online security settings to "maximum."

There are ways for terrorists to get around all of these functions, but by making it as difficult as possible to gather information, you are stemming many of the more amateur wannabe terrorists without the technological know-how.

In a world so controlled by the information we share online, a minimalist approach to personal sharing can go a long way. Protection of our information is rapidly becoming the most serious security issue. It is likely that much of your information has already been collected, sorted and analyzed by various state and sub-state organizations and groups. What is left to you is what you do with the information you have not yet uploaded.

There is no reason to stop using social networks. They are a great feat of modern technology and can help keep us all connected. What is of utmost importance is that we all think twice before sharing. The world is literally at our fingertips, but for Jews, protection and security of our most vital information must come first. ■

The writer is a graduate student in security and diplomacy at Tel Aviv University.

Dates are important if we want to remember

Dan Held

As a student, I spent a lot of time on Facebook. I'd skim my timeline, check out my "friends" walls, read the articles others posted, and generally snoop around other people's lives. When asked about the topic of my dissertation, I'd sometimes quip that I was studying Facebook.

Since beginning a new job in January, my Facebook time has been cut drastically. I triage my scarce time and focus on one area: birthdays. Facebook has created the infrastructure to remind me of important dates in the lives of my "friends" and I take advantage by posting a quick "happy birthday" or "like" whenever I see one pop up.

Dates are important, but of real significance is what lies behind them.

I often refer to this week of the Jewish calendar as the Yoms: Yom Hashoah, commemorating the Holocaust; Yom Hazikaron, remembering Israel's fallen soldiers; and Yom Ha'atzmaut, celebrating Israel's establishment. The three come in a convenient chronological, emotional and educational order.

In truth, however, the dates were manufactured as such. Yom Hashoah was established in 1953 by Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion. The commemoration could have been set on any number of dates, including Tisha b'Av, a traditional day of Jewish mourning; Nov. 9-10, marking Kristallnacht; or Jan. 27, the International Holocaust Remembrance Day marked on the anniversary of liberation of Auschwitz. The proposal was to hold Yom Hashoah on the 14th of Nisan, corresponding to the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, an important symbol of strength and defiance for a new state. With Passover starting on the 15th of Nisan, Yom Hashoah was set shortly after the holiday.

Similarly, Yom Hazikaron, was intentionally placed on the day preceding Yom Ha'atzamut. In the early years of the state, memorial services for fallen soldiers were held on Yom Ha'atzmaut. In order to separate memorial observances from the celebrations of independence, Yom Hazikaron was established the day prior.

It's only Yom Ha'atzmaut that falls on a true anniversary, usually. In a normal year, we celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut on the anniversary of the day Ben-Gurion stood in Tel Aviv and declared the state. When the anniversary falls on Shabbat, Friday, Sunday or Monday, we move the celebration to a more convenient day.

In truth, it's less the date that's important than the annual pause they command. Yom Hashoah, Yom Hazikaron, and Yom Ha'atzmaut command our collective attention in powerful ways that ingrain their message in our collective memory. Without a date on the calendar, it would be easy for their significance to be missed.

For schools, the Yoms can be overwhelming. There's so little time between Passover and summer vacation that a week of assemblies could easily be brushed away. But they're not. Day and supplementary schools pause their curricula, tests and activities to bring home the varied messages of the days through speakers, plays, dances and ceremonies.

For families who see in warming weather the opportunity for the first trip of the season to the playground or the start of soccer league, the Yoms command a pause from the normal. I remember having a falafel dinner each year during elementary school on Yom Ha'atzmaut and going with my family to Yom Hazikaron ceremonies in high school.

For the community, it would be easier to hold one event in May or to shift our events away from the spring, with its allure of warm weather and budding trees, to indoor events in the winter. It would be easier to combine them with other community events, rallies and speakers, or the Walk with Israel, held a few weeks later. But we don't, and if we did, their message would be muffled. Throughout our community – in schools, shuls and JCCs – events are held to commemorate each of the Yoms.

Having a date on the calendar forces our active memory. Just as a birthday is less about the date and more about the person, and an anniversary is less about the wedding and more about the marriage, the actual date of the Yoms bears little significance if we use them as markers to pause, reflect, remember and celebrate. ■

OPINION

What peace would really mean

Jean M. Gerber

I am deep into *The Orenda* by Joseph Boyden. It's a powerful and deeply disturbing read – as you'll find out if you tackle it yourself. But it's not the violence practised by the tribes at war, or even the racist and morally disfiguring attitude of the "crows" (Jesuits) that strike me. The novel's overriding theme for me was the inability of each group to realize the intentions of the other.

In alternating chapters, we hear the voices and inner thoughts of Bird (Huron) Snow Falls (Iroquois) and Crow, the Jesuit missionary they call charcoal, sent to convert the "*sauvages*" (his term.)

Snow Falls is the Iroquois captive of Bird. The two tribes have been bashing at each other for some time. Bird, the Huron leader, tries to understand his captive, while Snow Falls plots his destruction. Neither can perceive the inner thoughts of the other. Crow is obsessed with the souls of the Huron, and even after he learns enough of their language to preach to them, he continues to regard them as subhuman. His goal (happily achieved) is also martyrdom. His character is a construction based on accounts sent back to France by the early Jesuits in New France.

While the First Nations see the "charcoal" as helpful in trade, they never realize that what's at stake is the priests' basic intention to convert them – and serve as the first stage in taking control of French North America for the crown (not so godly an intention, that).

Between Jesuits and native there can be no understanding, beliefs and cultures simply cannot meet. It's irony with a violent and tragic twist. In the end Iroquois defeat Huron, who are driven away from their farming villages, dispersed among other related tribes. For the Jesuit priests in the novel, their end is pretty grim. But we know, living outside the novel, that priests and French settlers – and the English enemy as well – will ultimately be victors. Sickened by diseases and their lands overrun, First Nations will all be worse off. It's no accident that we're still dealing with the irony of misapprehensions.

Fast forward, or backward in this case. While giving an interfaith workshop years ago, my husband and I discussed a number of faith words with a Christian church group. It was amazing to all of us to realize how divergent our understandings were.

Take the word "redemption." For Jews, redemption is a community event involving all Jews: the final dawn of a messianic age. For Christians, redemption is a personal achievement after an experience of being born again. An actual person, a messiah, will bring the final apocalypse.

Now let's bring it home. This year has seen new efforts to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Success would seem to hinge on a set of mutual political compromises and baby steps toward that. If only it were so simple.

It was so easy to imagine a Jewish state, a glorious rebuilding of the land, when Jews were stateless and barely recovered from the Holocaust. Battles with the Palestinians, terror attacks and hostility from surrounding Arab states were part of the heroic stance of the new Israeli.

But the real problem? Jew and Palestinian each had a story encapsulated in the word "exile" that pretty much excluded the other. For the new Israel, the word "exile" meant 2,000 years of Jewish Diaspora outside the Land of Israel, followed by hard-won return. There: job's done, and we're never going back.

No one else can be in exile, of course.

Except for the Palestinians: to them, exile means living in a current, cruel diaspora caused by the Jews of Israel. Same word, but with such divergent meanings.

So to achieve peace isn't to engage in a purely political settlement. It's not just a question of bits of land, payments, who did what to whom, where lines will be drawn, or who gets Jerusalem. If it were simply that, we all know the outline of the compromise. The crux is to untangle a web of internal meanings for each community. It didn't work for the Huron/Jesuit. Can it work for us? ■

The demoralizing faith of religious draft dodgers

James Diamond

During the year after my father's death, I used the *Kaddish* prayer as a recurring reminder to explore how other serious thinkers responded to catastrophe, particularly that which my father endured. The most remarkable I encountered are the sermons of Rabbi Kalonymous Kalman Shapira, the chassidic master known posthumously as the Warsaw Ghetto Rebbe. Published as *The Holy Fire* (*Eish Kodesh*), they were delivered in the Warsaw Ghetto between the fall of 1939 and the summer of 1942, when he was finally murdered, and are no less a heroic form of resistance than the armed uprising that has unfortunately monopolized the popular imagination since. They weren't simply flashes of virtuosic Torah learning, but intended rather to combat despair in desperate circumstances.

On the annual commemoration of my father's death, I revisited *The Holy Fire* and studied a sermon delivered in mid-March of 1942, one of the last before his deportation, on the occasion of his own father's yahrzeit. There he cites his father's teaching, which strikingly speaks to recent Israeli legislative efforts to redress the inequity of religious exemptions from military and national service. The Torah allows for limited exemptions from serving in battle, among which yeshiva students are conspicuously absent. Included are the "fearful and disheartened," or those too terrified to enter the theatre of war, who are discharged from active duty because their fear would demoralize the troops. The Talmud defines "fearful" as "afraid of his sins," meaning the potential conscript worries that his sins might render him vulnerable to injury or death on the battlefield.

Rabbi Shapira then zeroes in on the phrase "his sins" in contradistinction to one who has a fear of *others'* sins. In other words, this exemption targets only those whose devotion to God is self-centred. The one who fears only the consequences of his own sins reflects a sorely deficient religious life absent any compassion for others. The corollary is that those who fear both for their own *and* their comrades' in arms sins are not exempt, because they're precisely the ones who qualify best as warriors, since their concern for others is what's essential for the physical self-sacrifice that war so often entails.

When afforded the opportunity to escape from the ghetto, Rabbi Shapira refused to abandon his followers, sacrificing his own future to do whatever he could to sustain their bodies and spirits. In March 1942, when this sermon was delivered, starvation, disease, and death were the defining features of ghetto life.

Some 5,000 people died in the streets monthly, the deportations to liquidate the ghetto of its remaining living dead loomed, and, in a short while, Adam Czerniakow, the Jewish leader of the ghetto, would commit suicide at the prospect of having to provide the daily quota for those deportations. The rabbi himself was doomed. Yet, Rabbi Shapira persisted in his sermonic resistance, not because he feared his own sins, but because he feared for others and for the physical integrity of his people.

The only Torah category that could accommodate exemptions for haredim is "the fearful and disheartened." Claiming the exemption ironically qualifies them for membership in the group called *haredim* because of a "trembling" before God out of a fear that fails to extend beyond the self. That fear is symptomatic of an impoverished spiritual condition that disqualifies one from the battlefield.

It would be difficult to find a more devout individual than the Warsaw Ghetto Rebbe, yet he surely would not have claimed such an exemption. His altruistic "trembling" before God emerged out of a magnanimous fear that transcended his own person, provoking an overwhelming care for the spiritual and physical well-being of others. In their rejection of service, haredim are ironically oblivious to the full connotations of the Hebrew term they proudly adopt as their moniker. Isaiah 66:5 does indeed designate those who are consumed with obedience to "the word of the Lord" as haredim. However, 1 Samuel 13:7 adopts that very same term to depict the zeal of those who bravely followed King Saul into battle, in stark contrast to the fearful who remained behind and "cowered in caves and tunnels." ■

James Diamond is Joseph and Wolf Lebovic chair of Jewish studies at the University of Waterloo.

News | GTA

IDF paratrooper survives despite the odds

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

For Israeli lieutenant Aharon Karov, life has always been unpredictable. In December 2008, Karov was celebrating with his wife, Tzvia, at their wedding. Twelve hours later, the member of Paratrooper Brigade 890 was on the ground in Gaza as Operation Cast Lead began.

In January 2009, Karov was walking through an old building in a besieged Gaza neighbourhood when an explosive detonated above his head. Members from his team thought he was dead. Aboard a helicopter on the way to an Israeli hospital, a medic slit Karov's throat to insert a breathing tube – a procedure that had never been attempted airborne before.

Israeli Lt. Aharon Karov speaks to Nahal soldiers at an army base in Israel about his story of adversity and staying connected to his faith.

Miraculously, despite a head and body pierced by more than 500 fragments of shrapnel, Karov survived. Twelve surgeries and operations later, the soldier is walking proof that one can overcome anything one sets his or her mind to.

"Today, I don't feel anything from the injury," Karov told *The Canadian Jewish News*, via a translator. "Baruch HaShem."

Karov, 28, will be arriving in Toronto a few days before Yom Ha'atzmaut to speak with high school students and at local synagogues about his story.

Joining Karov is his father, Rabbi Zev Karov, who recently published a book, *Deep in the Heart*, about his experiences during his son's recovery.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

STATE OF THE ART

Presenting
AFTER-WORK ART IN THE CITY MIX, MINGLE, BE INSPIRED

Wednesday
ANGELL GALLERY
Collection includes contemporary art from national and international artists who take risks and challenge critical norms
angellgallery.com

Thursday
May 29
TORYS
Collection includes contemporary, abstract and sometimes controversial Canadian art
torys.com

Monday
June 9
Private Yorkville Residence
Collection features contemporary work in a variety of media reflecting artists' concerns with perception, colour, space and memory

Wednesday
June 25
Artist Studio
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kosoyandbouchard.com

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Jewish Heritage Month

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

The Centre for Israel & Jewish Affairs

May blooms with

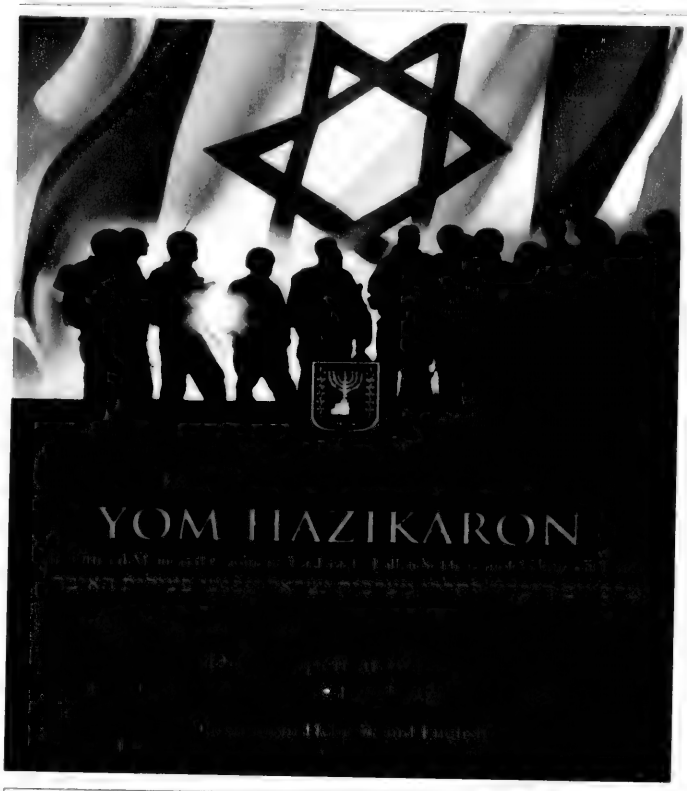
In the multi-cultural mosaic that is the Province of Ontario, Jewish Heritage Month (JHMO) is recognized in May of each year, by celebrating and honouring the heritage, culture, achievements and contributions made by members of the Jewish community in this province.

Whether it's UJA's Walk with Israel, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival or Israel's Independence Day, there is something for Jews of all ages and backgrounds to celebrate and take pride in.

For a complete listing of May's Jewish-themed programs and initiatives, visit

ontariojewishheritagemonth.com

Jewish Heritage Month Community Consortium Members



Lt. Aharon Karov speaks to visitors from the United States during Operation Pillar of Defense, the attack against terror groups in Gaza in November 2012.

Karov known as 'the groom who went to war'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Rabbi Karov began writing just two weeks after his son was wounded. "I was overwhelmed... from the compassion and the exhibition of Jewish unity in the media, newspapers," he said.

"People were calling me, sending letters. It was the birth of something very new and it inspired me to just start writing. I didn't think it was going to be a book."

The wounded soldier, also known as "the groom who went to war," lay in a coma for 10 days. When he woke up, Karov was unable to move his body. He could not recognize his wife and was unable to speak.

Karov had also lost about 25 per cent of his skull and his nose had been ripped away. Initially, doctors thought that he would never walk, speak or eat normally again.

"There was a difficult time about three months after the injury. I felt like it was not the same kid," Rabbi Karov said. "The main change was in his eyes. Something was not there, it was not the Aharon I knew."

However, the wounded soldier proved them wrong. Forty-five days after waking up, he was in a wheelchair and a nurse was helping him to stand up. Each day, he walked a few more steps, Karov himself told *The CJN*.

"When I arrived at rehab, [the doctors] did not have a goal that I was going to be normal again," he said. "For them, each goal was small... having me say one word, for instance. That was the goal set and that was what they focused on."

The soldier currently lives in Ariel, an Israeli settlement in the West Bank, with his wife and two children, four-year-old Hodaya and two-year-old Amitzur. He is a student at Ariel University and works for Panim el Panim, an Israeli organization that promotes Jewish unity and identity.

For Panim el Panim, Karov brings his message of Jewish identity and faith to soldiers in combat. He told *The CJN* he does not regret his decision to go into battle so soon after his wedding.

"When one is in the army... you are in a current mindset that when you are needed, it doesn't matter if you have anything else," he said "Anything else is prioritized to be second, even if it's your wedding."

Deep in the Heart, now printed in English, will be launched in Canada on May 5, at the Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto (BAYT) synagogue in Thornhill, Ont. Karov and his father will be present.

His speaking engagement in Toronto marks Karov's fourth tour outside of Israel– he has spoken in London, New York and Los Angeles.

In New York, the soldier did something that would have seemed impossible a few years earlier: he ran the New York Marathon. Karov ran it in four hours and 14 minutes. With the run, he raised more than $40,000 for OneFamily Fund, an Israeli organization that helps fund victims of terrorist attacks.

"Ever since the injury, I set myself goals. Even during the very beginning of rehab, everything was setting a goal of something I think I cannot do, and [I] achieve it," Karov said. "For me, [the New York Marathon] was another step of achieving something you may think you cannot do, but with the strength within you, you can achieve it." ■

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Dr. Susan Vandermorris is a psychologist in the Neuropsychology and Cognitive Health Program at Baycrest. She received her Ph.D. in clinical neuropsychology from the University of Victoria, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in cognitive neuroscience at the Rotman Research Institute at Baycrest. She presently runs the Memory and Aging Program and provides clinical neuropsychological assessment services to older adults. Her research involves applications of neuropsychological assessment and intervention to improve diagnostic accuracy and enhance daily functioning.

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ICRF honours four Women of Action

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Four outstanding women who excel in their professional fields, in addition to displaying a strong commitment to humanitarian causes, will be honoured next week at the Israel Cancer Research Fund's (ICRF) annual Women of Action luncheon.

"We are delighted to once again honour four women who have made significant contributions to our community, each in her own way. Funds raised at ICRF's annual Women of Action luncheon are used to help support top level cancer researchers working at institutions throughout Israel," said Bryna Goldberg, president of ICRF's Toronto chapter.

The May 6 event at the Fairmont Royal York in Toronto, now in its 12th year, has raised more than $3.4 million, which has been allocated to 49 Israeli scientists working on research in areas including pediatric bone cancer, colorectal cancer, and tumour-growth inhibition.

Judy Winberg, who will receive the Vicki Campbell "VAST" Community Award, said she feels overwhelmed and humbled by the honour.

"I never think that what I'm doing is for the recognition. I don't like the spotlight, but I've been led to believe that by accepting the honour I serve as a role model for others," she said.

Winberg, an educational consultant who founded Options in Education, an organization that offers education and relocation consultation, has served a number of organizations including Jewish Family and Child, Toronto Hadassah WIZO, Mount Sinai Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, the Joshua Institute for Jewish Leadership and Holy Blossom Temple.

"Judy is an outstanding member of our community. She is dedicated, very thoughtful, she's very serious in her approach to her community work and she is the kind of volunteer anyone would be happy to have working with them on an important cause," said event co-chair Debra Campbell, sister-in-law of Vicki Campbell, for whom the VAST award is named.

Winberg, who was introduced to ICRF when she served on the committee for the 2009 Women of Action event, when her friend Vicki Campbell was honoured, said she has great respect for the work ICRF does.

"I've been involved with a number of other cancer-related organizations. My own mother and her two siblings succumbed to cancer, and Vicki as well, so I have a very close relationship, I'm afraid, with cancer, and thank God, not from my own experience," she said, adding that her mother died in 2001 after battling cancer for several years.

Judy Winberg

> *I never think that what I'm doing is for the recognition. I don't like the spotlight, but I've been led to believe that by accepting the honour I serve as a role model for others.*

"I'm also a committed Zionist, and I have done many things to support Israel over the years... The idea of supporting scientists who are working there is also very important to me."

In addition to Winberg, Dr. Eva Grunfeld, the evening's scientific honoree, will also be recognized for her research, which focuses on the access to and quality of cancer care across the cancer continuum, from screening to end-of-life care. Grunfeld is a physician scientist with the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research's Health Services Research Program.

Lisa Ray, the evening's inspirational story honoree, is an internationally acclaimed film actress who starred in the Oscar-nominated film *Water*, as well as a TV host and model.

In 2009, Ray used the red carpet at the Toronto International Film Festival as a stage to speak out about being diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a rare blood cancer.

Her blog, called the Yellow Diaries, chronicled her experience and led Harper Collins to publish her autobiography, and she continues to raise funds and awareness for multiple myeloma research.

Receiving the Carole Tanenbaum WOA Business Award will be Jenny Witterick, president of Sky Investment Counsel, one of the largest managers of international equities in Canada, which she founded in 2004.

In 2013, her debut novel, *My Mother's Secret* became a bestseller in Canada and was selected as a finalist for the U.S. Jewish Book Awards in 2013. When Witterick received an advance on her novel, she donated the entire amount to various charities.

Debra Campbell, who is co-chairing the event for the second time, said she expects guests to feel inspired by the women being honoured, all of whom will address the gathering.

"It'll be very inspiring and it's usually quite emotional when we hear about the accomplishments of all the honorees and they'll learn about the important work being done by ICRF-funded scientists in Israel."■

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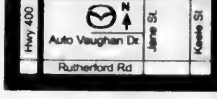

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Survivor talks of hope in Shoah's darkest hours

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Seventy years ago, during the darkest days of the Holocaust, those caught up in the war began moving from thoughts of permanent horror to potential hope that the war's end would be near.

For Hungarian Jew Leslie Meisels, 1944 was a year of both horror and hope. This year's Holocaust Remembrance Day marked the 70th anniversary of the announcement that Jews from his hometown of Nadudvar would be forced from their homes into a ghetto.

"What kept me going? That simple four-letter word: hope," Meisels told a crowd of more than 1,000 at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Community Campus on Sunday. "Every survivor is alive because some miracles happened to them when they should have perished."

Meisels, now 87, was one of several survivors who attended this year's Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah commemoration with their families in memory of the six million Jews, including 1.5 million children, who perished in the Holocaust.

Violinist Uri Mayer played a tribute to the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust.
JORDAN ADLER PHOTO

The thought that future generations won't hear first-person accounts from witnesses of the Shoah, such as Meisels, wasn't lost on anyone at the ceremony.

"This is a time when the Holocaust is passing from living memory into history," said DJ Schneeweiss, consul general of Israel in Toronto. "By keeping history alive, we also keep ourselves alive in history."

Fortunately for Meisels, all five of his siblings survived the war. His family was part of a group of nearly 2,000 Jews in an exchange between Rudolf Kastner and Adolf Eichmann. Eichmann allowed nearly 2,000 Jews to live in exchange for gold, diamonds and money. But Meisels still ended up at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where his family was allowed to stay together and treated with more compassion than other prisoners. Yet their lives were still very fragile.

"I entered [Bergen-Belsen] at a robust 175 pounds," Meisels said. "After four months, I became a 75-pound, emaciated skeleton. To die there was easy. To stay alive was a hard fight."

He told a rapt crowd that before the Nazis occupied Hungary in March 1944, the country's government fed its citizens propaganda, making them believe the stories of cruelty from nearby countries were only rumours.

The somber ceremony also featured a stirring violin performance by Uri Mayer, who played over footage of images from Yad Vashem's Auschwitz Album projected on screens around the hall.

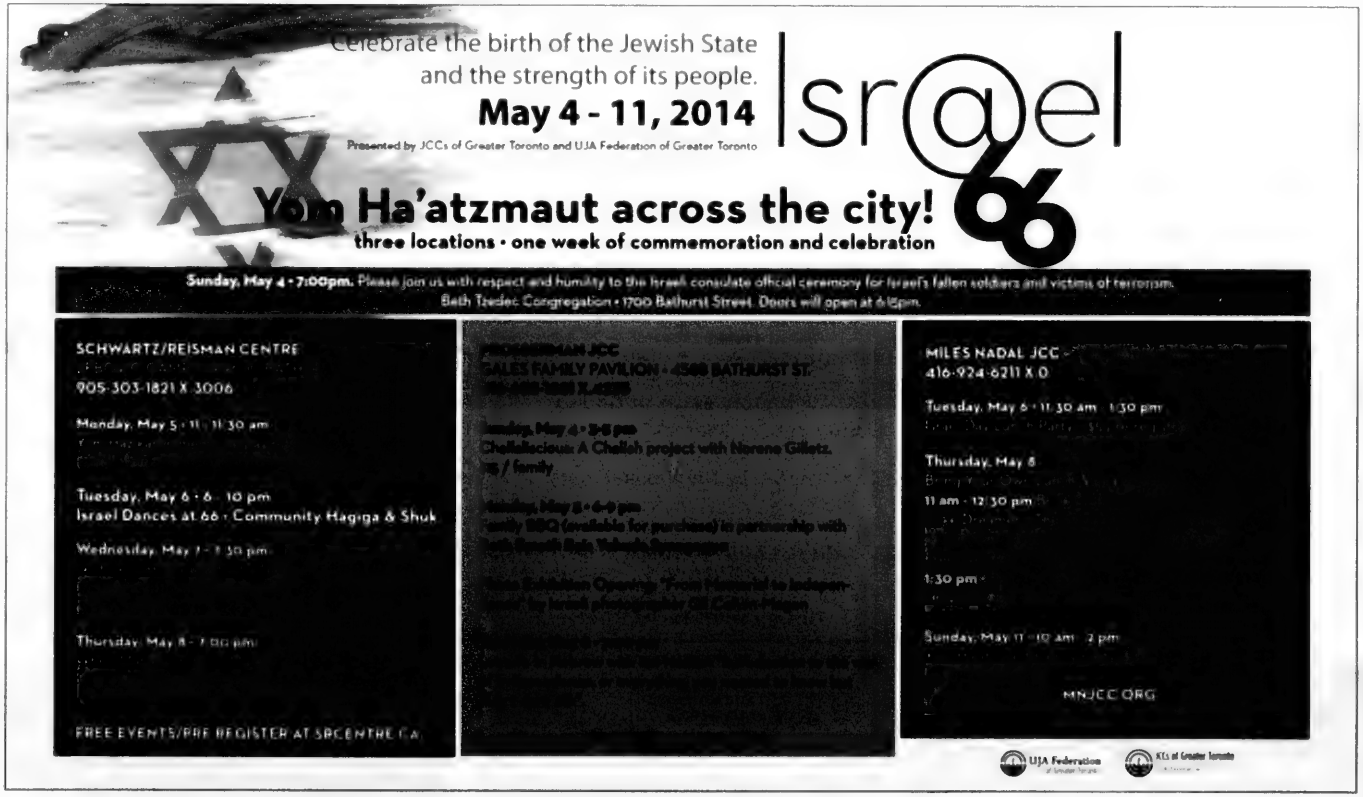
The album has photos that SS officers took when 430,000 Hungarian Jews arrived at Auschwitz in 1944, many of whom were murdered within two months. Some 570,000 Hungarian Jews perished in the Holocaust.

"Even today in this age of liberty and opportunity, many of us worry that the evil winds of that earlier time may be returning," Schneeweiss warned.

Meisels and his wife, Eva, a child survivor of the Budapest ghetto who was saved by Raoul Wallenberg, are involved with educating thousands of students every year. Meisels' story of survival is featured in *Suddenly the Shadow Fell*, part of the Azrieli Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs.

Meisels, who lives in Toronto, also documented his experiences as part of Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation.

"All future generations must remember these facts," Meisels said. "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. We must and we will remember." ■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GUEST VOICE

Remember what, exactly?

Film shown as part of Power of Propaganda Film Festival

MICHAEL FRAIMAN

Reg Hartt began screening *Triumph of the Will*, Leni Riefenstahl's distressingly seminal 1934 documentary of a rising Nazi Germany, around downtown Toronto in the 1970s. He is neither a Nazi nor a Jew, but has been mistaken for both.

After one packed screening in his living room at 463 Bathurst St., a man sitting near the front asked him: "Are you a Jew?" Hartt lied and said yes. "I knew it," the man sneered, and launched into a violently anti-Semitic rant that shocked and silenced the crowd.

Hartt smiled calmly in response and said nothing. He'd been watching the man's son, who'd been so embarrassed by his father's hatred that he'd awkwardly shifted away from him as much as possible.

"His son had never seen that ugliness for what it is until that moment," Hartt later recalled to me. "And the father was doing more to separate his son from that belief than anything I could do, or anything anyone else could do in a million years."

Every Tuesday in April, auspiciously coinciding with Yom Hashoah on the eve of April 27, Hartt has screened *Triumph of the Will* as part of his Power of Propaganda Film Festival at the Cineforum, the downtown townhouse-cum-indie-theatre he's been running for decades. It's meant to coincide with Hitler's birthday.

"It's important not to get emotional," Hartt said, remembering the anonymous death threats he's received for screening the acclaimed Nazi propaganda.

"It's like a surgeon going in to cut something in a patient's body that has to be removed – it may look flipping disgusting, but he cannot afford to get emotional when he sees that… This is one of the things that people forget when they get all caught up in, 'Oh, this is disgusting.' Well, yes it is, OK, fine. But we've got to deal with this."

Modern Jews are inching closer to the uncomfortable reality that, pretty soon, there will be no more Holocaust survivors. Once that happens, the link is severed – "Never again" will become completely abstracted. We'll understand the Holocaust exclusively through theories and history books. But what do middle class Jews know about concentration camps? What does a 10-year-old kid know about honouring the dead? How can we remember something we never saw?

Last November, I visited Berlin's famous Jewish Museum. It's gorgeous and fluidly designed, but nothing hits harder than the Holocaust Tower, a powerful art installation by architect David Libeskind. It's basically an enormous and empty stone triangle prison shooting up from an unheated basement, unlit but for a single sliver of daylight 20 metres overhead. It's truly terrifying. Once you're in it, you immediately feel hopeless and afraid. If you're in there alone, like I was, the isolation is palpable.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30

This is a poster for the 1935 film *Triumph des Willens* or *Triumph of the Will*
WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO

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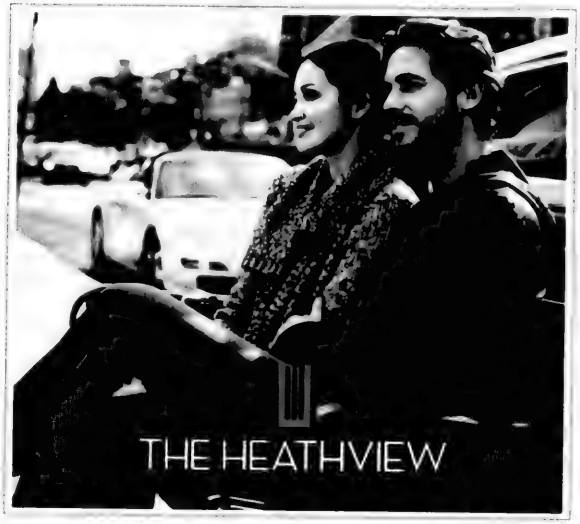

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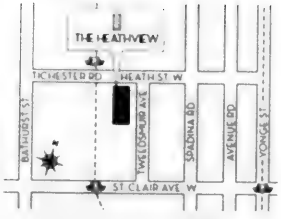

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It's time to talk about kids' mental health

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

We see it in our homes, in our families, in our classrooms, in our workplaces – everywhere! We know it. We often don't speak of it, but we do know it.

It is mental illness.

Benjamin Elliott Zeligson (Ben) suddenly and unexpectedly took his life on April 6. He was 15 years old.

Ben was overcome by mental illness.

The news of Ben's passing shocked everyone who knew him, and even those who didn't know him.

Ben's parents, Carolann Aitken and Larry Zeligson, found themselves surrounded by a community who gathered in disbelief to mourn the happiest person they knew.

"Ben touched so many people's lives with his smile, with his lovely sense of humour and his need to have everyone feel included," Aitken said. "Ben was blessed with the ability to spread love and laughter wherever he went."

He had many interests, she said.

"Ben was an academic who excelled in languages. Bilingual in French, he spent his weekends Skyping with a woman from China to learn Mandarin. For his most recent birthday, he bought himself Italian tapes to learn Italian, and I have no doubt he would have mastered that if he wanted to."

He was a regular fixture in the kindergarten and autism classrooms, volunteering during recess and lunch hours to support the students, his mother added.

Inspired by his maternal grandmother, a food lover, Ben loved to cook and to talk about cooking. He loved to read. He sang in the choir at Forest Hill Collegiate, where he was a student.

"Ben was surrounded by a family that loved him immensely and many, many caring friends," said Julian Jaffary, mother of Ben's longtime close friend Eric. "When he called his mom or dad from our house he ended each and every conversation with two simple words: 'Love you.' Ben enriched everyone around him."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

Ben Zeligson

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Meagan's Walk raises funds for pediatric brain cancer

CARA EDELL
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Just before her fifth birthday, Meagan Bebenek drew a special picture for Mother's Day. As she gave it to her mom Denise, she explained how the people in the picture were mommy and daddy and the object above their heads was Meagan, a little angel who would always be with them.

It had been five months since her diagnosis of brainstem glioma, a cancerous and inoperable brain tumour.

In the months that she had cancer, Meagan managed to live life to its fullest, as naturally as a child with her disease could. She went to preschool when she was well enough, played with friends when she was strong enough and cuddled every living creature she could find.

Meagan died in 2001 with her family by her side. She never complained about her treatments; rather, she focused on making and wrapping presents to give to her caregivers and loved ones.

When Denise left the Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) for the last time without Meagan, she knew something had to be done to help others like her daughter. Her mission that would become Meagan's Walk began.

Meagan Bebenek

Denise's vision transitioned into a spirited community walk to create hope and awareness about the illness that is the leading cause of cancer-related death in young people aged 20 and under.

"In 2002, we started the walk with our friends and family and ended at the Hospital for Sick Children where we held hands in a human hug," Denise said. "We raised $80,000 that year. In the 12 years since, the momentum has continued."

To date, Meagan's Walk has raised more than $3.1 million. All of the funds raised go directly to the Arthur and Sonja Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre at the Hospital for Sick Children.

On May 10, Mother's Day weekend, thousands of people will once again walk the five kilometres, from Fort York to SickKids. 2014 is the Year of the Hug, celebrating the wish of young Meagan to be able to hug the world and provide hope to those who are ill.

When the walk ends, participants will create a circle around the hospital, symbolizing Meagan's wish to hug not only the families with sick children, but the entire community.

"The hug has always been a very important part of Meagan's Walk. Those children who are inside look down at everyone and can see that we are sending love and hope to them. It is a very emotional moment. We may not be able to hug every person in every province and in every country, but in many ways we are embracing the world," Denise said. ■

To learn more about Meagan's Walk, visit meaganswalk.com.

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The Crime Fiction Novel

AMICA

May 6
Mike Anklewicz • Composer, arranger, teacher and performer (radio and TV), Klezmer musician and ethnomusicologist Dr. Michael Anklewicz will take you on a trip back in time to hear how klezmer musicians have always been blending their traditional Ashkenazi Jewish music with other, more popular music.
Where's the Klezmer?

Terrace on Bayview

May 13
Marc Gorbet • A member of the RCMP for 16 years, Marc has experience in complex police and Federal statute investigations, including undercover operations and wiretap investigations. Author of several articles on investigation and evidence, Marc currently practices law in Hamilton.
From RCMP to Lawyer – My Legal Journey

May 20
Dr. Terry Delovitch • A research career focusing on the genetics and immunology of autoimmune Type I diabetes, Terry's work spanned academia and industry. Currently a consultant/advisor and co-author of Medical Biotechnology, Professor Emeritus Dr. Delovitch will discuss why and how Ashkenazi Jews are at increased risk for several inherited disorders.
Genetic Diseases in Ashkenazi Jews

HAZELTON PLACE

May 27
Tom Sandler • More than 50 years ago, Canadian songwriter Ruth Lowe penned the Grammy Award winning song "I'll Never Smile Again" expressing her grief over the untimely death of her first husband. Join her son Tom Sandler, well known Toronto photographer, as he tells us of her journey with her natural gifts of composing and piano.
"I'll Never Smile Again"

Living Life

June 3
Norene Gilletz • The leading author of kosher cookbooks in Canada and the owner of Gourmania Inc, Norene is passionate about healthy cooking and living and has expertise in a wide variety of health and special diets. Her motto, "food that's good for you should taste good", has been a core principle guiding her culinary career.
The Menus in My Life

VIVA

June 10
Rabbi Jarrod Grover • Beth Tikvah's Rabbi will talk about the controversial Quebec Charter's proposed prohibition of public sector employees from wearing or displaying "conspicuous" religious symbols and the impact on us.
What the Proposed Quebec Charter Means for Us

June 17
John Thompson • Director of the non-profit Mackenzie Institute for the Study of Terrorism, Revolution and Propaganda. As the Arab nations have cycled through sixty years of monarchies, military governments, national-socialism, socialism, and theocracy, it seems the only constant is a hatred for Israel. Will they ever set this aside? Can they ever learn to become true liberal democracies?
New Realities in the Middle East: Impact on Israel

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Yom Hazikaron

Ceremony to honour fallen soldiers, victims of terror

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

The Jewish community in Canada has long taken pride in Israel's triumphs, so it only makes sense for it to share when it grieves.

On May 4 at 6:15 p.m., expat Israelis along with members of the local Jewish community will gather at the Beth Tzedec Congregation to mark Yom Hazikaron, the official memorial ceremony for Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror, sponsored by the Consulate General of Israel.

As many as 2,000 people are expected to attend the event, the Israeli equivalent of Remembrance Day.

Held according to the Hebrew calendar one day prior to Israel's Independence Day, Yom Hazikaron is a solemn commemoration that precedes the festive celebrations that mark Israel's rebirth.

The service blends elements of the religious and secular, with *Kaddish* being intoned and a candle lit in memory of those who have fallen. At the same time, the evening will include a program of Israeli songs.

The day provides an opportunity for people living in Toronto to express their solidarity with the Jewish state.

Nehama Isaak

"It's like standing with Israel," explained Nehama Isaak, the IDF and rehabilitation co-ordinator at the consulate.

The program focuses on the sacrifices made by those who serve in the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), as well as those killed in terrorist attacks.

One of those who will be remembered is Tom Farkas, an IDF pilot with a connection to Toronto. Farkas, whose family hailed from Israel, was born in Toronto. When he was around eight years of age, the family moved back to Israel. About 10 years later, Farkas joined the air force. He was killed in a plane crash during the second Lebanon war in 2006.

"His grandmother and uncle will light a candle" at the service, Isaak said.

Also participating in the program will be Ofra Roberts, whose brother, Yoav Vaspi, was a decorated hero of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Vaspi's son, Arnon, was also killed in action, during the 1982 Lebanon War. Roberts will place a wreath on behalf of bereaved families.

Zionist youth groups and organizations advocating on behalf of Israeli soldiers will lay other wreaths, while members of ShinShin, a Hebrew acronym for year of service – a reference to young Israeli emissaries known as *shinshinim* – will read soldiers' letters and perform a song written in memory of those killed in military service.

Harold Kimelman, whose daughter, Marnie, was killed in 1990 when a bomb went off on the beach in Tel Aviv, will say *Kaddish*, the prayer for the dead. And Lee Solomon, a Toronto native currently serving in the IDF, will read a message from Gen. Binyamin "Benny" Gantz, the IDF's chief of general staff.

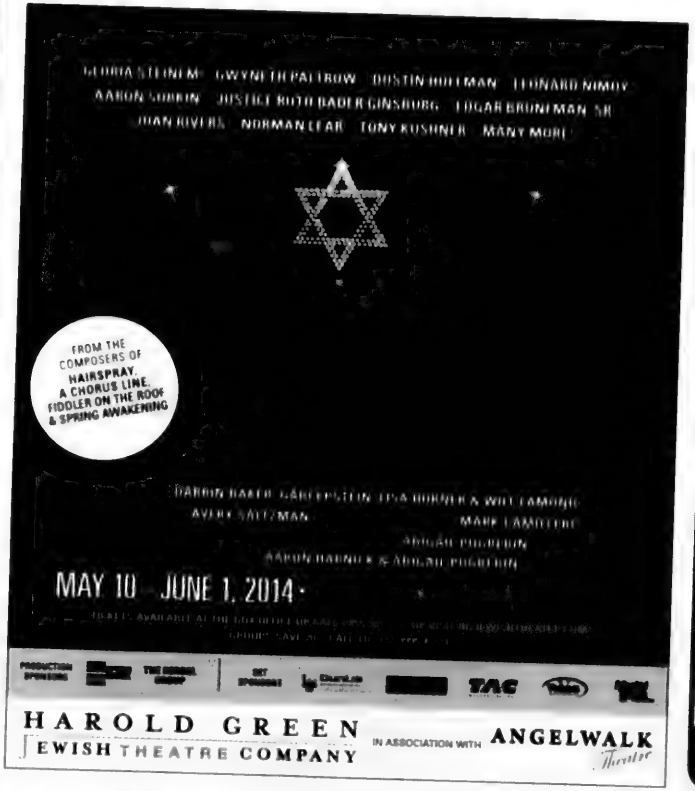
Yom Hazikaron is especially significant to Israelis, Isaak explained. "Everybody here has a friend who died or was wounded," she said.

"For us, as Israelis, it's like a sacred day," Isaak said. All Israelis show their respect for the country's bereaved families and for the soldiers who ensure the country's security. "It shows the families we're sorry about their loss and that it is our loss."

Isaak, who is completing a three-year stint in Toronto and will soon be returning to Israel, said when she first arrived in Canada, she was impressed how local Jews came out in big numbers for Yom Hazikaron events.

They see the importance of a strong Israel, protected by the IDF, as a safe haven for Jews around the world.

"Yom Hazikaron is a good opportunity for the Jewish community to support Israel," she said. ■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Community lay leader assumes top job at Baycrest

RON CSILLAG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

It's not often in Jewish communal work that a long-time lay leader becomes a worker bee, but in Garry Foster's case, that scenario suits him just fine.

After joining the Baycrest Foundation last September on an interim basis, Foster was recently named its president and chief executive officer, meaning he reports to work at the world-famous facility for seniors every day.

As Foster puts it, "it wasn't as though I walked in and was never involved." Indeed, he comes to the job after serving as the lay vice-chair of the Baycrest Foundation and as a former chair of Baycrest's board of directors.

Along with those came a slew of other communal involvement: He chaired the board of governors at Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies; served as president of Jewish Family & Child Service (now Jewish Family & Child), and was on the board at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

All of which, Foster said, stands him in good stead – both from the standpoint of understanding finances (he's an accountant to boot) and the community's workings and donor base.

Foster replaces Susan Sutton, an American fundraiser who lasted two years at Baycrest.

While not much about his new job title has surprised him, Foster, who describes himself as "a young 66," still seems a bit off guard as he sits in his second floor office at Baycrest's executive suites.

"If you asked me a year ago, [among] a thousand things I could be doing today, this probably wouldn't have been on the list," he told *The CJN* with a chuckle.

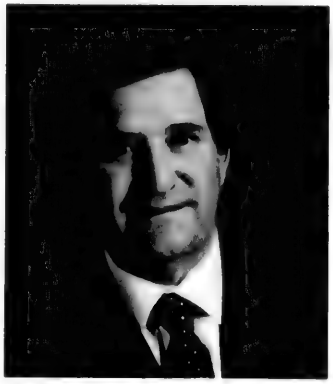
> *If you asked me a year ago, [among] a thousand things I could be doing today, this probably wouldn't have been on the list.*

Foster heads the fundraising arm of Baycrest Health Sciences, helping secure money for the institution's main strengths: research into cognition, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, stroke, and "aging brain health"; medical programs and services for seniors living in the community; and a public education component to support what Baycrest terms "healthy aging and health-care solutions" for a growing senior population.

He breaks his job down into three bite-sized areas: Finding philanthropic money for onsite care, education and research.

Baycrest's overall annual budget is about $160 million, with the provincial government funding two-thirds of that. The world-renowned institution's "value added" component, Foster noted, comes from charitable giving. That includes the facility's many day and respite care programs, cultural and recreational activities, and provision of kosher food.

In 2013, the foundation raised $22 million in charitable donations, and the same is expected for 2014 (factoring in investment income, revenue will be roughly $30 million this year). Of that, about $17 million will be allotted to care, education and research. The difference goes to salaries and administration.



Garry Foster

At the Apotex Centre, Baycrest's long-term care facility, costs exceed the rate the government sets by $40 per resident per day, Foster pointed out.

"Here's the challenge we face," he explained. "As a community, we have an Apotex Centre that is full, with a long waiting list. We know the future is going to more [about] taking care of people in their homes. So while we have 472 beds in the nursing home, it's not going to be expanded to a thousand people. We have to have better day care and better programs to take care of people in their homes. And all that has to be funded in many respects through philanthropy." Foster turns aside a suggestion that with that much fundraising, Baycrest is in tension with UJA.

"Tension is probably the wrong word," he said. "Maybe 'competition.' Nothing would make me happier than finding a good project with UJA to help fund a piece of Baycrest."

Fundraisers everywhere get used to hearing two things: Government cutbacks and donor fatigue. Foster said he hasn't noticed too much of the latter. "The one thing that has amazed me is how deep the roots are of the donors at Baycrest."

Governments, on the other hand, "are strange things. If the government was just a payer, that's one thing. But they're both payer and provider. They tell you how to provide services, even though it may not be in some cases the efficient way, so sometimes you have to negotiate the money with the provision of the services."

But like all planners in his field, he's aware of what looms on the horizon: Baby boomers forming a huge cohort that will challenge everything from elderly care to pensions and public health funding.

How is Baycrest preparing? Mostly with a view toward more home care.

"That's huge," Foster said. "To some extent, we probably have to develop a big part of [Baycrest's 22-acre] campus to accommodate more people" – not necessarily in residential care but in more day programs.

"Day to day, Baycrest is in good shape, but when you take a look at what's coming, we know we have to increase the funding base."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Children's Mental Health Week is May 4-10

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

But, there was another side of Ben. A side that he did not show to others.

"Ben had two separate personality platforms. He had one for the public and another for private," his father said.

As Ben's uncle, David Bernstein, put it: "There was a darkness that Ben was fighting, a terrible darkness. The darkness of the illness was so great that it prevented him from accepting the treatment that perhaps could have done something.

"Ben put his best face out there and it was that of a beautiful, smart, fun-loving boy who was interesting, curious and caring," said Rabbi Erin Polansky of Neshamah Congregation of York Region. "But, at the same time, he was in so much pain inside. He was so angry all the time but didn't know why, and the doctors couldn't help him find out why. His parents tried: they did everything, but no one knew why he couldn't get a handle on the frustrations of everyday life.

"He held it in when he was out there in public. He held it in and was like a bottle that was going to explode. When he was in a safe place, with his parents, he allowed it to explode – and when it exploded, it was huge. It was an eruption and he couldn't control it in the moment. He didn't mean to hurt the people he loved and he didn't mean to hurt himself. He just couldn't make it stop."

"We must talk about mental illness, give a voice to this terrible disease that affects so many of us," Rabbi Polansky added. "Ben touched so many people. We can pay that forward and touch so many more."

Children's Mental Health Week is May 4 to 10. Its goals are to increase awareness of the signs of child and youth mental health problems, decrease the stigma surrounding the illness and help people understand that help is available and treatment works.

In Ontario, one in five children and youth has a mental health problem, 500,000 kids, according to Children's Mental Health Ontario. Disorders range from anxiety, depression and conduct disorder to eating disorders, psychoses and bipolar disorder.

In Canada, suicide is the second-highest cause of death for youth aged 10 to 24.

The Canadian Mental Health Association says suicidal youngsters are in pain. They don't necessarily want to die – they want their pain to end. If their ability to cope is stretched to the limit, or if the problems occur together with a mental illness, it can seem that death is the only way to make the pain stop.

> *There was a darkness that Ben was fighting, a terrible darkness*

"Ben didn't want to end his life. He wanted to end his pain," his father said. "We have to learn to talk about mental illness without a stigma and be able to say, 'I have a mental illness,' in the same way as we would say, 'I have a physical illness.'" ■

For more information, go to www.kidsmentalhealth.ca

Proud of work at Rotman Institute

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

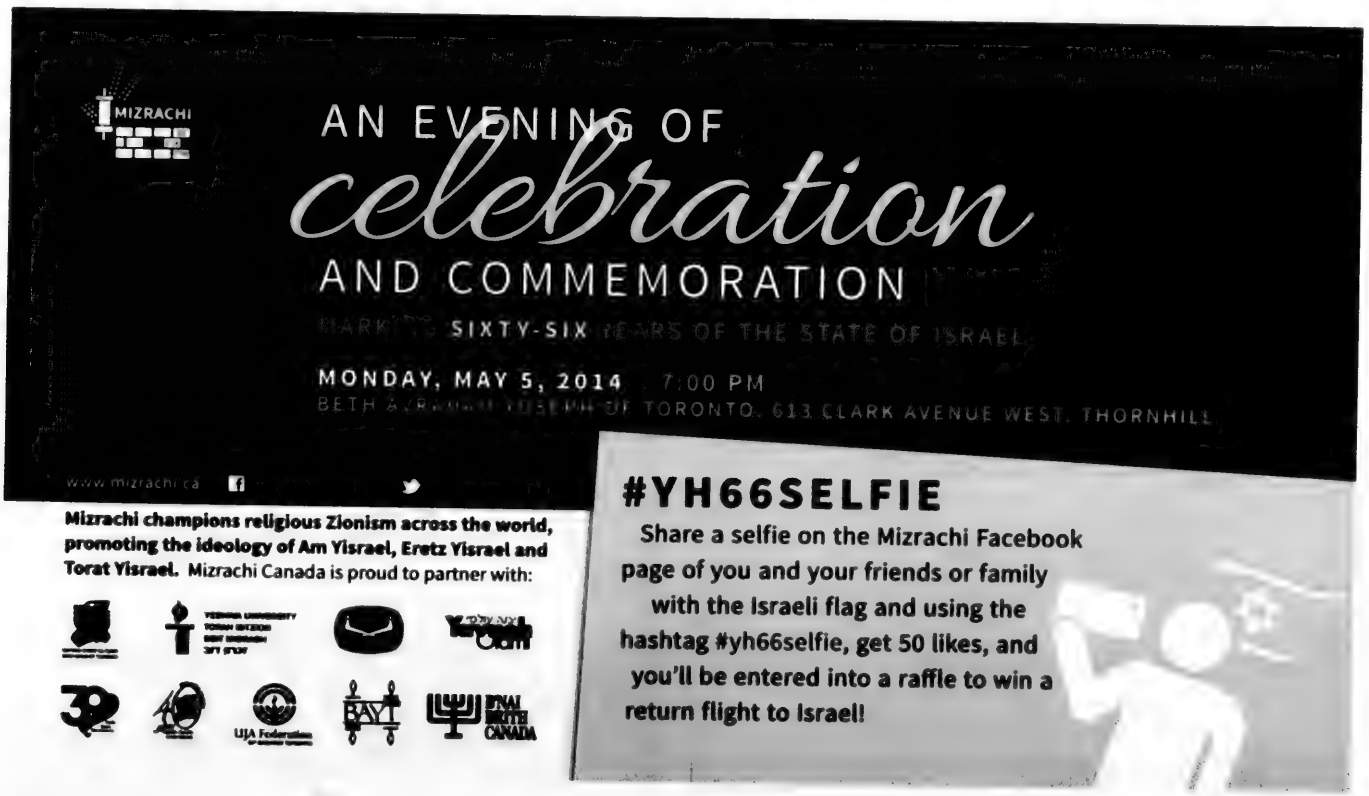
Foster is especially proud of the work at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute, which attempts to ease the impact of age-related illness and impairment. One project, the Virtual Brain, is the stuff of science fiction.

Working with colleagues on three continents, scientists at Baycrest are attempting to create a computer model of a fully functioning human brain that simulates how it functions under normal conditions, changes with aging and responds to damage from trauma or disease.

In the future, scientists will be able to study therapies on the computer model before testing them on humans.

Foster said current research on Alzheimer's disease is promising.

"It's clear that if you can delay Alzheimer's by five years, you basically cut the incidence of the disease in half. If you delay it by 10 years, you almost eradicate it." ■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Inside the outrageous world of mommy blogging

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

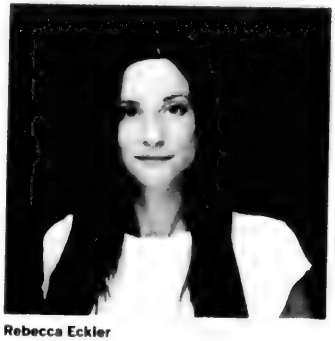
There's no denying the power of mommy bloggers. They're socially conscious and influential, and ferocious in their beliefs that they – and only they – know the right way to parent.

When did mommies become unkind and ruthless? And why? These are two questions author Rebecca Eckler asks herself daily.

Eckler, known for her frank and funny books about modern parenting, dedicated her ninth book – launched April 21 and titled *The Mommy Mob: Inside the Outrageous World of Mommy Blogging* – to the subject.

Aimed at mothers, *The Mommy Mob* takes readers on a journey into the world of mommy bloggers – more than four million of whom live in North America – whose passion is to blog, often anonymously, about motherhood and their kids. It's a laugh-out-loud look at self-styled enforcers of parental propriety in the wild arena of online motherly advice.

Eckler explores mommy blogging's innocent origins and its subsequent descent into darkness – how something that



Rebecca Eckler

started as a way to connect mothers with other mothers and build a community of support, friendship and advice has turned into a snake pit of righteousness, vitriol and self-consciousness.

Equipped with more than a decade's experience, Eckler writes inspiring personal stories of her own journey as a parent and partner.

"I was on the cusp when everyone started to blog 10 years ago, and it was a really nice world back then. I found all those parents agreeable – 'I am with you on that – my son does this – maybe you should look into this.' They were actually very well meaning and interested in helping," Eckler said.

Her book is about what happened next.

Any time Eckler reveals a truth too raw for her readers to stomach, something she does often, the mommy mob bursts out of the nursery and chaos reigns.

With a following of more than 10,000, Eckler has been blogging for a site called Mommyish.com twice a week for the last three years. As a mother to a toddler and a 10-year-old, as well as stepmother to a tweenie and a teenager, Eckler shares her funniest, most controversial insights.

"It's my 700 words of a thought that day. For me, it's a moment in time. People don't always look at it that way," she said.

"I am writing something down that you are thinking, or at least one of your friends is thinking, or everyone is thinking – it's just that no one is writing it down."

In one post for Mommyish.com, Eckler talks about the name of her son, Holt, and how some people have made cracks about the store Holt Renfrew and how she must love shopping.

"When my grandfather came over to Canada from Poland, he couldn't get a job, because his last name was Burnholtz, which at that time was too Jewish-sounding. I wanted to bring back the name Holt, a part of Burnholtz, in memory of my grandfather, Sam, and my grandmother, Helen.

"Frankly, I'm not sure why people make jokes like this, considering some of the names they give their kids. In the real world, unlike the blogosphere, people who don't like the name you choose for your child, or any other aspect of parenting, may engage in some harsh behind-the-back talk to which you won't be privy, whereas posters in the blogosphere want you to read their harsh opinions," Eckler said.

"The point of blogging, I think, is for readers to read and relate. The mother is stuck at home with the baby, so when the baby naps, you can get a conversation started. Every site needs a blog. It needs a voice. It needs a personal touch. It is an easy way to get your thoughts out there, but Mama Bear will come out sometimes, in response to those nasty online comments."

Yet the mommy blogosphere isn't entirely nasty, she said.

"Not all mommy blog readers are judgmental. Sometimes, they band together and support one another… and even me!" ■

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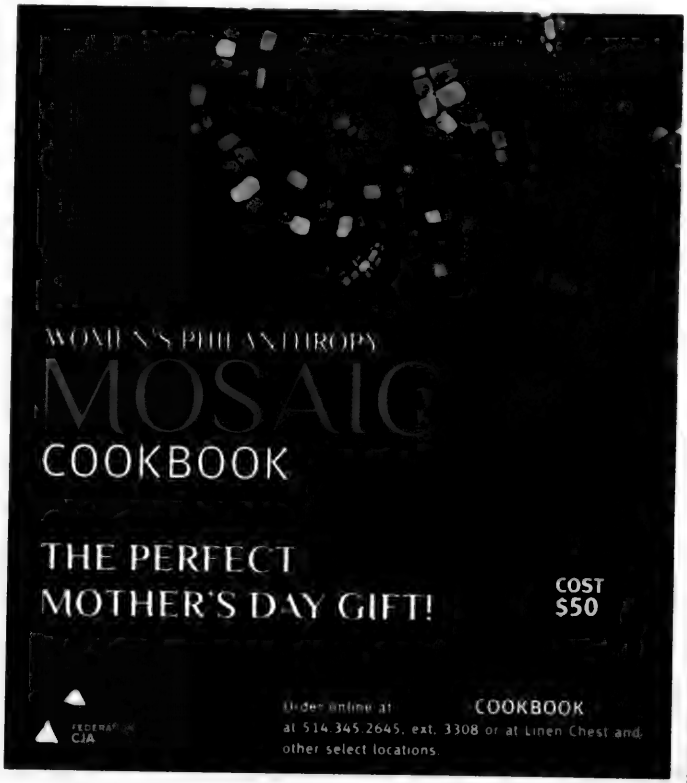
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MP leaves legacy of wit, integrity

DAVID LAZARUS
dlazarus@cjnews.ca

Canada's first-ever Jewish federal cabinet minister, Herb Gray, was remembered with affection for his martini-dry wit, deft deflection skills during Question Period, powerful oratory and even for his affinity for rock music following his April 21 death at age 82 in Ottawa.

Friends and admirers, however, said Gray's greatest legacy would be his sheer longevity, integrity, devotion to social justice and respect for the rules and customs of the House of Commons, where bitter partisanship now prevails.

His serious, stolid appearance belied his reputation for wit, self-deprecation, and a total lack of cynicism.

Herb Gray

Colleagues once teasingly voted Gray as the "second sexiest man in Canada," and on hearing the news, he demanded a recount.

Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, a close friend of Gray's for many years, described him to *The CJN* as an "ultimate mensch," who excelled in every capacity he undertook.

"He was the dean of Parliament in terms of length and quality of service," Cotler said.

Two incidents stood out in his mind: in the 1970s, Gray, then a cabinet minister, agreed to be active in a Commission of Inquiry on Economic Coercion and discrimination related to the Arab boycott of Israel, a position that could have led him to be "at variance" with government policy.

Second, Gray made his good offices available to Cotler when he began to take up the case of Soviet prisoner of conscience Natan Sharansky.

"It was Herb who made the pivotal call to me to take up [Sharansky's] cause," Cotler recalled.

His moniker was the "Gray Fog," so named for his legendary Question Period obfuscation. Cotler laughed when recalling how the speaker of the House was left completely perplexed when Gray employed the Yiddish term *narishkleiten* (foolishness) when describing a comment coming from the other side of the House.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

Jewish Music Week in Toronto
May 18-25, 2014
Musical events all week including these six Gala Evening Concerts!
Sunday, May 18
Rhythm & Jews: Toronto's Real Klezmer Supergroup
Monday, May 19
Aaron Bensoussan & Friends
Tuesday, May 20
Vanunu Ethno Jazz Ensemble
Wednesday, May 21
The Kids From Brooklyn
Songs of Sedaka, King, Manilow & Diamond
Thursday, May 22
Remembering Arik Einstein
Sunday, May 25
Vira Lozinsky and Emil Aybinder Ensemble
PLUS Lectures • Presentations • Free Daytime Performances
Victoria Day Music Marathon "Vocals for Victoria"
Saturday Night Community Melaveh Malka • Bogoroch Art Exhibit
www.jewishmusicweek.com
Jewish Heritage Month
TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL

THURSDAY MAY 1

VC 8:30 PM | **24 DAYS**
A gripping thriller that tells the true story of the kidnapping of Ilan Halimi in a Paris suburb.

FRIDAY MAY 2

KH 1:00 PM | **THE DYBBUK**
Sidney Lumet's 1960 television adaptation of the supernatural tale.

CS2 1:00 PM | **SHTISEL EPISODES 1 – 3**
The first three episodes of the multi-award-winning Israeli dramatic series.

EW 1:00 PM | **BEFORE THE REVOLUTION**
A fascinating portrait of the Israeli community living in Iran during the 60s and 70s.

CS3 2:00 PM | **IN THE SHADOW**
A suspenseful noir thriller set behind the Iron Curtain in 1950s Prague.

EW 3:00 PM | **HORA 79**
A charming drama about a disbanded Israeli folk dancing ensemble which reunites after more than 30 years.

KH 3:30 PM | **REGINA**
The life of Regina Jonas (1902-1944), the first officially ordained female rabbi.

CS2 4:00 PM | **WHEN COMEDY WENT TO SCHOOL**
An entertaining portrait of American comics who got their start in the Catskills.

CS3 4:30 PM | **BUREAU 06 - THE ARCHITECTS OF THE EICHMANN TRIAL**
A fascinating documentary about the special team that prepared the charges by the State of Israel against Adolf Eichmann.

SATURDAY MAY 3

KH 2:30 PM | **THE WORDSMITH** FREE
Produced in 1979 for the CBC, a rarely-screened drama by Claude Jutra and Mordecai Richler.

KH 5:00 PM | **PROFESSOR MAMLOCK** FREE
Made in Stalin's Russia, this was one of the first films worldwide to tackle Nazi anti-Semitism head-on.

KH 7:45 PM | **THE SEARCH FOR A JEWISH HORROR FILM** FREE
Dr. Mikel J. Koven takes us on a journey through Jewish representation in horror movies.

CS2 9:00 PM | **24 DAYS**
See Thursday May 1 VC 8:30PM

KH 9:30 PM | **GOD TOLD ME TO**
A series of bizarre and seemingly random murders leaves a NYPD detective baffled.

CS3 9:30 PM | **HUNTING ELEPHANTS**
In this endearing comedy, a 12-year-old misfit joins various eccentric seniors in planning a bank robbery.

SUNDAY MAY 4

CS3 11:30 AM | **THE REAL SHLEMIEL** FREE
A charming animated film based on stories by Isaac Bashevis Singer.

CS2 1:00 PM | **SHTISEL EPISODES 4 - 6**
TJFF presents three episodes of the multi award winning Israeli dramatic series.

KH 1:00 PM | **LIONEL BART: REVIEWING THE SITUATION**
The rise and fall of Lionel Bart, the songwriter behind *Oliver!*, the most successful English musical of all time.

EW 1:00 PM | **SUKKAH CITY**
Author Joshua Foer establishes an annual Sukkah design competition in New York City's Union Square.

CS3 1:30 PM | **SHELDON LEONARD'S WONDERFUL LIFE**
A loving tribute to the producer of *The Andy Griffith Show, The Danny Thomas Show, The Dick Van Dyke Show* and *I Spy*.

EW 3:00 PM | **IGOR AND THE CRANES' JOURNEY**
An 11-year-old Russian immigrant in Israel finds solace in tracking the migration of a flock of cranes. For cinema lovers of all ages.

CS3 3:30 PM | **WHERE WE GREW UP**
In this touching comedy, three estranged siblings reunite at their mother's funeral.

KH 3:30 PM | **A NEW LIFE ON THE LAND**
An eye-opening documentary that explores the rich history of Jewish farmers in Canada.

CS2 4:30 PM | **THE OUTRAGEOUS SOPHIE TUCKER**
A loving portrait of the entertainer famous for her blues-inflected songs and irreverent humour.

EW 5:00 PM | **THE UNVANQUISHED** FREE
This Soviet film was one of the first Holocaust films worldwide. Newly translated for this screening.

CS3 5:30 PM | **HORA 79**
See Friday May 2 EW 3:00PM

KH 5:30 PM | **ALBUM 61**
The dramatic story behind a World Chess Championship, as seen through the eyes of one of its main competitors.

CS2 7:00 PM | **THE SECRET LIFE OF URI GELLER - PSYCHIC SPY?**
Uri Geller—psychic entertainer, and possible "psychic spy" for the CIA and Mossad.

KH 7:30 PM | **ETGAR KERET: WHAT ANIMAL ARE YOU?**
An extremely enjoyable and intimate portrait of Israeli writer Etgar Keret.

EW 8:00 PM | **FOR A WOMAN**
In postwar France, life takes a sudden turn when Michael's brother, previously thought dead, turns up on the doorstep.

CS3 8:30 PM | **IN HIDING**
A tense thriller about a Jewish refugee and the young Polish woman who hides her during the Second World War.

CS2 9:00 PM | **THE BEST OF MEN**
The heart warming film based on the true story of the German Jewish neurologist who founded the Paralympics.

MONDAY MAY 5

ROM 1:00 PM | **BEFORE THE REVOLUTION**
See Friday May 2 EW 1:00PM

KH 1:00 PM | **THE UNVANQUISHED** FREE
See Sunday May 4 EW 5:00PM

ROM 2:30 PM | **FAREWELL HERR SCHWARZ**
This prize-winning documentary traces how three generations of a family would be haunted by a postwar reunion that never happened.

CS2 3:00 PM | **INTERNAL COMBUSTION**
The rise and fall of Detroit through a Jewish lens.

KH 3:30 PM | **THE STURGEON QUEENS**
The story behind New York's Lower East Side lox and herring emporium, Russ & Daughters, now in its 100th year.

EW 3:30 PM | **ARABANI**
Newly divorced from his Jewish wife, Yoseph returns to the small Druze village he left 17 years earlier.

CS3 4:00 PM | **THE GARDEN OF EDEN**
A year in the life of one of the largest and most visited parks in Israel.

ROM 4:30 PM | **FRIENDS FROM FRANCE**
Set in Odessa at the height of the Cold War, two young Jews from France attempt to secretly help 'Refuseniks'.

CS2 5:00 PM | **RUN BOY RUN**
The true story of 9-year-old Srulik, who escapes from the Warsaw ghetto in 1942 and learns to survive in the nearby woods.

KH 5:30 PM | **FOOTSTEPS IN JERUSALEM**
A collection of ten short films that collectively offer an evocative portrait of the city.

EW 5:30 PM | **THE ISRAELI CODE**
A light-hearted and intelligent documentary exploring the DNA of Israeli identity.

CS3 6:00 PM | **THE WOMEN PIONEERS**
Richly documents the lives of European women who came to Israel a century ago in the hopes of building a new world.

BC 6:30 PM | **ANYWHERE ELSE**
This charming film tells the story of a young Israeli woman living in Berlin who takes a spontaneous trip home.

ROM 6:45 PM | **FROM RUSSIA WITH FALAFEL: A SHORT FILM PROGRAMME**
A new generation of Russian-Israeli filmmakers turns the cameras on themselves and their community.

CS2 8:00 PM | **RUSSIAN DISCO**
With the collapse of the wall, three friends move to Berlin. An upbeat, funny and romantic charmer.

EW 8:00 PM | **LIKE BROTHERS**
A bittersweet comedy centring on an unlikely male trio who embark on a 500-mile road trip.

BC 8:30 PM | **AFTERMATH**
In this tense gothic thriller, two brothers in a small Polish town uncover a dark secret.

CS3 8:30 PM | **SEX AND SECRETS: A SHORT FILM PROGRAMME**
An excellent collection of short fiction films that mixes comedy and drama and looks at secrets both concealed and revealed.

ROM 9:15 PM | **THE SARNOS - A LIFE IN DIRTY MOVIES**
An engaging profile of legendary sexploitation director Joe Sarno dubbed the "Ingmar Bergman of 42nd Street."

TUESDAY MAY 6

ROM 1:00 PM | **THE OUTRAGEOUS SOPHIE TUCKER**
See Sunday May 4 CS2 4:30PM

KH 1:00 PM | **LET'S ASSUME FOR A MOMENT THAT GOD EXISTS**
A rich tapestry of the ethnically diverse community of Ramat Gan and its working class residents.

CS2 3:00 PM | **ORO MACHT FREI**
The unique history of Rome's Jews during the Holocaust.

ROM 3:30 PM | **SHELDON LEONARD'S WONDERFUL LIFE**
See Sunday May 4 CS3 1:30PM

KH 3:30 PM | **THE ISRAELI CODE**
See Monday May 5 EW 5:30PM

EW 3:30 PM | **CHILDREN OF THE SUN** FREE
Filmmaker Ran Tal's chronicle of the history of the kibbutz movement.

CS3 4:00 PM | **AMERICAN JERUSALEM: JEWS AND THE MAKING OF SAN FRANCISCO**
The complex and little-known story of the pioneering Jews of San Francisco.

CS2 5:00 PM | **A NEW LIFE ON THE LAND**
See Sunday May 4 KH 3:30PM

KH 5:30 PM | **THE WOMEN PIONEERS**
See Monday May 5 CS3 6:00PM

CS3 6:00 PM | **JOACHIM PRINZ: I SHALL NOT BE SILENT (WORK IN PROGRESS)**
An invaluable portrait of the German-born Rabbi Joachim Prinz, a leading figure in the American civil rights movement.

EW 6:00 PM | **THE JEWISH CARDINAL**
This drama chronicles the life of one of Catholicism's most controversial figures, Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger.

BC 6:30 PM | **IT HAPPENED IN SAINT-TROPEZ**
When the funeral of Zef's wife coincides with the wedding of Roni's daughter, an array of betrayals and misunderstandings becomes unavoidable.

CS2 7:30 PM | **BIRTHPLACE**
The 1992 documentary accompanies a writer to the Polish village of his youth as he traces the last steps of his family fifty years ago.

EW 8:00 PM | **WAITING FOR SURKIN** (I)
A kibbutz theatre director aspires to a life of artistic fame in Tel Aviv.

CS1 8:30 PM | **GOD'S SLAVE**
A nuanced thriller set against the backdrop of the 1994 bombing of the Jewish Community Centre in Buenos Aires.

BC 8:45 PM | **HUNTING ELEPHANTS**
See Saturday May 3 CS3 9:30PM

WEDNESDAY MAY 7

ROM 1:00 PM | **IN HIDING**
See Sunday May 4 CS3 8:30PM

KH 1:00 PM | **BUREAU 06 - THE ARCHITECTS OF THE EICHMANN TRIAL**
See Friday May 2 CS3 4:30PM

KH 3:00 PM | **THE SECRET LIFE OF URI GELLER - PSYCHIC SPY?**
See Sunday May 4 CS2 7:00PM

CS2 3:00 PM | **MARVIN HAMLISCH: WHAT HE DID FOR LOVE**
An engaging look at the life and career of the multi-award-winning composer and conductor.

ROM 3:30 PM | **FROM HOLLYWOOD TO NUREMBERG: JOHN FORD, SAMUEL FULLER, GEORGE STEVENS**
An examination of the footage shot by Hollywood directors John Ford, George Stevens and Samuel Fuller as they served during the Second World War.

EW 3:30 PM | **ALBUM 61**
See Sunday May 4 KH 5:30PM

CS3 4:00 PM | **LIFE SENTENCES**
Mommy (Shlomo) is born in Israel to a Palestinian father and a Jewish mother, and struggles to unite his conflicting identities after the discovery that his father is behind dozens of terror attacks.

KH 5:00 PM | **SUKKAH CITY**
See Sunday May 4 EW 1:00PM

CS2 5:00 PM | **ARABANI**
See Monday May 5 EW 3:30PM

EW 5:00 PM | **RAQUEL: A MARKED WOMAN**
Argentina in the 1920s. Raquel Liberman is tricked into prostitution for a Jewish criminal organization—but fights back.

BC 6:30 PM | **THE GERMAN DOCTOR**
A suspenseful drama set in 1960 that tells the story of one family's deepening entanglement with the notorious Nazi Dr. Josef Mengele.

ROM 6:30 PM | **RUN BOY RUN**
See Monday May 5 CS2 5:00PM

CS3 6:30 PM | **ETGAR KERET: WHAT ANIMAL ARE YOU?**
See Sunday May 4 KH 7:30PM

EW 6:30 PM | **FROM RUSSIA WITH FALAFEL: A SHORT FILM PROGRAMME**
See Monday May 5 ROM 6:45PM

CS2 7:30 PM | **THE DUNE**
Lior Ashkenazi plays the mysterious Hanoch, a man found on a deserted beach in France.

CS3 8:30 PM | **CUPCAKES**
A delightful musical comedy from director Eytan Fox set during a Eurovision-style song contest.

BC 8:45 PM | **RUSSIAN DISCO**
See Monday May 5 CS2 8:00PM

ROM 9:00 PM | **MARVIN, SETH AND STANLEY**
The Greenstein brothers reluctantly return home for a weekend fishing trip with their recently divorced father.

EW 9:00 PM | **ANYWHERE ELSE**
See Monday May 5 BC 6:30PM

THURSDAY MAY 8

ROM 1:00 PM | **THE JEWISH CARDINAL**
See Tuesday May 6 EW 6:00PM

KH 1:00 PM | **BIRTHPLACE**
See Tuesday May 6 CS2 7:30PM

KH 3:00 PM | **JOACHIM PRINZ: I SHALL NOT BE SILENT (WORK IN PROGRESS)**
See Tuesday May 6 CS3 6:00PM

CS2 3:00 PM | **MAMELE**
Molly Picon shines in this newly-restored Yiddish musical comedy.

ROM 3:30 PM | **LIKE BROTHERS**
See Monday May 5 EW 8:00PM

EW 3:30 PM | **THE GARDEN OF EDEN** (I)
See Monday May 5 CS3 4:00PM

CS3 4:00 PM | **IN BETWEEN**
A young married couple struggle to accommodate the husband's transition to Ultra-Orthodox Judaism.

CS2 5:15 PM | **IT HAPPENED IN SAINT-TROPEZ**
See Tuesday May 6 BC 6:30PM

KH 5:30 PM | **ESTHER BRONER: A WEAVE OF WOMEN**
A celebration of the trailblazing American Jewish feminist.

CS3 6:00 PM | **THE LAB**
A thoughtful documentary that explores how Israel became a key player in the arms industry.

EW 6:00 PM | **FAREWELL HERR SCHWARZ**
See Monday 5 ROM 2:30PM

BC 6:30 PM | **GOD'S SLAVE**
See Tuesday May 6 CS3 8:30PM

ROM 6:30 PM | **TRANSIT**
A moving drama about Israeli foreign workers told through the eyes of five Filipino families whose children risk deportation.

CS2 8:00 PM | **NATAN**
The Dreyfus Affair of the French film industry—the life of Bernard Natan, a forgotten film pioneer.

CS3 8:30 PM | **KIDON**
In this exciting international espionage thriller, Mossad agents try to find who is behind the assassination of Mahmoud al Mabhouh.

EW 8:30 PM | **FRIENDS FROM FRANCE**
See Monday May 5 ROM 4:30PM

BC 9:00 PM | **COMEDY WARRIORS: HEALING THROUGH HUMOR**
Five severely injured American veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars confront their disabilities and wartime experiences through the healing power of comedy.

ROM 9:00 PM | **SEX AND SECRETS: A SHORT FILM PROGRAMME**
See Monday, May 5 CS3 8:30PM

FRIDAY MAY 9

ROM 1:00 PM | **THE BEST OF MEN**
See Sunday May 4 CS2 9:00PM

KH 1:00 PM | **LIFE SENTENCES**
See Wednesday May 7 CS3 4:00PM

CS2 1:00 PM | **AFTERMATH**
See Monday May 5 BC 8:30PM.

EW 1:00 PM | **SHTISEL EPISODES 1 - 3**
See Friday May 2 CS2 1:00PM

CS3 2:00 PM | **NANA, GEORGE AND ME**
A portrait of two Iraqi-born Jews—a 92-year-old grandmother and a flamboyant 73-year-old gay man.

ROM 3:30 PM | **TEN FROM YOUR SHOW OF SHOWS**
TJFF honours the late comedian Sid Caesar with this special screening.

KH 3:30 PM | **RAQUEL: A MARKED WOMAN**
See Wednesday May 7 EW 5:00PM

CS2 3:30 PM | **MARVIN, SETH AND STANLEY**
See Wednesday May 7 ROM 9:00PM

EW 4:00 PM | **REGINA**
See Friday May 2 KH 3:30PM

CS3 4:15 PM | **THE LENGTH OF THE ALPHABET**
A touching portrait of the life and work of Naim Kattan, the Iraqi-Jewish Francophone Canadian author.

SATURDAY MAY 10

KH 3:00 PM | **SHALOM SESAME FREE**
These two episodes introduce young viewers to Jewish customs, holidays, traditions and culture.

KH 4:30 PM | **THE X-FILES: KADDISH** (C) **FREE**
FBI agents Mulder and Scully find themselves face to face with Jewish folklore in the guise of Crown Heights' very own golem.

KH 7:00 PM | **SPADINA FREE**
The 1984 chronicle of the rise and decline of Spadina's Jewish community.

CS2 9:00 PM | **THE GERMAN DOCTOR**
See Wednesday May 7 BC 6:30PM

BC 9:15 PM | **KIDON**
See Thursday May 8 CS3 8:30PM

ROM 9:15 PM | **THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS, OR PARDON ME, BUT YOUR TEETH ARE IN MY NECK** (C)
Roman Polanski's 1967 horror-comedy.

KH 9:15 PM | **NATAN**
See Thursday May 8 CS2 8:00PM

CS3 9:30 PM | **COMEDY WARRIORS: HEALING THROUGH HUMOR**
See Thursday May 8 BC 9:00PM

ROM 11:30 PM | **GOLDBERG AND EISENBERG** (C)
The routine of a meek computer programmer is suddenly disrupted by a mysterious and violent man.

SUNDAY MAY 11

BC 1:00 PM | **THE LAB**
See Thursday May 8 CS3 6:00PM

ROM 1:00 PM | **FOR A WOMAN**
See Sunday May 4 EW 8:00PM

KH 1:00 PM | **INTERNAL COMBUSTION**
See Monday May 5 CS2 3:00PM

CS2 1:00 PM | **ESTHER BRONER: A WEAVE OF WOMEN**
See Thursday May 8 KH 5:30PM

EW 1:00 PM | **SHTISEL EPISODES 4 - 6**
See Sunday May 4 CS2 1:00PM

CS3 2:00 PM | **A STRANGE COURSE OF EVENTS**
This touching and understated Israeli drama tells the story of a 40-something melancholic dreamer and his conflicted reunion with his father.

BC 3:00 PM | **CUPCAKES**
See Wednesday May 7 CS3 8:30PM

KH 3:00 PM | **THE LENGTH OF THE ALPHABET**
See Friday May 9 CS3 4:15PM

CS2 3:00 PM | **LIONEL BART: REVIEWING THE SITUATION**
See Sunday May 4 KH 1:00PM

ROM 3:30 PM | **THE PLEASURES OF BEING OUT OF STEP**
An enjoyable portrait of Nat Hentoff, writer, civil libertarian and passionate champion of jazz.

CS3 4:30 PM | **TRANSIT**
See Thursday May 8 ROM 6:30PM

EW 4:30 PM | **FROM HOLLYWOOD TO NUREMBERG: JOHN FORD, SAMUEL FULLER, GEORGE STEVENS**
See Wednesday May 7 ROM 3:30PM

ROM 5:30 PM | **IN THE SHADOW**
See Friday May 2 CS3 2:00PM

KH 5:30 PM | **AMERICAN JERUSALEM: JEWS AND THE MAKING OF SAN FRANCISCO**
See Tuesday May 6 CS3 4:00PM

CS2 5:30 PM | **THE STURGEON QUEENS**
See Monday May 5 KH 3:30PM

BC 6:00 PM | **THE PIN**
The first and only Yiddish feature ever produced in Canada. A haunting love story about two young adults in hiding during WWII.

BC 8:30 PM | **FADING GIGOLO**
Woody Allen plays a New York City bookseller who convinces his friend that there's a fortune to be made by becoming a gigolo. Directed by John Turturro.

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(I)	Israel @ 66
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TICKET INFORMATION

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All box offices open 1 hour prior to the first screening of each day and close 30 minutes after the last screening begins.

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Programme subject to change. Tickets subject to availability. **For box office hours and more information visit: TJFF.COM**

Gray praised by politicians, Jewish community

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Gray served as a Liberal member of Parliament for just short of 40 years – including as deputy prime minister under Jean Chretien – between 1962 and 2002 in the riding of Essex West (which later became Windsor), the third-longest tenure in Canadian history behind former prime minister Wilfrid Laurier and John Haggart, both of whom died before 1920.

Gray served the longest continuous tenure as an MP in Canadian history.

"Beloved by all, Herb devoted a lifetime to his party and his country, in both good times and bad," Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau said in a statement. "He left behind an immense legacy unmatched by most in Canadian history."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper reacted on Twitter: "He was an honourable parliamentarian who served his country well."

In an April 23 statement, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs described Gray as an "icon in Canadian politics, a pioneer in Jewish civic engagement, and a distinguished Parliamentarian who made many contributions to advancing democracy in Canada."

B'nai Brith Canada CEO Frank Dimant called him "an outstanding individual who represented his country and community with distinction. He will always be remembered as an honourable member of Parliament who served his constituency well and was always ready to speak out on human rights issues – particularly when they impacted the Canadian Jewish community."

The Windsor-born Gray was elected 13 consecutive times in his riding, the first in

Herb Gray, left, with former Israeli ambassador to Canada Alan Baker and his wife Dalia
CJN FILE PHOTO

Opposition during the Tory government of John Diefenbaker and the last during Chrétien's Liberal government.

Gray's first appointment to cabinet was at age 38, without portfolio in 1969 in the government of Pierre Trudeau, and he would go on to be named to cabinet 11 times over 22 years under three prime ministers: Trudeau, John Turner, and Chrétien.

During Chrétien's term, Gray even served as his point man in Parliament during the so-called Shawinigate affair.

Gray's portfolios over the years included National Revenue; Industry, Trade, and Commerce; and Treasury Board president. Gray also served as government house leader (1993-1997); solicitor general (1993-1997); and as deputy prime minister (1997-2002). In 1990, he served as interim Opposition leader for 10 months following Turner's departure.

Gray's parents were Harry and Fanny, immigrants from Belarus who ran a yards-goods store in Windsor. He met his wife, Sharon Sholzberg-Gray, while she was a university student working on the Montreal election campaign of future prime minister John Turner.

According to the *Globe and Mail*, it was Turner who first suggested to Sholzberg that she and Gray meet. They married in 1967 and had two children, Jonathan and Elizabeth.

Gray received many honours and awards during his lifetime. He was among the few Canadian parliamentarians ever to be named "the Right Honourable," was a Companion of the Order of Canada, and received numerous honorary degrees and Jubilee medals.

In 2010, he even had a parkway in Windsor renamed after him.

Following his retirement in January 2002, Gray was named Canadian chair of the International Joint Commission, which deals with Canadian-American air and water issues and was appointed chancellor of Carleton University in November 2008.

Sholzberg-Gray told the *Globe and Mail* that her husband would be remembered for his "brilliance, wit, and charisma."

"He was always underestimated," she said. "He was a brilliant orator. He gave a political speech just as good as the best of them." ■

> *He was an honourable parliamentarian who served his country well*
>
> **PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER**

For complete coverage of Herb Gray's funeral, please go to cjnews.com

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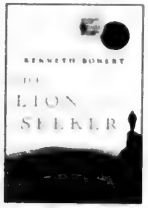

Author Kenneth Bonert will discuss his novel, *The Lion Seeker*, **Winner of the National Jewish Book Award** for Outstanding Debut Fiction. The novel traces the struggles of the Helger family after emigrating to South Africa from a small shtetl in Lithuania in the years leading up to the Second World War.

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A special message for the Baycrest community

CommunityMatters

Baycrest celebrates Jewish Heritage Month

By Dr. William Reichman, Baycrest President and CEO & Garry Foster, Baycrest Foundation President and CEO

As an organization that was founded by the Jewish community nearly a century ago, Baycrest Health Sciences' strong commitment to Judaic culture and values has been ingrained into our very DNA. Visual reminders exist everywhere you look on our campus, from the artwork on the walls to the mementos and artifacts curated in our Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum. Weekly concerts bring traditional music to our residents and their families at The Terraces of Baycrest Retirement Residence and the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for Aged. And a full slate of cultural and spiritual programming helps enrich the quality of life of our residents, guided always by the principles of Judaism.

Our connection to our Jewish heritage is an intrinsic part of the way we provide care for seniors, here at Baycrest and in our community. Baycrest remains "a gift to the world" from our Jewish community, and continues to embrace the moral mandate of Tikkun Olam, or "repairing a broken world."

So it is our great honour to once again host a series of programs and exhibits to celebrate Jewish Heritage Month here on our Bathurst Street campus. We invite you to visit Baycrest throughout the month of May to experience the wide range of Jewish arts and cultural events that are planned.

Some of the notable events include:

- The dedication of a heritage plaque by Heritage Toronto to commemorate the history of Baycrest and the Toronto Jewish Old Folks' Home. The event takes place at the south entrance of the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged on May 28 at 11 a.m.
- A month-long exhibition of archival photographs, performance posters, and a recreated shtetl scene, celebrating the Golden Age of Yiddish theatre in Toronto.
- An exploration of the unique Jewish relationship to the written word through textile based artwork created by members of The Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles.
- Judaic artwork made by members of the Donald and Elaine Rafelman Creative Arts Studio.

The following special exhibitions on display at Baycrest have been extended for Jewish Heritage Month:

Origins of Judaic Symbols
Origins of Judaic Symbols explores recurring symbols of divinity, identity and culture found on the art and artifacts in the collection of The Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum.

Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life
In *Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life*, photographer Elliot Sylman tells the story of the endurance and resiliency of Holocaust survivors through images of 180 people, all of whom are Baycrest residents and/or program participants. You can view the portraits on the first floor, near our Bathurst entrance, or see the collection online at www.baycrest.org/preciouslegacy.

Help us grow our Tree of Life campaign

Baycrest is fortunate to have the strong support of our community in ensuring we can continue to offer such rich cultural and spiritual programming to seniors. Government funding does not cover all of our costs for these innovative programs. We need your support to continue programs that have made Baycrest a focal point for the care needs of generations of Toronto families.

Please visit our website and make a sustainable four-year commitment to Baycrest and our Tree of Life campaign—funding we can count on year-over-year for programs that go above and beyond the norm. Find out more about the Tree of Life campaign at:

www.baycrest.org/treeoflife

Israeli teenagers tattooing concentration camp numbers on their forearms

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

We don't get that in school. We can watch Spielberg documentaries and listen to survivor interviews all we like, but if we want to really grapple with the horrors of the Holocaust, we need something closer to experiential learning. We need to be engrossed by the essence of evil. We need to stare into the eyes of Hitler and see Hitler staring back.

This is a growing trend across the world. Consider the bold and unsettling wave of Israeli teenagers tattooing their grandparents' concentration camp numbers on the inside of their forearms.

"All my generation knows nothing about the Holocaust," 21-year-old Eli Sagir explained to the *New York Times* in 2012. "You talk with people and they think it's like the Exodus from Egypt – ancient history. I decided to do it to remind my generation: I want to tell them my grandfather's story and the Holocaust story."

It's an unbelievable gesture, to say nothing of the fact that Israeli high school students already make pilgrimages to Polish and German concentration camps, an experience I'm sure is far more unsettling than my own moment in an art installation.

But we're limited as Canadians, emotionally and physically, and that makes it easier to fall into complacency.

We have to rattle ourselves out of that. If we can't fly to Germany, let's bring Germany to us: facing Nazi propaganda at its purest offers an unfiltered look at actually understanding the whole mess of 70 years ago, like why beleaguered postwar Germans would believe in hailing their messianic leader.

It paints his portrait beautifully and proudly, and only by confronting that directly can we understand what we mean when we say, "Never again." ■

Fichman makes tennis history in Quebec City

Canadian Fed Cup tennis player Sharon Fichman of Toronto and her teammates were already celebrating winning their April 20 Fed Cup tie against Slovakia in Quebec City prior to Fichman taking to the court for her doubles match with teammate Gabriela Dabrowski. With last week's Fed Cup 3-1 win in the best-of-five match Fed Cup World Group playoff over the Slovaks, Canada made tennis history with its victory by advancing to the world group of eight nations that will compete in 2015 for the Fed Cup championship. Please read story at cjnews.com

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NCSY celebrates 60 years

CARA EDELL
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Over the past six decades, the National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY) has provided more than 250,000 Jewish teens with opportunities to explore their heritage and connect with Jewish life in a warm and welcoming environment.

Through Shabbatons, regional conventions, Jewish student union clubs and a host of summer programs, the youth movement of the Orthodox Union has inspired many of our current community leaders.

Educators, philanthropists, medical professionals, lawyers and entrepreneurs credit NCSY for their Jewish observance, leadership abilities and public speaking skills. Their identities have been shaped, in many ways, thanks to their involvement with the organization.

This year marks a special milestone, as NCSY celebrates its 60th anniversary.

Rabbi Glenn Black, CEO of NCSY Canada, spoke to *The CJN* about the movement's history, evolution and successes.

"We are marking [the anniversary] in so many ways. We recently hosted a weekend of inspiration at nine synagogues in our community. As part of our focus on alumni that we have reinvigorated in 2014, we held an event open for the entire community, with several of our speakers addressing the challenges facing our next generation and held an NCSY-style *kumzitz* featuring internationally renowned Jewish singers Abie Rotenberg and Shlomo Simcha," he said.

"We are continuing to reach out to our alumni with a robust social media presence. The feedback has been great, and many of our alumni are asking us how they can become involved in our work and give back. We are also working closely with the national office and taking part in their initiatives such as the recent special edition of *Ignite*, NCSY's popular magazine, telling the tale of how we made it from 1954 until now."

When NCSY was founded in 1954, American Judaism was struggling with continued observance, as people were becoming more absorbed into mainstream American culture, Rabbi Black said.

"NCSY was founded to keep Jewish teens connected and engaged with their heritage. The movement sought to create and connect various youth programs across the country, creating a movement to give teens strength and support to enable them to live fulfilling Jewish lives. That goal remains the same today."

NCSY girls at the Kotel.

Rabbi Black said the same passion for Judaism and outreach to Jewish youth has carried into the present.

"Practically, the programming is no longer based out of shuls, because it is seeking a wider reach. In Canada, our primary focus has been on reaching out to unaffiliated and unconnected Jewish teens, primarily in public high schools and non-parochial private schools. These teens are at the greatest risk of disappearing from the Jewish scene, as the recent Pew study [of U.S. Jewry] demonstrated. Expanding our reach, and constantly seeking innovative ways to involve Jewish youth, pushes us to move forward every day."

NCSY has seen a lot of gradual change over the past 60 years, even though the heart of the organization remains the same, he said.

"One of the major leaps was going from being a synagogue-based movement to bringing our programming to the unaffiliated."

Among its many innovative opportunities for youth, NCSY has created Jewish culture clubs in schools and a Torah High program that offers Jewish studies courses for credit to hundreds of students across the country.

"Implementing programming in Israel was also a big step. This summer, NCSY Canada will be sending close to 200 teens on summer programs. We will continue to grow these numbers."

Rabbi Black said NCSY has always made it a priority to engage youths on their terms, in their language. "That began with bringing on student advisers rather than just rabbis to be leaders of the movement. Going digital was also a major decision made to keep NCSY relevant and has been highly successful."

While NCSY runs many programs, Rabbi Black said one of the most popular is Live-2Give, combining tzedakah, social action and Jewish learning for young women.

"Another is our Jewish Professional Association for high school, giving aspiring business and professional faculty students the opportunity to be mentored by successful entrepreneurs who have taken leadership roles in the community."

In terms of future aspirations, Rabbi Black said NCSY has several areas of focus, including "leveraging cutting-edge technology to enable us to reach a far broader audience of Jewish teens... [and] investing more resources in professional development in order to increase the depth and breadth of our team of more than 350 staff and advisers."

Ultimately, he said, NCSY is on a "mission to inspire the Jewish future." ■

> *We are continuing to reach out to our alumni with a robust social media presence*
>
> **RABBI GLENN BLACK**

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Completed applications must be sent by **May 16, 2014**

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Looking at Ourselves and Others

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בית צדק Beth Tzedec Congregation

Students get a taste of business world

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Entrepreneur and Startup TanenbaumCHAT founder Daniel Warner said he hopes the inaugural conference will expose Jewish students to the endless possibilities in the business world.

Warner, an Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto alum, said he was inspired to organize the event after noticing that in his four years of speaking at the TanenbaumCHAT career day, he was always the only entrepreneur on the panel.

"I wanted to educate them and empower them to know that they too can create a business and follow their passion and essentially build their future as opposed to someone else's. If they want to work for a big corporation, that's totally fine. We just want them to know that they can go out and create their own business and be their own boss," said Warner, an MBA graduate from the Schulich School of Business, and the VP strategy and brand partnerships for SnapSaves, a digital grocery coupon app.

He said he approached TanenbaumCHAT's advancement department with the idea for a day-long entrepreneurship-themed conference.

"I suggested that I bring in my colleagues from the startup space, whether they are investors, advisers, lawyers, experts, incubators, social entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs who work in Israel – literally, the entire spectrum," he said.

When Warner, 31, was a student at TanenbaumCHAT, he was working towards becoming a pediatrician, taking courses in biology, chemistry and physics. It wasn't until he enrolled at Westmount Collegiate Institute for an extra year of high school that he took a course in business administration.

"That ultimately led me to study business in my undergrad, getting my MBA, starting six different startups in marketing and media and technology and social media and I was inspired, especially while I was in university, to bring these opportunities to kids really early on."

The event offered eight panels that focused on topics including women entrepreneurs, business incubators in Toronto, Israel's startup nation, and venture capitalism.

In addition to the 30 plus business leaders who participated in the panels were two keynote speakers – fashion designer and entrepreneur Erin Kleinberg, and Ryerson University business professor and co-founder of Canada's Ernst & Young's Venture Capital Advisory Group, Sean Wise.

Daniel Warner RAQUEL WALMAN PHOTO

The event also featured a networking dinner that allowed the 125 students who registered for the event to converse with the participants, and a competition modelled after the popular television show called *Dragon's Den*.

"A really great part was our Dragon's Den competition, which we called Beit Dragon. We had a panel of dragons and... the winning team got a maximum of $2,000 per team, so $500 per person, and it was awesome. There were 12 entries into the competition."

He said the winning concept was a food delivery service for university and college students.

"If someone is looking for a home-cooked meal or several, it is essentially a courier service where parents would be able to ship out home-cooked food to their kids."

Warner, who plans to make this an annual event, wants the students at his alma mater to understand that even those who don't have ambitions to run a business can benefit from entrepreneurial knowledge.

"For those people who are keen on being professionals – doctors, lawyers, accountants, what have you – they still need some business acumen to build their practice or firm. We also wanted to educate those kids... For them to be truly successful, they have to treat it like it's their own business," he said. ■

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Herb Gray זל

We extend our heartfelt condolences to his beloved wife Sharon Sholzberg-Gray, children Jonathan and Rachel, Elizabeth and James, grandchildren and entire family.

May his memory serve as an everlasting blessing to those who were fortunate to have known him.

Menahem Ben-Sasson	**Murray Palay**	**Rami Kleinmann**	**Susan Katz**
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Two popes who changed Jewish-Catholic relations

RUTH ELLEN GRUBER
JTA

Popes John XXIII and John Paul II were declared saints of the Roman Catholic Church on April 27, the day that was also the eve of Yom Hashoah.

It's a coincidence but a notable one.

These two post-Holocaust pontiffs revolutionized relations between Catholics and Jews, fostering interfaith dialogue and embedding respect for Jews and Judaism in official Catholic dogma.

"These two popes transformed not just the church, but made a bigger impact on the outside world – and on us," said Rabbi Gary Bretton-Granatoor, a vice-president of the World Union of Progressive Judaism and longtime participant in Jewish-Catholic dialogue. "As a Jew, my life, and the safety and security of Jews, have been improved by the actions of these two individuals."

Pope Francis, who took office little more than a year ago, presided over the solemn ceremony at the Vatican, that took place on the day Catholics celebrate as the Second Sunday of Easter. It was Pope Francis who decided to canonize the two former popes in an unprecedented joint ceremony.

Millions of the faithful converged on the Eternal City for the event, which was also attended by representatives of the Jewish community including Rome's chief rabbi, Riccardo Di Segni; the American Jewish Committee's international director of interreligious affairs, Rabbi David Rosen; and Pope Francis' personal friend, Rabbi Abraham Skorka of Argentina.

Pope John XXIII, who reigned from 1958 until his death in 1963, initiated policies that changed nearly 2,000 years of church teaching.

First, he cancelled the words "perfidious Jews" from Good Friday prayers. Then, to reform and update the church, he convened the Second Vatican Council in 1962. This council in 1965 issued the Nostra Aetate declaration, a landmark document of less than 1,600 words that called for Jewish-Catholic dialogue and rejected the ancient Christian stigma against Jews as killers of Jesus.

More than two decades earlier during World War II, as Cardinal Angelo Roncalli, the future pope had worked actively to save Jews, using his position as papal nuncio in Turkey to draw up false papers for Jewish refugees. Pope Francis highlighted these actions while speaking with reporters last year about the canonizations.

"How many testimonies of false baptism he did in Turkey in favour of the Jews," Pope Francis said. "He was a courageous man, a good country priest, with such a great sense of humor – so great, and great holiness."

Pope John Paul II, who reigned from 1978 to 2005, made Catholic-Jewish reconciliation a cornerstone of his papacy. Born Karol Wojtyla in Wadowice, Poland in 1920, he grew up with Jewish friends and was an eyewitness to both the Holocaust and totalitarian communism.

In 1979, on his first trip back to Poland, he prayed at Auschwitz, and throughout his reign he repeatedly condemned anti-Semitism, commemorated the Holocaust, and met with Jewish leaders and laymen.

In 1986, he made history by crossing the Tiber River to Rome's Great Temple to become the first pope to visit a synagogue. There he embraced Rome's then Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff, and honoured Jews as Christianity's "elder brothers in faith."

Moreover, Pope John Paul oversaw the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel and prayed for forgiveness for Catholic persecutions of Jews in the past.

His emotional pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2000 left "the indelible picture of his sticking this prayer into a crack in the Western Wall," Lisa Palmieri-Billig, the AJC's representative in Rome and liaison to the Holy See recounted.

The popes who followed popes John XXIII and John Paul have built on their legacy. Pope Francis, who had a close relationship with the Jewish community when archbishop of Buenos Aires, has demonstrated attention to Jewish issues since his election in February 2013 and will visit Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian territories this month.

On the whole, said Rabbi Bretton-Granatoor, "things today are pretty good between Catholics and Jews."

But some sticking points do linger. These include the issue of opening the Vatican's World War II archives to clarify the wartime role of Pope Pius XII, whom critics accuse of failing to act to save Jews during the Holocaust. ■

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Hillel of Greater Toronto
Notice to Members of Annual General Meeting
The Annual General Meeting of Hillel of Greater Toronto will take place on
Wednesday, May 7, 2014 at 6:00 pm
at The Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life
36 Harbord St., Toronto, M5S 1G2
416-913-2424
Members may vote by written proxy in accordance with the corporation by-laws.
By Order of the Board, Allan Weinbaum, Secretary April 25, 2014
UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO

OPINION

Tfillin as a catalyst for Jewish change

Josh Gottesman

It's a common belief that Rashi's daughters wore tfillin while they prayed. Whether historical fact or mere lore, this belief speaks to a longstanding tradition of questioning the boundaries of this ostensibly gendered role. While practitioners of liberal streams of Judaism have long permitted women to lay tfillin, in recent months, the issue has emerged amongst the more Orthodox factions as well. Though the changes are brewing at the grassroots level, led by young women who want to engage in a practice that brings spiritual meaning to their lives, the probability for expanded impact is great, both among young women and their elders who may well follow suit.

Such change is not new in Judaism. Indeed, as Judaism and Jews have constantly been faced by an ever-changing reality, so, too, have they undergone a fairly constant process of change. In his recently published book *Flexigidity: The Secret of Jewish Adaptability*, the Reut Institute's president and founder, Gidi Grinstein, aptly described the process by which even the most conservative forces in Judaism likewise adapt: "Their evolution is slow, often invisible to the impatient eye. But a broader view exposes the radical transformations that even the most conservative groups in Judaism undergo, rendering the view that they are stagnant and immobile unfounded."

Innovations such as cellphones and Shabbat elevators have made a remarkable and undeniable impact on the halachically observant world. The use of electric candles instead of actual fire in hospital rooms, lights on timers during Shabbat and the numerous innovations developed by the Zomet Institute in Israel – "dedicated to seamlessly merging halachic Judaism with modern life" – have all centred on how to keep our ancient laws relevant in the modern world.

Concurrently, we're witnessing the hard-earned fruits of the struggle of Women of the Wall. After years of persistent prayer in the face of hostile and even violent opposition, the State of Israel has finally recognized the right of these women to worship in the sacred spot that is the inheritance of all the People of Israel.

This move is in contrast to, and a reaction against, a process of extreme centralization of religious authority that began with the birth of modern Israel. As described in *Flexigidity*: "Upon the establishment of the State of Israel, its government took the power to legislate and regulate on matters of Jewish life, which had hitherto been resolved by the workings of Judaism's 'invisible hand.' The Knesset, the government and the courts began to shape the Jewishness of society in a top-down manner… In such an environment, Orthodox factions came to dominate and domineer Israeli society in most matters relating to Israel's Jewishness and religious assets."

That the current state of religious affairs in Israel is unsustainable is obvious to any acute observer. The inconsistent and discriminatory decisions of the rabbinate are being brought into greater light, along with its ambiguous and unclear relationship with the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of America (RCA). The aspersions cast upon the conversions of Rabbi Avi Weiss ultimately have done more to undermine the credibility of the RCA and the rabbinate than the credibility of Rabbi Weiss, one of modern Orthodoxy's strongest proponents.

The line between custom and law is often a blurry one. The path that Jews walk, our Halachah, by necessity must be adjusted to the context in which we find ourselves. Abandoning stringencies and restrictions that may have served a purpose at one time but are not inherent to the Halachah is an inevitable process.

There's no explicit Jewish law that prohibits women from laying tfillin, and the inertia that has thus far kept women from engaging in the practice seems to be losing its grip.

Balancing the flexibility necessary to deal with such circumstances with the rigidity necessary to maintain loyalty and adherence to our roots is the challenge and the call of *Flexigidity*. ■

No talks with Hamas, Netanyahu says

RAPHAEL AHREN
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday Israel will be looking for alternative paths to peace with the Palestinians and insisted that he won't negotiate with any government that's backed by Hamas.

If a negotiated peace proves impossible because of the makeup of the Palestinian government, "we will seek other ways," Netanyahu told *CNN*. "I am not going to accept a stalemate. I won't accept another Palestinian state that is an Iranian offshoot of Iran, firing missiles in our cities… But I do seek a two-states-for-two-peoples solution. If I can't have it right away with this Palestinian government, then we will seek other ways."

Netanyahu said he told his cabinet Sunday that Israel would "take time out now for reassessment" and try to figure out "alternative paths to peace." The simplest way, however, was for Abbas to renounce the deal with Hamas, he said.

He also left the door open for Hamas to moderate its views and recognize Israel, accept past agreements and renounce terror, though he said that was unlikely.

On April 24, Israel suspended peace talks in the wake of a unity deal the previous day between Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction and Hamas.

Though Abbas has insisted the Palestinian leadership will continue to recognize Israel and renounce violence, Hamas said Sunday it would never acknowledge Israel's existence, rebuffing reports it was considering the shift.

Speaking to *CNN*, Netanyahu reiterated that he won't negotiate with any government backed by Hamas, even though the Palestinian unity government would be headed by Abbas and adhere to previous agreements with Israel. He rejected the argument the new government would be technocratic and not contain members of either Hamas or Fatah, likening it to a mafia organization that places "more respectable people" in the front office, while thugs sit in the back. "We're not going to buy this trick."

"I call on President Abbas: tear up your pact with Hamas. Recognize the Jewish state. Come back to a real peace process," Netanyahu said.

He also repeated his dismissal of a statement from Abbas recognizing the Holocaust as the "most heinous crime," saying the Palestinian leader was doing "damage control."

Netanyahu said he tried to "reconcile" Abbas' statement with the fact that just a few days earlier his Fatah group signed the pact with Hamas, which "denies the Holocaust and openly calls for a new extermination of the six million Jews of Israel."

He said Abbas "can't have it both ways. He can't say the Holocaust was terrible but at the same time embrace those who deny the Holocaust and seek to perpetrate another destruction of the Jewish People. I think what he's probably trying to do is damage control."

He wants to "placate western opinion, which understands that he delivered a terrible blow to the peace process" by embracing Hamas and "he's trying to wiggle his way out of it," Netanyahu said.

But Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, Israel's chief negotiator with the Palestinians, left the door open.

The Hamas-Fatah deal "was quite a disappointment… but we decided to wait and see what happens on the Palestinian side when a new government is created," she said, noting the government suspended rather than called off talks. ■

ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

Shoah Recalled

Israel came to a standstill at 10 a.m. on April 28, when a two-minute siren blared to honour victims of the Holocaust on Yom Hashoah. Israeli President Shimon Peres joined veterans in laying wreaths of flowers at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Mu seum in Jerusalem.

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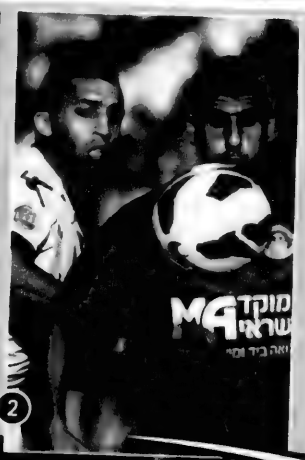
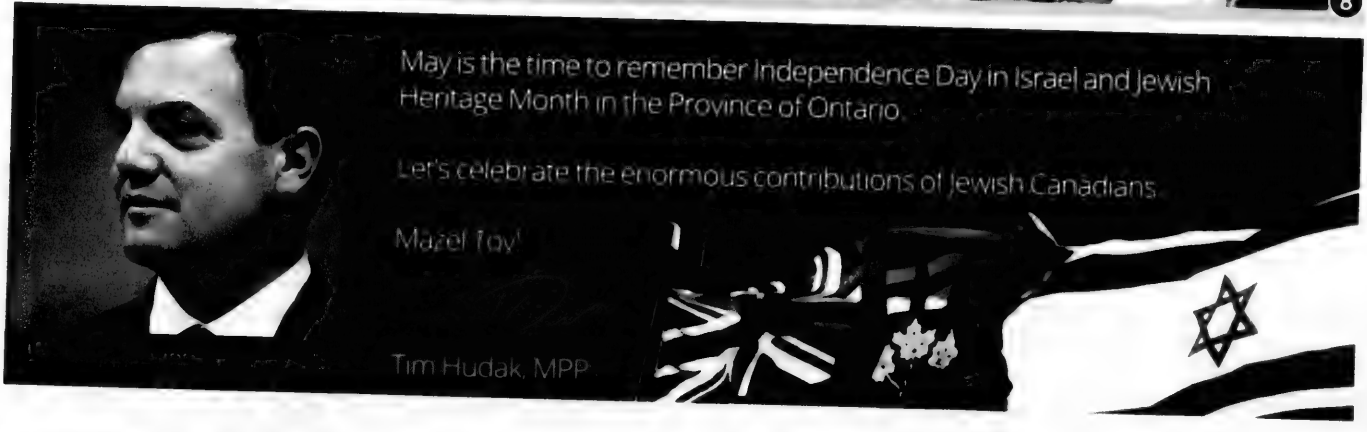
UJA Federation

Israel's year in pictures

1. Women of the Wall danced at the Western Wall on March 3.
2. Hapoel Katamon and Hapoel Jerusalem battled Nov. 15.
3. Singer Paula Abdul posed inside the Ahava statue in Jerusalem in November.
4. Members of Israel's LGBT community demonstrated outside the Russian embassy in Tel Aviv Aug. 10.
5. Heavy snow hit Israel in December.
6. Thousands of migrant workers protested in Tel Aviv in January.
7. A family from Yemen arrived at Ben-Gurion Airport on Aug. 14 to make aliyah.
8. Ultra-Orthodox Jewish men surrounded the body of Sephardi spiritual leader Rabbi Ovadia Yosef on Oct. 7.




May is the time to remember Independence Day in Israel and Jewish Heritage Month in the Province of Ontario.
Let's celebrate the enormous contributions of Jewish Canadians.
Mazel Tov!
Tim Hudak, MPP

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 1, 2014

Jewish Life

Family photo inspires artist

RITA POLIAKOV
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Adad Hannah didn't have a traditional upbringing. As a child, the artist spent his time touring Europe with his family while performing experimental theatre.

"We would busk. I learned math counting money in a hat," he said.

But there was one aspect of his childhood that really stands out. Hannah remembers a certain photo that hung on his wall when he was a child. The photo, or rather newspaper clipping, showed his grandmother painting a portrait of his mother, who, at eight or nine, was sitting stock-still in a chair, posing. The photo was taken in a military base in Alaska in 1953, 18 years before Hannah was born, where his grandmother lived while his grandfather served in the U.S. army.

It's this photo that sparked Hannah's latest exhibition, currently featured at the Koffler Gallery. *Three Generations* is a video-recorded tableau vivant – a medium that Hannah specializes in.

Literally, a "living picture," a tableau vivant is a way of recreating a photo using live actors. Hannah, a Vancouver-based artist, spent months remaking every detail of the newspaper photo, from the dress his mother wore to the brush his grandmother used. In some ways, the very nature of tableau vivant poses a challenge.

"It's a complicated process to restage something. It's a lot of work for a simple outcome," Hannah said. "When the initial photo was taken, it was one photographer. But I really explode it and make it into a bigger production. I have someone make a dress that matches the dress my mother was wearing. I have to do casting for the models. I'm taking this instantaneous moment of a snap shot and expanding it into a video."

The exhibit also features an interview with his grandmother and collages of family photos made by his mother, Barbara Txi, both elements Hannah is proud of.

"(This is) also about my grandmother becoming an artist," he said. "I could see how happy she was to be part of this."

While Hannah's art explores a variety of topics, he's been working on a series of family stills since around 2001.

"It's very different," he says of using personal photos as the inspiration for his tableau vivant. "I don't think it's better or worse. It's more challenging in a way. You feel like you're putting yourself out there."

Hannah prefers tableau vivants because of the questions the art poses.

"By making these videos, I enable this conversation about photography and history and the way photography freezes a moment," he said. "I always want people to think, to kind of get pushed back into thinking about themselves."

For his *Three Generations* exhibit, Hannah hopes to inspire discussion of a different nature.

"There's also this family history element, and we all have completely different and unique histories, but there's also this kind of overlap," he said. "Family photographs are the most prevalent genres of photography and, counter intuitively, they're the most generic in a way. My photo album of my family isn't so different than yours." ■

Adah Hannah: Three Generations runs at the Koffler Gallery, 180 Shaw St. Toronto until June 8. It is part of the Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival.

Stars of David come to life

KATHRYN KATES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Darrin Baker will take to the stage in the Canadian premiere of the musical adaptation of Abigail Pogrebin's *Stars of David: Prominent Jews talk about being Jewish* running at the Studio Theatre at the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

The book is a snapshot of Jewish identity told through essays by people such as Joan Rivers, Aaron Sorkin, Gloria Steinem, Gwyneth Paltrow, Dustin Hoffman, Leonard Nimoy, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Tony Kushner, Fran Drescher and Kenneth Cole.

"Those essays from the book were then sent out to some of the greatest musical theatre composers," explains Baker. "What came back were these amazing songs based on these prolific people's identities and views on their Judaism – either their culture, faith, religion, community or obligation."

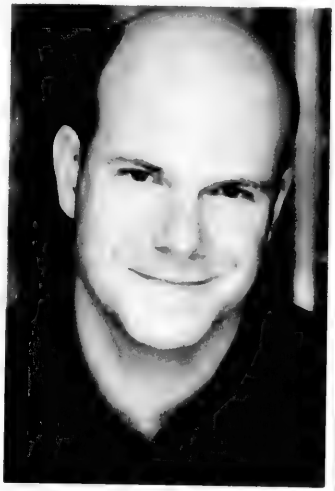
In the show, Baker voices iconic TV producer Norman Lear, entrepreneur Edgar Bronfman Sr., designer Kenneth Cole, musician Michael Feinstein, and director Steven Spielberg.

"What an opportunity for an actor to investigate this cross-span of people," he says. "They are all magnificent in their own respects. What is amazing about the piece is what you start to find out is that their concerns, identities, joys, struggles and obstacles with Judaism are so much like yours and mine."

Baker says it is such a deceiving little show. "It seemingly is a little review but it is kind of epic, even on the basis of who has written it, when you consider that these composers have composed shows like *A Chorus Line, Shrek, Next to Normal, Fiddler on the Roof, Miss Saigon*. So what's magnificent about this tiny show is that you have all these great composers and lyricists that bring different styles and more importantly they bring different perspectives."

Of all the characters he portrays, he especially identified with Cole. "I married out of the faith as did he," says Baker. "It took him a long time to figure out that Judaism meant much more to him than he thought, sparked by his father's passing and as he started to raise his children, he realized that his children have a heritage that they might not know about unless he figured out a way to impart that, which he has. So, although his children are being raised Roman Catholic, he and his wife's common goal is to give them faith. To them faith is most important and that's one of the universal messages in the show."

Baker says Stars of David is also provocative. "Don't get me wrong, it is not a preachy show in any respect. It is just a human interest show that is fascinating because these people have struggles and their struggles might challenge you to think about your place in all of it."



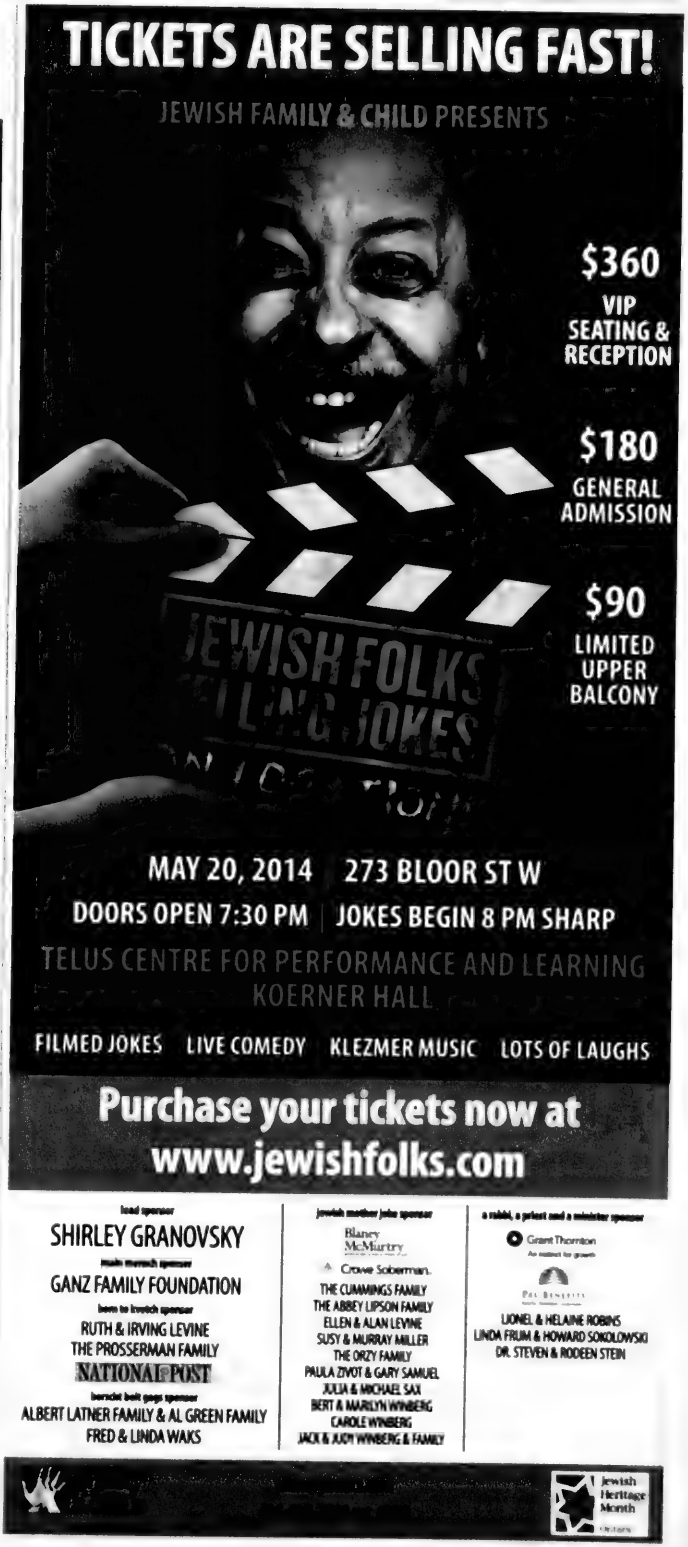
Darrin Baker

> *Their concerns, identities, joys, struggles and obstacles with Judaism are so much like yours and mine*

Baker won the Toronto Theatre Critics award for best supporting actor and was nominated for a DORA for best actor in a musical for *Falsettos*.

The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company and Anglewalk Theatre production of *Stars of David* is directed by Avery Saltzman, with musical direction by Mark Camilleri. It also stars Gabi Epstein, Lisa Horner, and Will Lamond. ■

Stars of David runs May 10 to June 1. Tickets www.hgjewishtheatre.com or 1-855-985-2787.



THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 1, 2014

Jewish film fest promises a little bit for everyone

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

TJFF, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival, is only one letter away from the acronym of the city's international film festival. The proximity is fitting, though, since TJFF is now more of an international festival than ever before.

The festival, which runs from May 1 through May 11, features 116 diverse titles from 23 countries, as well as a large number of Canadian films, shorts and documentaries.

"We're hoping that people will enjoy the diversity," says festival programmer Jérémie Abessira. "We have a little bit of everything at the festival."

One very high-profile foreign title is *Transit*, the Philippines' Oscar submission for the foreign language category. The film tells the story of five Filipino families who live as migrants in Israel. *Transit*'s director, Hannah Espia, will be present during the festival.

Also showing on the world cinema front is the short film program *From Russia with Falafel*, running May 5 and 7, which features four films from Russian Israelis.

"We want to make sure there's not too many films related to a certain theme," says TJFF program manager Stuart Hands. He explains that too many films about the Holocaust or political strife in Israel would not be an accurate indicator of what comprises Jewish cinema around the world.

The festival is also putting an emphasis on Canadian films this year. "We're trying to do a yearly series of films where we screen Canadian Jewish films that have been sitting in archives for ages," Hands says.

Among the obscure Canadian films to be screened are *The Wordsmith*, directed by Claude Jutra (*Mon Oncle Antoine*) for CBC from a Mordecai Richler script. The film is about an idealistic writer living on St. Urbain Street in Montreal.

One of the festival's major features in 2014 is a retrospective on Iraqi-Jewish filmmaker Joe Balass. Balass just finished *The Length of the Alphabet*, an hour-long portrait of Naïm Kattan, an Iraqi-Jewish and French Canadian author.

"It's a look at Jewish identity [and] Montreal and Quebec politics in a way I've never seen before," Hands says of the director's newest film. "Most of the Jewish films we get [from Quebec] are English-speaking Jewish films. It's really a different point of view in terms of representing Montreal."

The TJFF will premiere that film, as well as screen two of Balass's other films about Iraqi-Jewish life, *Nana, George and Me* and *Baghdad Twist*, on May 9. Balass will be present at the screenings that day.

Other buzzworthy Canadian titles include *The Pin*, the first Yiddish film to be produced in Canada. It is a young adult love story set in Lithuania during World War II.

A pair of documentaries at the festival explores the lives of influential Jewish artists from Europe whose names are obscure to North American audiences.

Alexandre Arcady's *24 Days* is a true-crime thriller that explores anti-Semitism in France.

Natan is an Irish documentary about Bernard Natan, who helped boost Jewish cinema in France during the 1920s and 1930s as the head of the studio Pathé.

"It's about his dramatic life story as a Jew in cinema in a France with a lot of anti-Semitism," Abessira says. "We always hear about the Jews of Hollywood, yet we've never really heard about any indication of Jews in French cinema."

Lionel Bart: Reviewing the Situation tells the story of the titular Jewish songwriter and composer behind musicals like *Oliver!* Bart was influenced by Yiddish theatre and synagogue hymns, as much as by Broadway show tunes.

"We're starting to see films dealing with Jews involved in popular culture in other countries," Hands says.

The TJFF is also unveiling a new festival prize, the Micki Moore Award. It goes to the best narrative film from a female director, selected by a jury of industry peers. 2014's winner is *For a Woman*, a French melodrama from Diane Kurys.

The festival will open and close with films from two beloved directors whose stories could not be more different.

24 Days, directed by Alexandre Arcady, is a true-crime thriller about the kidnapping of Ilan Halimi, a Jewish Moroccan living in Paris, and his family's attempts to get him back. It explores anti-Semitism in France, which remains a hot-button issue. Arcady will be present at the screening, which is also the film's world premiere.

Closing the 22nd annual festival is a different beast, the uproarious comedy *Fading Gigolo* from director John Turturro. Turturro stars in the film alongside Woody Allen, *Modern Family*'s Sofia Vergara and Sharon Stone.

In *Fading Gigolo*, which also screened at 2013's Toronto International Film Festival, Allen and Turturro play low-income men who decide to begin a business as a pimp and gigolo to make some extra money.

"Any time we can get a film with Woody Allen and John Turturro, I think it's a great tone to finish with," Hands says.

Other anticipated titles include the indie comedy *Marvin, Seth and Stanley*, starring Alex Karpovsky (*Girls*), and *Kidon*, an Israeli caper thriller that bears similarities to the original *Ocean's 11*. ■

To check showtimes and purchase tickets for the Toronto Jewish Film Festival, visit http://tjff.com/.

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Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

THREE TOP YOUNG ISRAELI MUSICIANS TO PERFORM CONCERT FOR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Three award-winning young musicians from Israel are performing here this month in aid of the Sharett Scholarship Program, a tuition-assistance program for Israel's most promising musical artists.

Violinist **Daniel Aizenshtadt**, pianist **Tomer Gewirtzman** and viola player **Shira Majoni** perform a private concert hosted by the Canada Israel Cultural Foundation.

Itzhak Perlman received the scholarship at age 10, and an autographed photo of the now-famous violinist from that ceremony is being auctioned off at the event.

Four Seasons Private Residences Presentation Gallery, 50 Scollard St. Thursday, May 22, 7:30 p.m. Suggested donation $100. 416-932-2260, email cicf@bellnet.ca

• • •

Stars of David: Harold Green Jewish Theatre and Angelwalk Theatre co-present the Canadian premiere of *Stars of David*, the off-Broadway musical that offers a snapshot of modern North American Jewish identity. Based on **Abigail Pogrebin's** book *Stars of David: Prominent Jews Talk About Being Jewish*, this funny and captivating production features excerpts from conversations with **Gloria Steinem**, **Gwyneth Paltrow**, **Dustin Hoffman**, **Leonard Nimoy**, **Joan Rivers**, **Aaron Sorkin** and many others, as well as songs penned by notable Broadway composers and lyricists.

Conceived by **Aaron Harnick**, directed by **Avery Saltzman**, featuring **Darrin Baker**, **Gabi Epstein**, **Lisa Horner** and **Will Lamond**. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St. May 10 to June 1 (opens May 14). $25 to $65. www.hgjewishtheatre.com, 1-855-985-2787.

• • •

Molly Picon Classic: The Toronto Jewish Film Festival and Friends of Yiddish present a screening of the 1938 Yiddish film classic *Mamele*, starring **Molly Picon**, directed by **Joseph Green** and **Konrad Tom**. Filmed in Poland, Yiddish with English subtitles. Famous Players Canada Square Cinema, 2190 Yonge St. at Eglinton. Thursday, May 8, 3 p.m. $8, tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

The 22nd annual Toronto Jewish Film Festival runs May 1 to 11. It showcases movies from 23 countries including Argentina, France, China, Germany, Ireland, Poland, Philippines, Sweden, the U.K., U.S., Venezuela and, of course, Israel. For details, please visit www.tjff.com or phone 416-324-9121.

• • •

Names in the News: Filmmaker **Yael Reuveny** has won the $5,000 David A. Stein Memorial Award for her documentary *Farewell Herr Schwarz*, which premieres at the upcoming Toronto Jewish Film Festival. The film focuses on a missed postwar reunion at the Lodz train station that haunted three generations of her family. It screens May 5 at 2:30 p.m. and May 8 at 6 p.m.; details at tjff.com.

Also, filmmaker **Diane Kurys** has won the $5,000 Micki Moore Award for her most recent film, *For A Woman*, which is a "lush and well-made melodrama" that offers a new perspective on Jewish life in postwar France. It screens May 4 and May 11.

• • •

Names in the News II: The Association of Canadian Jewish Studies has named **Adam Fuerstenberg**, professor emeritus at Ryerson University, as the recipient of the 2014 Louis Rosenberg Award for distinguished service in the field of Canadian Jewish studies. Fuerstenberg is being honoured for his role as a "literary scholar of Yiddish Canadian literature" as well as his achievement in establishing both the Canadian Jewish Book Awards and the *Parchment* literary journal. The ceremony is May 25 at Brock University, St. Catharines.

Ten-year-old Itzhak Perlman receiving the Sharett Scholarship in Israel, about 1955. An autographed photo of the event is being auctioned off at a performance May 22.

Arts in Brief

• Toronto author **Gerald Ziedenberg** begins a series on Epic Trials in Jewish History with a discussion of "Bernie Madoff, His Life and Lies." Beth Torah Congregation, 47 Glenbrook Ave. May 1. 416-782-4495.

• Film critic **Adam Nayman** continues his series on filmmaker **David Lynch** with an examination of the films *The Elephant Man* and *Dune*. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, May 5, 7 p.m. $12 drop-in, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• **Frieda Forman**, editor of *The Exile Book of Yiddish Writers*, gives a talk on Yiddish women writers for the Yiddish Vinkl, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. Thursday, May 1, noon. $18 cash includes buffet lunch. RSVP to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca

• **Fern Lindzon** performs a CD release concert for her latest, *Like a Circle In A Spiral*. Jazz Bistro, 251 Victoria St. Thursday, May 8, 8 p.m. Cover $15, students $10. 416-363-5299.

At the Galleries

• *Adad Hannah – Three Generations* (Kodiak Art Club, 1953) is the Vancouver-based artist's exploration of a "frozen moment" of personal history from his mother's life, long before he was born, caught in an ordinary family snapshot. Koffler Gallery, Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St. until June 8.

• Works by Toronto-based photographer **Rafael Goldchain** are on view at the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until May 19. ■

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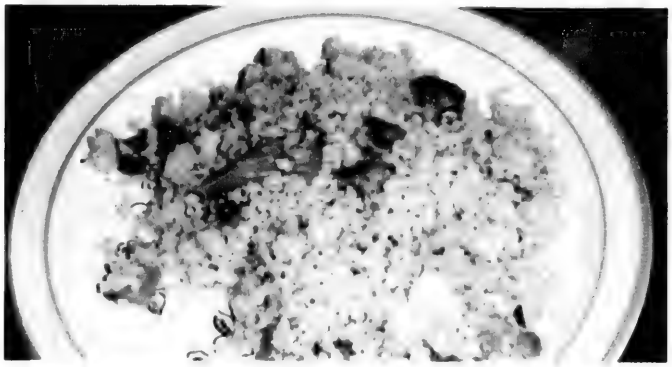
New ways with grains

DAPHNA RABINOVITCH
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

It's amazing how healthy and tasty often go hand in hand. Case in point, grain recipes. Grains of all kinds are incredibly healthy for you – they're chock full of fibre and loaded with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. That's all beside the point if you don't make them part of your diet or you see them as too "earnest" or even, (heavens!) stodgy.

Grains come in many forms and adapt to an encyclopedic array of flavours. I've paired the chewy, nutty goodness of farro, an Italian ancient grain, with roasted sweet vegetables and an acidic vinaigrette for a great side dish. I have found that if you get pearled farro, you can omit the overnight soak. That way, it only takes about 25 minutes for farro to cook. Quinoa cakes – great for breakfast with fruit and yogurt, are terrific topped with salsa or even wonderful as a "hamburger" with regular condiments. Here's to a whole new way with grains. ■



Farro with Roasted Cauliflower, Carrots and Cherry Tomatoes

Farro, an Italian ancient grain, retains its chewiness and nuttiness when cooked. It can be made up to 24 hours in advance and is great hot, warm or at room temperature. Try to buy pearled farro to avoid an overnight soak.

- ❑ 1 small head cauliflower, cut into 1-in. pieces (about 6 cups)
- ❑ 2 carrots, peeled and sliced
- ❑ 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. each salt and pepper
- ❑ 1cup cherry tomatoes
- ❑ 1cup semi-pearled farro

Dressing:

- ❑ 1 tbsp. sherry vinegar
- ❑ 1 tsp. honey
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. dried thyme
- ❑ 1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
- ❑ 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

Preheat the oven to 400. Line a large, rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil. In a large bowl, toss together cauliflower and carrots with olive oil, salt and pepper until well coated. Spread onto prepared baking sheet. Roast in the centre of the preheated oven for 35 minutes, stirring once or twice. Stir in cherry tomatoes. Roast for 10 to 15 minutes or until vegetables are very tender and lightly browned. Meanwhile, bring 2-1/2 cups of lightly salted water to a boil. Stir in farro. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for about 25 minutes or until farro is tender but still chewy. Drain well. Gently toss together farro and vegetables in a serving bowl.

In a separate small bowl, whisk together vinegar, honey, thyme, salt and pepper. In a thin steady stream, gradually whisk in the olive oil. Pour dressing over farro mixing, tossing gently until well coated. Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 6 servings.

Quinoa Cakes

Great on their own as a side dish, these cakes need a bit of dressing up, in the form of some salsa, gravy or topping. They are incredibly easy to make and freeze exceptionally well.

- ❑ 1 cup raw quinoa
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. salt
- ❑ 1 tsp. paprika
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. each dried oregano and dried basil
- ❑ 1/4 tsp. pepper
- ❑ 2 eggs
- ❑ vegetable oil

Rinse quinoa in a fine mesh sieve. Combine with 2 cups water in a saucepan set over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 15 to 18 minutes or until tender and water is absorbed. Transfer to a bowl. Stir in salt, paprika, oregano, basil, pepper and eggs, mixing well.

Heat about 1/8-in. of oil in a large skillet set over medium-high heat. Using a 1/4-cup measuring cup or scoop, scoop out quinoa mixture. Gently "plop" into skillet; flatten into a 1/4-in. cake. Repeat with remaining quinoa, making sure not to crowd the pan – you should be able to fry about 6 cakes at once. Cook cakes for 3 minutes per side or until golden. Makes 12 cakes. ■

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Tales from Bathurst Manor

BILL GLADSTONE
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

I hadn't heard of Stuart Ross before reading *Snowball, Dragonfly, Jew*. I was therefore surprised to find that we are *landsleit* – both from Bathurst Manor – and that he is quite prolific, with more than a dozen books and published anthologies under his belt.

How to describe his writing? One needs many adjectives, including: funny, eccentric, poetic, childlike, surreal and experimental. If you drew a Venn diagram, this book might be situated at the place where Leonard Cohen's *Beautiful Losers*, Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*, Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and loads of old comic books, Hardy Boy adventure mysteries, and 1960s movies and TV shows all come together.

At first, *Snowball, Dragonfly, Jew* seems just a series of light comic sketches, but soon it broadens pleasingly into a quirky quasi-novel. The setting is the heavily Jewish north-Toronto suburb of Bathurst Manor of several decades ago – home, not incidentally, to one of the Diaspora's largest communities of Holocaust survivors.

Ben, our first-person protagonist, recounts a series of striking and bizarre boyhood incidents, misadventures and fantasies, all of which helped shape his world. He tells us of the raccoon that ate his pet catfish, the enormous dragonfly that landed on his leg while he was floating in a lake, the anti-Semitic bully who forced him to tear a paperback book to pieces, and his grandfather's false teeth that he soaked in an old yahrzeit glass each night.

Ben attended cheder at Beth Emeth, where he was taught about 12 saintly rabbis who chose martyrdom rather than betray their Torah and their Judaism. In his childish recollection, the rabbis are variously thrown off a cliff, lowered into a vat of boiling oil, crushed by a falling weight, fed to alligators and starving wolves, and so on. Yet none betrayed their faith. Ben imagines he could not live up to the example set by these Jewish paragons if confronted by anti-Semitic Christian boys on the way home from cheder.

"I pictured them wearing Boy Scout outfits. They say to me, Ben, give up your Jewish god and become Christians like us, or we'll kill you right now. I think of potato latkes and jelly fruit slices, and of my grandfather's dentures floating in a glass by the sink, and of my mother sitting on the edge of my bed and telling me how all her aunts and uncles were killed by Hitler, and of my father slathering horseradish upon his lump of gefilte fish at the Passover seder, and of my mother getting pelted with snowballs because she's four years old and she speaks Yiddish. Then I think of being dead. Nothing happens when you're dead, and you're not even aware that nothing is happening, because you're dead.

"The reason I feel guilty is because I don't think I would be as brave as those rabbis."

Ben is obsessed with the memory of his mother, doomed with terminal cancer, going to Bathurst Manor Plaza with a gun and shooting a known Nazi sympathizer on the sidewalk outside Faggot's Hardware.

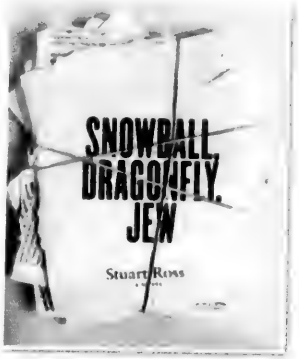
Is it a false memory or did his mother really commit the murder and then coolly drive away? Ben thinks he cannot get to the bottom of the mystery. Both his parents have died and his only sibling, Jake, has been institutionalized after losing almost all of his memory like a hard-drive wiped clean.

The adult Ben becomes a performance artist who does strange things like submerge himself up to his head in a vat of ketchup in a store window; he muses that ketchup, according to the Hollywood convention, is actually blood.

Ben weaves the actress Kim Novak and her role in the movie *Vertigo* into his childhood memories. Novak becomes one of the characters and Ben has imaginary conversations with her as though she, or at least her movie character, has been recalled to life.

Similarly, by the time this off-beat but entertaining book is done, all the main characters – Ben, mother, father, Jake, grandmother, grandfather – also seem vividly alive, as if floating eerily in the sky above Wilmington Plaza.

You don't have to come from Bathurst Manor to appreciate the humour and depth of these seemingly light-hearted sketches.



Snowball, Dragonfly, Jew
Stuart Ross

(ECW Press)

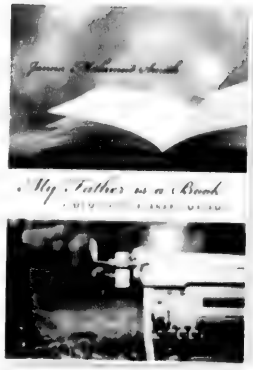
One hundred years after his birth in 1914, acclaimed novelist and short-story writer Bernard Malamud has been surprisingly overlooked by biographers – in large part because his family had blocked access to his private papers. But in recent years the family has repented of this action and is co-operating with British literary scholar Philip Davis who has a major biography of Malamud (an expansion of an earlier work) in progress.

Malamud, who died in 1986, wrote a handful of acclaimed novels, including *The Natural, The Fixer and The Assistant*, as well as hordes of fabulous short stories. The Pulitzer-Prize-winning author's name often appears alongside the names Philip Roth and Saul Bellow, but his reputation may have slipped somewhat due to the lack of scholarly attention. Or so muses his daughter, Janna Malamud Smith, in the preface to *My Father Is A Book*.

Malamud-Smith now uses all available material at her disposal to present the sort of memoir that she once vowed she would never write. The book is very much a daughter's recollection, not the empirical study that we expect eventually from Davis.

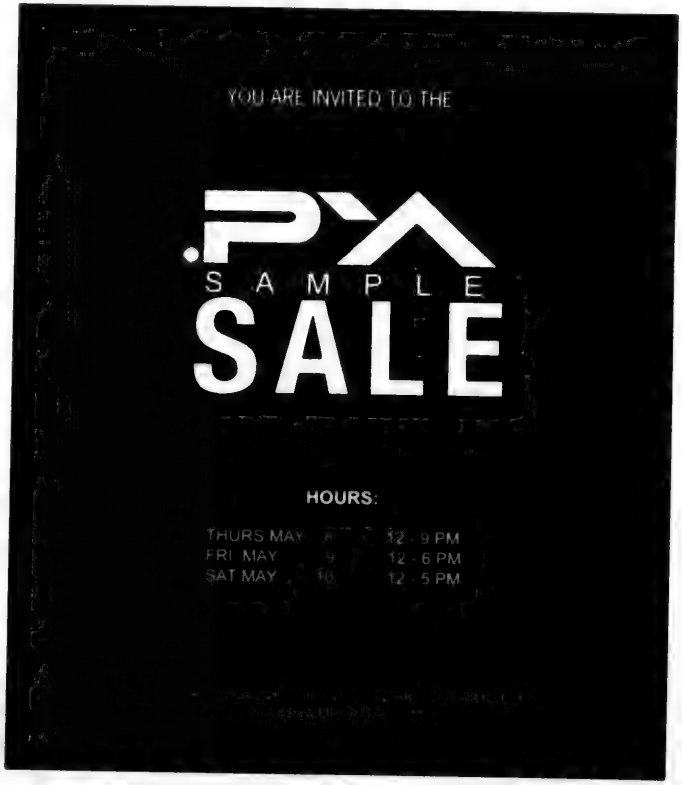
The son of immigrant shopkeepers in Brooklyn, Bernard Malamud spent his formative years, before his daughter was born, with his family in a town in Oregon. Despite the limitations of her perspective, Malamud-Smith succeeds in painting a three-dimensional portrait of a passionate and complex human being immersed in his literary art.

If you've enjoyed some of Malamud's novels and short stories and want to know more about the man, this intimate, if overlong, memoir should satisfy. ■



My Father Is A Book: A Memoir of Bernard Malamud
Janna Malamud Smith

(Counterpoint Berkeley)



What's New

Lila Sarick

Thursday 1	Friday 2	Saturday 3	Sunday 4	Monday 5	Tuesday 6	Wednesday 7
			Drop off your electronic waste at the Toronto Heschel School.	Learn more about organ donation at Beth Radom Synagogue.	Yom Ha'atzmaut	Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day school open house.

Thursday, May 1

ALAN BOROVOY
Toronto Workmen's Circle presents a conversation with **Alan Borovoy,** 7:30 p.m., 471 Lawrence Ave. W.

YIDDISH VINKL
Frieda Forman, editor of *The Exile Book of Yiddish Writers*, is the speaker at the Yiddish Vinkl, noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

Sunday, May 4

BABYSITTING COURSE
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation offers a babysitting course for youth 11 and older. Register at www.bayt.ca, or call **Rich Winkler** 905-886-3810, ext. 135.

ELECTRONIC WASTE RECYCLING
The Toronto Heschel School is collecting and recycling old cellphones, inkjets, toner cartridges and digital cameras. Drop them off at 819 Sheppard Ave. W., 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

YOM HAZIKARON
The official ceremony for Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror will be held at Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst St. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. Program starts at 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT
Beth Tikvah Synagogue offers a bereavement support group starting today, 10 a.m., with a trained facilitator. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 301, to register.

Deadline Reminder:
The deadline for the issue of May 15 is May 5. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Yom Hazikaron

The official ceremony to remember Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror will be held May 4 at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

WALK ON WATER
Beth Tikvah Synagogue shows the Israeli film *Walk on Water*, 7:30 p.m. $5/$10.

Monday, May 5

WOMEN AND THE HOLOCAUST
Sara Horowitz discusses "Women and the Holocaust," today and May 26, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

SPRING LECTURE SERIES
Elizabeth Legge discusses "Chagall and Modern Art," 2 p.m., Temple Emanu-El.

ORGAN DONATION
A discussion of organ and tissue donation will be held at Beth Radom Congregation, 7:30 p.m. For more infomation, visit www.bethradom.com.

Tuesday, May 6

BOOK CLUB
Janna Nadler reviews the book *The Orphan Master's Son*, Holy Blossom Temple, 2 p.m.

DYING WITH DIGNITY
A discussion on "Dying with Dignity," sponsored by Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism will be held at 18 Wynford Dr., 7 p.m. 416-385-3910.

Wednesday, May 7

JEWISH HISTORY
Hana Werner discusses "Deborah: A Woman of Valour," 2 p.m., Beth Tzedec.

OPEN HOUSE
Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School holds an open house, 10 a.m., 750 Spadina Ave. RSVP, **Sheri Rapp,** 416-928-3537 or sheri@djds.ca.

AUDITIONS
Medina Theatre Ensemble holds auditions for a staged reading of *Plaza Suite*, 7 p.m., 2 Neptune Dr. RSVP to arrange a time. Call **Reva** 416-445-8718 or **Fran** 416-638-2716.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Chemistry professor **Joe Schwarcz** separates the science from fiction when it comes to food. Adath Israel Congregation, 7:30 p.m. For tickets, call 416-635-5340. $10/$15.

CYBER-SECURITY
Yuval Elovici, cyber-security expert from Ben-Gurion University, discusses "Crossing the Cyber Pass: The route which thieves take to pilfer your sensitive information," Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, 7:30 p.m. RSVP bgutoronto@bengurion.ca, or call 416-665-8054, ext. 21.

MORASHA CLASSES
Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum teaches a class on "When the Bible is confusing," Part II. **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner** teaches a class on "The Jew and her Food, from Sinful to Sacred." Classes start today, at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Call 416-789-7400 to register.

COUNTER-MISSIONARY SEMINAR
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Real Messiah: The Biblical Template," First Narayever Congregation, 8 p.m. To register, call 416-789-0020, or email: toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca

Thursday, May 8

LITERARY LEVEE
Anthony De Sa, author of *Kicking the Sky*, is the guest speaker at Atid Chapter of Canadian Hadassah's Literary Levee, Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community, 2 Neptune Dr. For tickets, call 416-630-8373, or visit tinyurl.com/2014Levee-registration.

COMING EVENTS

NEWTONBROOK REUNION
Newtonbrook Secondary School celebrates

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

its 50th anniversary with an open house and pub night May 24. For tickets, call 416-395-3280, or visit schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/newtonbrook.

HESCHEL GALA

The Toronto Heschel School honours retiring principal **Gail Baker** and 18 years of education with a gala evening, May 21 at 6:30 p.m. For tickets, visit www.torontoheschel.org.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **Mind-Body Connection for Women:** A 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts May 1, at 7 p.m.
- **The Challenge of Anger for Women:** A 6-session group for women to learn how to express anger. Starts May 6, 35 Madison Ave, 3 p.m. or Lipa Green Centre at 7:30 p.m.
- **Widow/Widower Under 60:** A 6-session group for people under 60 who have recently lost a spouse. Starts May 6, 7:30 p.m.
- **Living with Teens:** A 6-session group for parents. Topics include dating, alcohol and setting limits. Starts May 6, 7:30 p.m.
- **Life Skills for Today's Woman:** A 6-session group. Topics include time and stress management, self-esteem. Starts May 6, at 7 p.m.
- **Parenting the Child/Teen with ADHD:** A 4-session group for parents. Starts May 7, at 7 p.m. Call for pre-group assessment.
- **Adult Children Losing a Parent:** A 6-session group for adults who have recently lost a parent. Starts May 7, at 7:30 p.m.
- **Widows/Widowers over 60:** A 6-session group for men and women who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Starts May 8, at 1 p.m.
- **Demystifying Alzheimers and Dementia:** A 1-session workshop for anyone wanting to know more about cognitive impairment. May 20 at 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents.

- Grief counsellor **Andrea Warnick** discusses "Supporting Families When Death Touches Our Lives," May 26 at 7:30 p.m., Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses "Jewish film stars who influenced American cinema," May 13, May 20, 1 p.m. To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. May 6, **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses "A Day in the Life of a Jewish Shtetl: Staszow," 10 a.m.; May 8, **Rochelle Reichert** discusses "Healthy Digestion," 1:30 p.m.; May 8, drop-in social work clinic, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine May 28 (register in advance); Dance with live music, May 25, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise 10 a.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.
- **Day Centre for Seniors** provides a friendly, secure place for seniors with dementia. Hot lunch, stimulating activities, transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.
- **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George**, 416-256-1892.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

- **Iain Scott** discusses singer Marilyn Horne, May 12, 1 p.m.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of J.M.W. Turner and David Hockney, May 13 and 20, 1 p.m.
- The book club discusses *Americanah* by **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** May 26, 1 p.m.
- **Norene Gilletz** gives a workshop on making challah, May 4, 3 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition (male voices needed) July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. Call ext. 250.
- **Adam Nayman** looks at the impact of **David Lynch**'s films. May 5: *The Elephant Man* and *Dune*, 7 p.m..
- *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is presented by Alexander Showcase Theatre, May 2-11, Al Green Theatre. For tickets, call 416-324-1259, or visit www.alexandershowcasetheatre.com.
- Photos by **Rafael Goldchain** are at the gallery until May 19.
- **Vernal Banton** discusses "Power of Attorney, Wills and Trusts," May 3, 1 p.m.
- The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.
- Harmonia, a choir for youth aged 8-18, meets Sundays 4 p.m. until June 1. Email: harmonia@mnjcc.org.
- **Robert Freedman** discusses how Tel Aviv's urban design shapes the city, May 6, lunch served at 11:30 a.m., lecture at noon.
- Yom Ha'atzmaut community celebration, May 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Yiddishtog: A day of lectures and music celebrating Yiddish, featuring **Yael Chaver, Elly Gotz, Goldie Morgentaler** and a concert by **Vira Lozinsky**, May 25. For tickets, call 416-907-0468, or visit www.ticketwise.ca
- Health and fitness: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays, until May 6, 7 p.m., Wednesdays until May 7, 11 a.m. MELT Method – hand and foot, Mondays until May 12, 2:30 p.m. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays until June 18, 12:15 p.m. To register for all fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

- Zen kids art for children age 4 to 6 starts May 1. To register, **Jennifer** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275.
- Celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut May 6. 5-10 p.m.
- Join the SR Centre for a trip to see *Hay Fever* May 28 in Stratford. Call ext. 3006, or email adaiam@srcentre.ca. ■

MARRIED WITH KIDS

Date night is like glue

Lauren Kramer

We were in shul when I heard my daughter Maya, 5, speak loudly and clearly in a voice that is certainly mine. She's made two paper airplanes, handed one to a cousin and christened them "man" and "woman." "Let's leave the kids at home and go out for dinner, just you and me," she suggests to the "male" airplane.

I recognize those words immediately and am stunned, first into silence, then laughter and then denial. "I don't say that very often," I begin tentatively, trying to recall the last time we actually did head out on a spur-of-the-moment dinner without the children. "Oh yes, you do!" she retorts.

Maya's words ring in my ears for the rest of the day and the days that follow. At first I'm disturbed that her first thoughts, when playing "mom," are to escape the kids. Is that how she sees me? As a mother who can't wait to get away?

I'm comforted, though, that on some level she gets it: moms and dads need time to themselves to enjoy each other without the presence of their children. She might have launched into a different dialogue with her male airplane, say, about how he was working too much or not helping enough around the house. Perhaps I should be grateful that the first thought in her head, when playing the role of a mother, was "date night!"

Managing a relationship with your spouse is an ongoing challenge with kids in the house. In our home, when the children were younger, the witching hour – with its feeding, bathing and sleeping dramas – meant any down time was spent in shell-shocked recovery mode from the hours that preceded it. Now that infancy is well behind us, the struggle is in getting the kids to go to bed and stay there at a decent hour so that we can have at least a glimpse of an evening to ourselves. Many times, the only way to have an uninterrupted conversation of any depth is to close the front door and head out.

It's something we don't do often enough.

When we do, though, the harried parents frustrated by kids who don't listen shed their skins. They clasp each other's hands and walk into the cold, quiet night air as a man and a woman who share stories about their week and find peace and comfort in each other's company. We're reminded what a beautiful thing our partnership is, especially so when it has the space to breathe, strengthen and rejuvenate.

Because kids are great, but they can also deplete reserves of patience and tolerance. With those in low supply, the memory of a relationship between two adults that preceded the kids' arrival recedes as well. And it's the marriage, and the love within it that sustains, nurtures and adheres the whole family structure.

The stats on marriage survival in Canada are not pretty. Some 41 per cent of all marriages end in divorce before their 30th anniversary, says Statistics Canada. Where do they go wrong? How does dewy love head south to disinterest, dislike and, eventually, disassociation? Where does the communication break down, and how do we prevent that from happening?

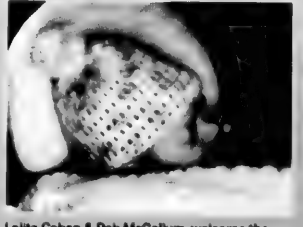
Maybe more guilt-free date nights and weekends away sans kids are the key to keeping it together. A couple's relationship requires oxygenation to keep it balanced and happy, after all. Maybe the marriage should be given more space in the family so that couples remember why they chose each other to begin with.

In hindsight, I'm not ashamed to admit it: though I love my kids to bits, I also want to ditch them every now and then and breeze out the door with my husband. It's a tonic, a gift we give our partnership and one that helps us keep the glue of the family together. Without that glue, it's a slippery slope downhill. ■

Family Moments

Mazel tov to Bernyce & Marvin Kalifer on your 60th wedding anniversary. Wishing you all the best. With love from your children, grandchildren and great grandchild.

Mazal tov to Dr. David Kaplansky on your 90th birthday! May we celebrate biz 120. With lots of love from your adoring children and grandchildren



Lolita Cohen & Rob McCollum welcome the arrival of their grandson, Israel Meir, born to Chaim & Sori Cohen on March 31 in Lakewood, New Jersey.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click on "Family Moments"

Mazel Tov!

מזל טוב

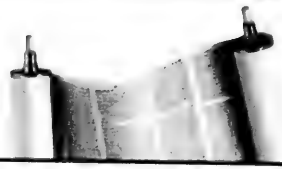
SeeJN | Justin Trudeau visits Koffler

KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS PHOTO

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau visited the Koffler Gallery last week and took a tour through the new Adad Hannah exhibition (see page 38). Pictured are, from left, Michael Levitt, VP of business development of Benjamin Group and Koffler board member, Trudeau, Tiana Koffler Boyman, chair of the Koffler board of directors, and film producer Marc Boyman.

Parshah

Emor | Leviticus 21:1 - 24:23



Maharat Rachel Kohl Feingold says Shabbat is a day to unplug from our distractions
Rabbi Denise Handlarski on the challenge to empower, rather than harm, others
Rabbi Yirmi Cohen explains sfirat haOmer as a reminder to not waste our time

Maharat Rachel Kohl Feingold

In our home, we try to enforce a "no phones at the table" rule – not for our children, who are still young and don't have cellphones – but for my husband and me. Our phones distract us with email and texts. We put them away during dinner so that our kids know they have our full attention.

However, those 20 minutes at dinner stand in contrast to the rest of the day. We live in a society of divided attention. Hundreds of distractions prevent us from focusing on the present.

Parshat Emor contains one of several places in the Torah where we're commanded to keep Shabbat. The verse says, "Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the Sabbath." (Lev. 33:3) The great chassidic master Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk (1717-1787) notes this odd grammatical choice. It might have said that for six days, you shall do work, and on the seventh you shall rest, as the verses do elsewhere. The use of the passive verb involves a simple change in vowel for the Hebrew – *te'aseh* instead of *ta'aseh* – but the sentence takes on an entirely different meaning.

Rabbi Elimelech says that during the week, our work is done passively. We act out of habit and lack focus on what we're doing. It's as if the work completes itself, without our conscious involvement. On Shabbat, we remove the distractions of everyday life and focus on every moment. When we act more consciously, we obtain a greater depth of awareness and pay closer attention to what's most important – family, community, and godliness.

Shabbat is a day to "unplug" from our distractions, to stay present from moment to moment. Perhaps if we cultivate that ability on Shabbat, it can spill over into the rest of the week. ■

Maharat Rachel Kohl Finegold is director of education and spiritual enrichment at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim in Montreal.

Rabbi Denise Handlarski

Parshat Emor challenges us to confront aspects of our textual tradition that don't conform to our contemporary values. Simultaneously, it includes aspects that we continue to celebrate. The beginning of the parshah concerns priestly purity. These rules present sexist attitudes – any "harlot" of the priestly line is to be put to death (21:9) – and ableist attitudes – no offspring of Aaron with a "defect" may serve (21:18). While we object to the types of stratifications being established here – man above woman, able-bodied above those with disabilities, we also might remember that power always engenders hierarchy. The priests were the leaders of their time and, therefore, sought to establish authority and superiority. Emor challenges me as a rabbi, and anyone in a position of Jewish leadership, to consider how to use our power to empower, rather than harm, others.

There are discomfiting aspects of Torah, but also aspects that anchor us to our tradition. Emor describes rituals for some of our earliest holidays, including Yom Kippur and Sukkot. In the discussion of the harvest, we're told to leave the gleanings for the poor and the stranger (23:22). This not only encourages us to view our Judaism through the lens of doing social good, but also links that social good to the commemoration and celebration of our holidays. Thus, our identities and practices are bound up with our imperative to be moral. To me, this is the true value of Judaism: that which makes me who I am also inspires me to do good in the world, and as I aim to do good in the world, I am continually made better as a person and as a Jew. To both challenge and inspire is the nature of Torah. Emor does both, giving us much food for thought this Shabbat. ■

Rabbi Denise Handlarski is assistant rabbi with Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism in Toronto.

Rabbi Yirmi Cohen

In Parshat Emor, we learn about the special mitzvah of sfirat haOmer, the counting of the Omer, which we count for 49 days from the second night of Pesach until Shavuot. Every night we count another day.

When the Jewish People came out of Egypt, God told them he would give them his treasure, the Torah, in seven weeks. With excitement, they counted every single day.

Sfirah doesn't only mean to count. It also comes from the word *safir*, which means to shine.

The Jews were in a very low spiritual state when they came out of Egypt, being in slavery under the Egyptians. When they finally did leave, they were not yet ready for the great revelation of the Exodus. However, from then on, they worked on improving themselves, so that they would shine (*safir*), in order to be ready to receive the Torah.

So, too, every year, we also need to count the days before Shavuot in order to appreciate what we have – that God gave us his precious Torah. When we count, it reminds us that time is precious. Let's not waste time. Let's use every day that God gives us as a gift.

With every new day, let's shine, by learning more Torah and doing more mitzvot. Tomorrow should be an even better day than today. Finally, after 49 days of counting and improving ourselves, we'll be ready to receive the Torah.

So let's improve by being nicer to our spouses, by learning more Torah with our kids, by respecting each other more, and by being more careful with keeping Shabbat and keeping kosher. With God's help, may we merit not only the receiving of the Torah on Shavuot, but also receiving the Mashiach speedily in our days! ■

Rabbi Yirmi Cohen is rabbi of Ohalei Yoseph Yitzchak Congregation in Toronto.

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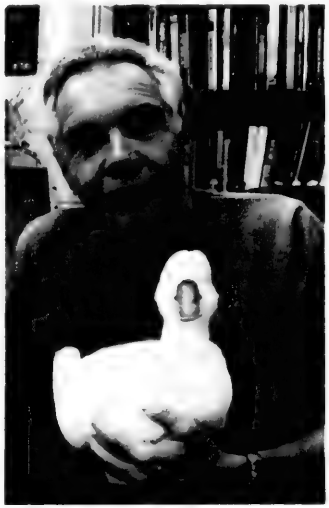
THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 1, 2014

Joe Schwarcz: Making science palatable

DAVID LAZARUS
dlazarus@cjnews.ca

Millions know him as "Dr. Joe," the McGill University chemistry professor who has spent the last 30 years popularizing science, exposing frauds, charlatans and quacks, and defending the scientific method with passion, wit and clarity. For the last 15 years, Schwarcz has conducted a lot of his work from the McGill Office of Science and Society in campus quarters lined with several thousand science books and dozens of rubber ducky "quacks" he's collected.

Schwarcz, 66, also travels widely, is an in-demand public speaker, writes a weekly column for the Montreal *Gazette*, and hosts a popular radio science call-in show, *The Right Chemistry* on CJAD radio. His 14th book, *Is That a Fact?: Frauds, Quacks, and the Real Science of Everyday Life* (ECW Press), is due out this month. All his previous books have been bestsellers in Canada.



"Dr. Joe" Schwarcz holds a "quack" at his McGill University office.

All your books seem similar in that they try to bring science to the average person. How is your latest book different?

Mostly, it's where the emphasis is. The theme is always the same in all my books: how to make science interesting and palatable without trivializing it – a book you can open at any page, and you say, "That's interesting," and you keep reading. The challenge is to make it interesting, make it palatable, and still have quality in it in terms of the science. Most of my books have had, as a theme, "separating sense and nonsense."

You've divided the book into categories, black for scientific non-fact, white for fact and grey for somewhere in-between.

Unfortunately a lot of science actually is grey, because the issues are not ironclad – there's always more to be learned. That's one of the beauties of science: it approaches the finish line but never quite gets there. But we do have final answers in the area of nonsense, what I call "black." There's a lot of stuff out there that's just not debatable, absolute crap.

Do your books preach mostly to the converted?

That's hard to say. I suspect most of my readers are random, interested people. It won't be the naturopaths or homeopaths who read it. But they might pick it up to see what the enemy is saying.

I guess there's no sense in debating someone religious about the existence of God.

Right. You can talk to them about things that you know you can debate, but not about faith. There's a big difference between science and faith, and science cannot overcome – and doesn't even need to try to overcome – faith.

How do you explain scientists who wear kippot?

Just because they wear a kippah or are religious doesn't mean they don't follow the science. I would say that there would be very few scientists – certainly Jewish scientists – who believe the Bible literally. There are many Jewish scientists who have great faith and believe in God, but they also respect the science and understand that the world, in fact, is billions of years old, and that Adam and Eve might have been a couple of microbes.

How would an observant Jewish anthropologist in Israel reconcile the faith belief that the universe is 6,000 years old with the anthropological facts?

I have no answer to that, how anyone could reconcile that, how you could throw away all of the evidence. The argument they could make is that when God created the world 6,000 years ago, He also created the fossils that look like they are billions of years old. But there's that small group who believe that the seven days [of Creation] really meant seven, 24-hour days. Most rabbis I have spoken to don't believe that literally. Faith versus science is not debatable because science is not based on faith. Science is based on evidence. And faith by definition is belief without needing evidence.

What type of reaction do you get to your columns and books?

It's 99 per cent positive. It takes me a year to write one book. You can read it from any point and find it interesting. And a little bit of humour makes the medicine go down. I started my radio show in 1980. It is the longest-running radio show on chemistry in the world – as well as the only one.

Why does it seem that, increasingly, you see homeopathic treatments (infinitesimal levels of a supposed active ingredient "dissolved" into huge quantities of water) being allowed at medical clinics or doctors' offices?

It's absolutely bizarre. It's kind of that the public has the right to be wrong, and if this is their wish, then there are people who will fulfil it. How anyone with any kind of scientific training can buy into homeopathy is completely beyond me. Most people think homeopathy is "alternative medicine." It is not. Homeopathy is scientifically absurd, and there's no evidence for it except for the placebo effect, which is not something you should sweep under the carpet. My main objection is that teaching something that is scientifically absurd is never right, even if there is some positive outcome. The other objection is that it sidetracks people from effective treatments.

Have you ever been accused of being in the pocket of the pharmaceutical industry and the like?

Yes, it's happened, but I can't really afford to pay attention to nonsense. One of the reasons my office is respected and listened to is that we are unbiased and don't get any funding from anyone. And it's not in my financial interest to promote or destroy homeopathy. The only allegiance I have is to the scientific method. Scientists are accused of having blinders on, closed minds, but that it isn't true at all. It's just a question of "show me." ■

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Memories of Herb Gray

Backstory

IRVING ABELLA

Former MP Herb Gray had passions – democracy, Canada, Parliament, the Liberal party, the Jewish People. He loved each of them, and he devoted his public life defending and invigorating all of them.

Everyone who knew Herb has a favourite memory of him. Mine are meeting him at various lectures and conferences on Jewish topics in Ottawa – he seems to have gone to all of them, especially after he resigned from Parliament. He always sat in the front row to greet and chat with as many members of the audience as there was time for, and to make sure he could hear the speaker.

I spoke at some of these events, and what I loved best was talking about the difference between the Canadian and American Jewish communities and how much more involved in politics were the latter. In America, for example, there were more than 50 Jews in Congress, while in Canada there were only three in the House of Commons. I also pointed out that the first Jew named to a cabinet position in the United States was by Teddy Roosevelt some 100 years ago, while "the first Jew selected to a Canadian cabinet was so recent he is here with us tonight."

Whereupon Herb would stand and acknowledge the enthusiastic and affectionate applause from everyone in the room. It was a moment of great spontaneity, and Herb loved it – every time it happened, and it happened often.

For the Jewish community Herb was a trailblazer. Not only was he the first to be in cabinet, he was also the first – and still the only – Jew to serve as leader of the opposition, if only briefly following the resignation of Liberal leader John Turner in 1990. He was also the only Jew ever to act as deputy prime minister of Canada, allowing him to stand in for the prime minister in Parliament and cabinet meetings when he was away. And when he gave up his seat, he was the longest continuously serving member of Parliament in Canadian history.

Herb was a bit of a homer, inordinately proud of his native town of Windsor, Ont., and especially proud of its contribution to Canadian Jewry. He reminded me whenever we spoke that Windsor was a city of Jewish firsts. Aside from his achievements, in the 1930s, another Windsor Jew, David Croll, was the first Jewish mayor of a major Canadian city, and the first to sit in a provincial cabinet, as minister of public welfare and labour, in Ontario from 1934 to 1937. In 1955 Croll became the first Jew appointed to the Canadian senate. Not bad, Herb was fond of saying, for a Jewish community of a few thousand. And who could argue with that.

Herb's appointment to cabinet by Pierre Trudeau in 1968 was a turning point for the Jewish community. For the first 100 years of Canada's history since Confederation, Jews were kept out of the country's mainstream. For much of that period, they were the considered the pariahs of Canadian society, despised, demeaned, discriminated against, targets of abuse, excluded from many professions and schools, and legally prevented from living and vacationing in a wide variety of areas from coast to coast.

The Canada Herb Gray grew up in was permeated by racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, which was only just beginning to lift by the 1950s. It was his generation that finally broke through the quotas and restrictions that constrained and overwhelmed Canadian Jewry. With the help of suddenly sympathetic politicians and courts, Jewish leaders, veterans and trade unionists successfully lobbied to end discriminatory policies against minorities, thus opening up Canadian society not only for themselves, but for other ethnic and immigrant groups as well.

By the 1960s, a new era had dawned. For the first time in the nation's history, there were Jewish deputy ministers, university presidents, members of corporate boards, including banks, hospital chiefs of staff, and partners in major downtown law firms. Only Parliament seemed immune. And then Herb's elevation to cabinet opened doors for his fellow Jews. Within a few years, he was joined by three more in cabinet, a Jewish premier in British Columbia, a leader of a national political party and several provincial ministers.

Thanks to Herb, the 100 year logjam had finally been broken. ■

Irving Abella is a history professor at York University, co-author of the book None is Too Many, *and a member of the Order of Canada.*

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Karakowsky, Benny	April 13/14	92 Bevshire Circle	Scheinman, Gabriella	April 16/14	17 Wendy Cres
Zaichik, Victor	April 13/14		Volodina, Raissa	April 15/14	Private
Gorender, Helen	April 13/14		Laiken, Irene	April 17/14	784 Centre St
Pelz, Pesach	April 13/14	429 Walmer Rd	Newman, Anna R	April 17/14	10 Torresdale Ave
Charles, Louis	April 14/14	33 Drewry Ave	Abergel, Messod	April 17/14	
Horowitz, Rose	April 14/14	131 Torresdale Ave	Portnoi, Michael	April 17/14	Private
Franco, Elizabeth	April 14/14	282 Antibes Dr	Snyder, Samuel	April 18/14	11 Townsgate Dr
Ericsson, Brian Carl	April 14/14		Schwartz, Isabel	April 18/14	3560 Bathurst St

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
ROSE HALPERN ז"ל
Will take place
Sunday, May 4th at 10:30 a.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St N of Major MacKenzie
Temple Sinai Section
Relatives and Friends are invited to attend

Jojne "Jack" Weisdorf

Passed away peacefully in his 95th year on Saturday, April 12 of Nissan, and was buried the following day in the Wierzbniker section of Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park Cemetery. Shiva was held at son Albert's home. He will be missed by his loving children Albert (Brenda), Mara (Tishchenko), Yura, Mark (Lorraine Bell), and Sandy (Stephen Hall); grandchildren Richard & Carolyn, Ola & Tanya, Katya, Lisa & Kayla, and Matthew; and four great grandchildren, as well as his brother Moishe.

Dad/Zaidy survived the Holocaust by escaping to the former U.S.S.R, returning to Poland to learn that most of his family had perished. Helped by his brother Moishe, who came to Canada in 1936, and other family members, Jojne, his then wife, and sons Albert and Mark arrived in Canada in July 1960.

Jack loved people and life.The Weisdorfs, Wierzbniker Society and Toronto Jewish Folk Choir were all part of his extended family; music, singing, poetry, dancing and celebrations were amongst his passions. He passed away as family and friends were gathering in Toronto for Passover - where he had always led and enjoyed the Seder story telling, prayer, song, wine and food. This Passover, Dad/Zaidy Jojne once again played a central role in our celebration of the Seder. The family asks that those wishing to make donations in Jack's memory, consider the United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto.

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Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St. N. of Major MacKenzie
Beth David Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
SOLLIE WAGMAN ז"ל
will take place
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Bathurst, south of Steeles
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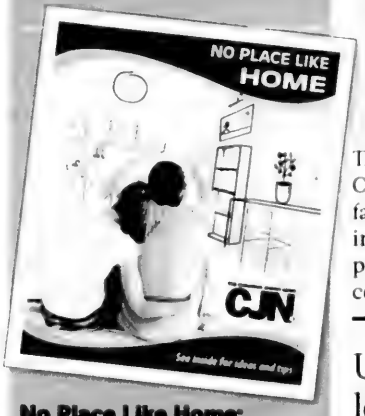
Inside

Living on $1.75 a day

For five days, staff from Ve'ahavta took up the challenge of trying to eat and drink on that dollar amount.
PAGE 14



No Place Like Home:

Look for our 28-page supplement. **SECTION B**

Editor

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:10 p.m.	9:21 p.m..
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Calgary	8:53 p.m.	10:14 p.m.
Vancouver	8:22 p.m.	9:40 p.m.

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A CJN INVESTIGATION

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הכשר במקום הזה בתורת מהדרין תחת השגחת ועד הכשרות הרבני תאראנטא.

The *Canadian Jewish News* begins a three-part series on kashrut certification in Toronto. The Kashruth Council of Canada, also known as COR, is the major player in certifying kosher products and facilities in the city, but for the past six years, it has faced competition from upstart Badatz. *The CJN* investigation looks at the relationship between the two organizations, concerns among kosher food producers over COR pricing and whether COR's practices may be affecting the cost of kosher food for consumers. Part 1 of the series can be found on **PAGES 8 & 9**

Ukraine's Jewish leader visits *The CJN*

Anti-Semitism in Ukraine not as bad as being reported, says one of the country's Jewish leaders .
PAGE 12

Russian violinist to play Toronto

Violinist Vladimir Spivakov and the Moscow Virtuosi chamber orchestra will be in concert May 9 at Roy Thomson Hall. **PAGE 31**

Rabbi Englander says goodbye

Q & A: Spiritual leader says goodbye after 40 years at Mississauga synagogue.
PAGE 42

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A questionable media law and a cardinal's Jewish roots

Actor, director starred in iconic films

Filmmaker and actor Assi Dayan, son of Israeli icon Moshe Dayan, was found dead in his Tel Aviv home May 1 at 68. He reportedly suffered from serious health problems. Dayan appeared in some 50 Israeli films and TV series, and directed at least 16 films, including classics such as *Halfon Hill Doesn't Answer*, and *Life According to Agfa*. In recent years, he starred in the popular drama *B'Tipul*, or *In Treatment*, which was adapted for U.S. TV.

Shul politics would have done him in

Cardinal John O'Connor, the late archbishop of New York, was technically Jewish, new research says. His sister, Mary O'Connor Ward, recently discovered through genealogical research that her mother, Dorothy Gumple O'Connor, was born Jewish but converted to Catholicism before she met and married the cardinal's father. Ward told the *Catholic New York* newspaper she doesn't know whether the late cardinal, who died in 2000 at age 80, knew his mother had been Jewish. Ward said her mother never spoke about her roots, but when she was growing up, she "surmised" her mother was a convert.

But could Cardinal John O'Connor give a good Rosh Hashanah sermon?

Cardinal O'Connor had close ties with New York's Jewish community, often describing Jews as Catholics' "elder brothers." He also marched in protests to free Soviet Jews, visited the site of the Dachau concentration camp and joined Jews in commemorating the Holocaust.

Freedom is never paying for your news

The pro-Likud freebie newspaper *Israel Hayom* fought back last week against a bill that would outlaw free distribution of major daily papers with a slew of opinion pieces slamming the proposed law. The paper has become Israel's most popular daily since its 2007 launch. Last month MKs from seven parties – but none from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud – co-sponsored the bill that clearly targets *Israel Hayom*, which is owned by pro-Republican U.S. casino magnate Sheldon Adelson. If passed, *Israel Hayom* would have to start charging for copies. ■

Gematria

8.2 million

Israel's population, up two per cent over last year. Jews account for 6.1 million of the total, or 75 per cent, and Arabs for 1.7 million, or 21 per cent.

22 to 17

The result of the secret-ballot vote that barred dovish Jewish group J Street from admission to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Quotable

Playing Israel now is the moral equivalent of playing Sun City at the height of South African apartheid.

— Pink Floyd founders Rogers Waters' and Nick Mason's plea on *Salon.com* to the Rolling Stones, who play Tel Aviv June 4.

Inside today's edition

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Letters to the Editor

Former MPs recall Herb Gray

As former parliamentarians and current board members of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), we were saddened to hear of the passing of former deputy prime minister Herb Gray – someone who exemplified the Jewish tradition of civic engagement.

We had the privilege of serving in Parliament during Herb's tenure, and can attest to the universal respect he garnered on the Hill as a committed public servant. We fondly remember his good nature, his humour, and his dedication to his community and country alike, both of which he represented with honour and dignity.

Sheila Copps
Stockwell Day
Lorne Nystrom

Remembering Herb Gray

Herb Gray and I lived in the Rho Pi Phi Fraternity House in Toronto during our school years, and he was my roommate. I remember Herb very well, and we became close friends over the years. As a student Herb made a deep impression upon all of us at the frat house. He was very serious, yet with a sense of good humour. He was down to earth and totally dedicated to his legal studies.

We knew that he would go far in politics, but we could not imagine his meteoric rise in Parliament. He was re-elected 13 times, without interruption, a great record by itself. Despite his success, his warm personality and easy approach never changed. He set an example of statesman-like behaviour for all politicians to follow.

It is much to the credit of Canada, that a young and brilliant Jewish lawyer from Windsor reached the pinnacle of service to his country by becoming the deputy prime minister of Canada, admired and respected by all.

Leslie Dan
Toronto

Liberal record disputed

MP Marc Garneau's letter ("What Trudeau said," *The CJN*, April 24), belies the actual record of the Liberal party regarding the State of Israel. That record is clear: for decades under the Liberals, Canada either abstained or voted in favour of numerous one-sided resolutions attacking Israel in both the UN General Assembly and Security Council. Based on the platitudes offered by Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau, I see no reason to believe that this would change should the Liberals ever come to power again.

If the Conservatives were indeed focusing on electoral expedience in determining foreign policy, it would make sense for them to focus on Canada's large Muslim community rather that the tiny Jewish community. The fact that they do the opposite is testimony to the Conservative government's principled stand in this matter.

Furthermore, Trudeau's contention that the Iranian people have democratic aspirations appears based on some typically naive and dreamy world-view garnered from the back of a motorcycle.

Were the vast majority of the Iranian people not supporting the mullahs in Tehran as they have for decades, they would no longer be in power. And if Iranians in Canada, in fact, oppose the Iranian regime and its murderous plans for Israel, where is their voice?

Sam Margel
Thornhill, Ont.

Israel guilty of 'pinkwashing'

As a director of the Centre for Gender Advocacy, as well as a member of Independent Jewish Voices, I applaud both groups for the principled positions they have taken ("Protest tries to shut down pro-Israel gay activist," *The CJN*, April 10).

These groups, and I as an individual, condemn Israeli state policies that violate human rights and that do not reflect serious commitments to justice and inclusiveness. Selecting isolated examples in attempts to show Israeli superiority, as in claiming how much better queers are treated there than elsewhere in the Middle East, is indeed to "pinkwash" their illegal (as ruled by the International Court of Justice) policies and practices.

This obscures the way many women are treated in Israel, how necessary health services are precluded for those held up at checkpoints, and how not all living within Israel have equal civil rights, to say nothing of the continuing occupation of Palestinian territory. ■

Abby Lippman
Montreal

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*

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RABBI-2-RABBI

The challenge of intermarriage

When a Jew marries out of the faith, is it the end of the road, or can subsequent generations still be Jewish?

Rabbi N.Daniel Korobkin
BETH AVRAHAM YOSEPH CONGREGATION, TORONTO

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow
TEMPLE EMANU-EL-BETH SHOLOM, MONTREAL

Rabbi Korobkin: The latest Pew Survey on Jews in America contains a few dark clouds for the future of North American Jewry. Rabbi Grushcow, as a Reform rabbi, you represent the Jewish movement to which the highest percentage of U.S. Jews affiliate. But is that really a victory when more than half of marriages since 2000 have been intermarriages? How do we as a Jewish community respond to the alarming figure of 22 per cent of American Jews who now profess to be Jews of "no religion"?

Rabbi Grushcow: I don't see these numbers in terms of victory or defeat. Rather, I think they raise important issues for us all. For example, intermarriage is far from limited to Reform Jews. As a movement, though, we have made the decision to welcome and support everyone who wants to build a Jewish family. That includes a lot of couples where one spouse isn't Jewish. I continue to be inspired by how many non-Jewish parents are dedicated to raising Jewish kids.

Rabbi Korobkin: I also try to be optimistic, as do you, rabbi. But whereas you are inspired by intermarried families that raise their children as Jewish, I see defeat and failure. The cornerstone of Jewish continuity is when two Jews marry and raise their children Jewish. I don't believe that this continuity and Jewish legacy can be maintained when only one parent is Jewish, and I think both history and our own observations bear this out. While there are the occasional exceptions, even exceptional exceptions, they don't support the rule.

Rabbi Grushcow: We see very different realities in our different communities. At Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, non-Jewish parents of Jewish children are part of the very fabric of our synagogue's life, and they add to our community in immeasurable ways. More and more, we see people opting into Judaism, whether or not they pursue conversion. When we look to our history (even going back to inscriptions in ancient synagogues), we learn that in many eras, non-Jews have been supporters of the synagogue and of Jewish life. As long as we see intermarriage as the end of the road, we will close our doors to people who would otherwise come in. When we open the doors, we don't just accommodate exceptions to the rule, but the rules themselves change. I often think of the talmudic dictum that we should only judge by what our own eyes see. In that sense, I am very optimistic about Jewish life, and I am continually impressed by the people who find their way to us.

Rabbi Korobkin: Don't get me wrong: I agree that intermarried families can contribute a great deal to the fabric of a Jewish community, so I'm not negating your experience. I've noted that at times, they are even more enthusiastic to make a difference, since they have to compensate for the greater challenge in providing Jewish identity to their families. My point is, rather, that when we look at the bigger picture of Jewish continuity, about what makes Judaism perpetuate from generation to generation, history shows us that once a Jew marries out of the faith, the chances of his or her Judaism continuing beyond a generation or two approaches nil. You know the old rabbinic commentary to the four sons at the seder: Each "son" represents a succeeding generation within the same family. Where's the fifth son, the fifth generation? The fourth son's Judaism became so diluted that he intermarried, so the fifth son doesn't even bother showing up to the seder. Yes, we never give up on any Jew, even the intermarried Jew. But looking at the Pew study's cold statistics gives one a shiver.

Rabbi Grushcow: I don't think the fifth son disappears because of intermarried parents. We have many families at the temple who have had intermarriages in every generation and stayed deeply connected to synagogue and Jewish life. I think the fifth son disappears when we take Judaism for granted, or base it entirely on nostalgia. Interfaith families, and others who consciously choose a Jewish path, have to think about why they are Jewish and what form their Judaism takes. This, to me, can be a source of strength, even if it can be a more difficult path. ■

How to reach us

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CJN wins Rockower Award

The American Jewish Press Association (AJPA) has recognized *The CJN* with a first-place Simon Rockower Award for excellence in editorial writing in 2013.

The paper submitted three editorials written by Mordechai Ben-Dat for consideration: "Strengthen our unity" (Jan. 3, 2013), "Summit on Education" (Feb. 14) and "Renewing our vows" (May 14).

The first dealt with the issue of accommodating non-Orthodox prayer at the Western Wall, while the second spoke of the need for the community to convene a summit to deal with the high cost of Jewish education. The third urged Jewish leaders to continue to strengthen the infrastructure of communal life, pointing to the need for adequate Jewish education for all children and the importance of maintaining *The CJN* as a community newspaper.

The AJPA is planning to hold its 2014 annual conference in conjunction with the Jewish Federations of North America's General Assembly in Washington D.C., Nov. 9 to 11.

To view the three editorials, go to cjnews.com. ■

From the archives | Protest at City Hall

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES

A small group of protesters demonstrate outside Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto against the treatment of Jews inside the U.S.S.R. circa 1975.

From Yoni's Desk

An invitation to COR: our door is still open

Over the past eight months, *The CJN* has investigated the veracity of a series of rumours, insinuations and allegations regarding the practices of the Kashruth Council of Canada, known colloquially as COR. Primarily, *CJN* reporter Paul Lungen sought to examine long-circulated claims that COR stifles competition in Toronto's kosher certification market. This week, *The CJN* presents part one of "Behind the Label," a three-part series detailing what he found.

Lungen spoke to owners of kosher businesses, including food manufacturers and caterers, and the stories they related about their dealings with COR certainly suggest something is awry. Many told of ever-changing rules and regulations, rising fee structures and false claims about what is and what is not kosher.

Meanwhile, Badatz Toronto, an upstart kosher certifier, charges that COR has threatened kosher businesses under its supervision or those considering a switch that if they moved to Badatz, their products would be off limits wherever COR is the sanctioning body.

Next week, Behind the Label continues with a look at how COR's practices may be affecting the price you pay for kosher products such as chicken and meat. One of the founders of Badatz alleges that kosher food produced in Toronto "costs consumers 10 to 15 per cent higher [than it otherwise would] because of COR." And in two weeks, the series concludes with a look at what the future may hold for kosher supervision in Toronto.

It's worth noting, though, that the co-owner of one of Toronto's largest kosher caterers described his company's relationship with COR to *The CJN* as "collegial" and that among COR's chief critics are two former employees, neither of whom left the organization on good terms. That's precisely why we sought out COR's version of events during the course of this investigation and why we were so disappointed when it refused to comment.

Instead, COR elected to run an advertisement in this week's newspaper (the ad ran in another Toronto-based Jewish newspaper some weeks ago, after COR was made aware of the investigation and was offered the opportunity to respond), which begins: "The Kashruth Council of Canada (COR) would like to take this opportunity to initiate a dialogue with the community about our services and in the interests of transparency, discuss our fee structure, our business model and the origins of our organization." It's a terrific sentiment, but forgive us for wondering why, if that's the case, COR rejected *The Canadian Jewish News*' invitation.

The CJN has been accused of committing a chillul HaShem (the biblical prohibition against desecrating God's name) for undertaking this investigation, and the indictments will likely multiply in the coming weeks. Make no mistake: we are sensitive to such concerns. We want to emphasize that the imperative to not make a chillul HaShem – to, in fact, produce the opposite, a kiddush HaShem – informed the reporting process and decision to publish.

Ultimately, our goal and that of COR would seem to be the same: to establish an open discussion about kosher supervision in Toronto. So I'll conclude by re-extending the offer to COR: if you want to talk on the record, we'll be happy to hear from you. It's not too late to tell your side of the story. ■ – **YONI**

OPINION

Holocaust education in Canada uneven at best

Naomi Azrieli

The Holocaust has become a global reference point for education in many subject areas beyond Jewish, European and world history – human rights, international law, responsible citizenship and the role of the state in societies, to name a few.

The very premise of a recently published UNESCO report on Holocaust education is that its importance lies not only in learning about the systematic murder of more than six million men, women and children in the heart of Europe's most civilized and modern societies, but also in the universality of its lessons and their relevance to present-day issues. Holocaust education has a critical role to play in building tolerance, instilling respect for human dignity and promoting appreciation for diversity.

So it seems fitting in this month of remembrance – Yom Hashoah, the 70th anniversary of the destruction of the Jewish community in Hungary, the 20th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda – to take a look at the state of Holocaust education in Canada. The imperative to educate students about the Holocaust has never been stronger, as is the urgency to provide them with the tools to grapple with this complex history and questions of morality and social responsibility.

A recently published study by Université de Montréal researchers Sivane Hirsch and Marie McAndrew on the dearth of Holocaust education in Quebec, and the near absence of the Holocaust from its textbooks, raises much concern. Superficial or partial treatment prevents Quebec's students from fully grasping the impact of this historical event on contemporary society.

Students at a Toronto day school reflect on the Shoah. Many students in Canada only get a superficial exposure to the Holocaust by the time they finsih high school. FILE PHOTO

Yet of even greater concern is the fact that many of the authors' main conclusions about Quebec could describe the situation in any province and region of the country.

Indeed, the situation in Quebec is in keeping with current standards across Canada: Holocaust and genocide education is not mandated by any provincial education authority. While it's often a suggested topic in the curriculum, it's left to local decision-makers and, ultimately, to individual teachers to grapple with how to teach the topic.

Many teachers do include the Holocaust in their curricula and do an excellent job, addressing the subject not only in history classes but integrating it into other subject areas. There are several examples of good elective courses on the Holocaust and genocide at upper secondary school levels. And even when textbook offerings are meagre, suggested secondary resources can be extensive.

But the gaps are wide: it is possible to finish a secondary school diploma in this country with only superficial exposure to the Holocaust. Working within the structural and cultural complexities of Canada's diverse education systems – which means that legally mandated Holocaust education is highly unlikely – doesn't mean we must accept low or no standards of training for the educators who are on the front lines of teaching the Holocaust. And it doesn't mean the best possible resources should not be made widely available.

The best way to tackle this issue is to focus on teacher training and the provision of educational resources – teach the teachers and give them good materials. All accredited teacher training programs in Canada, for example, should be required to include methods and pedagogy on teaching the Holocaust and genocide.

Moreover, every school board should survey the local resources available to teachers and encourage their use. Holocaust centres across Canada offer materials and guidance and undertake educational outreach throughout their provinces. Excellent resources and support are also available from a number of non-profit organizations throughout the country – the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, the Asper Foundation and Facing History and Ourselves come to mind.

Among the best resources are the powerful, personal, first-hand accounts that allow readers to grasp the enormity of what happened in the Holocaust, one story at a time. The Azrieli Foundation, through the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program, makes such resources available free of charge to educators and schools across the country. The personal connection that is created between a reader and the survivor is often the catalyst for students who might not otherwise be inclined to delve deeper into the history of the Holocaust and related themes.

We stand today on a bridge between memory and history. Very soon, there will be no first-person witnesses to the Shoah left. As we learn from *Pirkei Avot* (*The Ethics of Our Fathers*): "You are not required to complete the task, yet you are not free to withdraw from it." We challenge Canadian teachers and educational authorities to plug the curriculum gaps, provide in-depth learning about the Holocaust, and ensure that this genocide, which was unprecedented in history and set the precedent for all genocides to come, is taught to our children – our future leaders. ■

Naomi Azrieli is chair and CEO of the Azrieli Foundation and publisher of the Azrieli Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs. For more information, visit www.azrielifoundation.org.

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 8, 2014

The politics of kashrut

CJN Investigation: First of a three-part series

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Part way through an interview, Rabbi Moshe Bensalmon becomes particularly animated. He's been talking about his interpretation of Jewish law as it pertains to insects that can be found in vegetables and fruits, but when the discussion turns to his reputation he becomes angry.

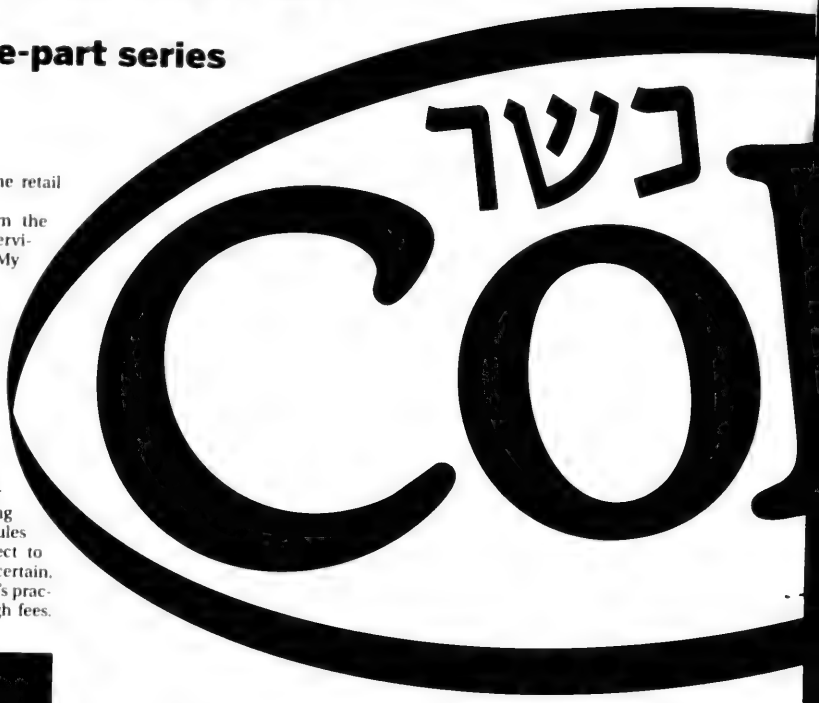
A letter had been put up at a mid-town Toronto yeshiva in 2011 questioning his ability to determine what is kosher and what is not. The letter, he said in a raised voice, embarrassed him in his role as kashrut administrator of the Badatz Toronto kosher certification agency, which he, along with Rabbi Amram Assayag of the Sephardic Kehila Centre, founded in 2008.

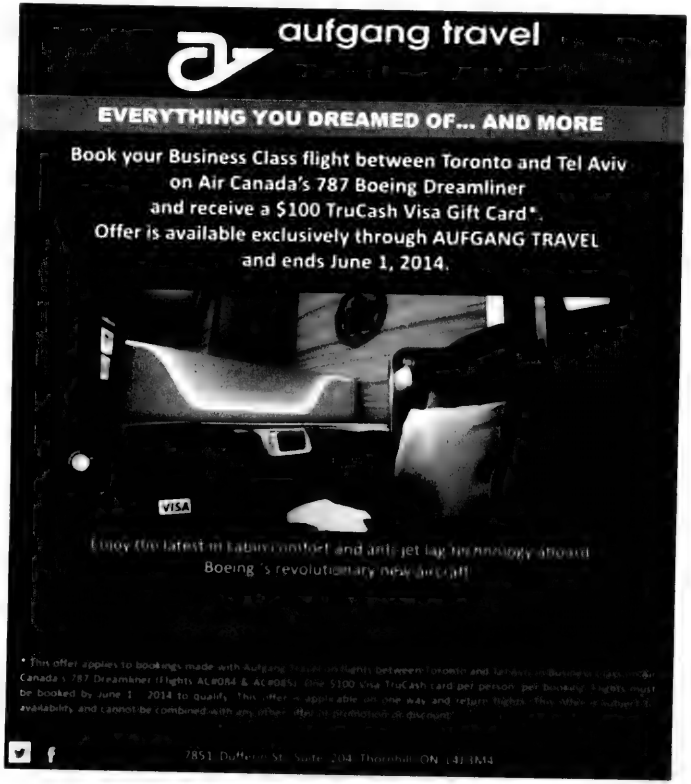
The document questioned Badatz's certification of lettuce that may contain bugs and suggested the produce should not be considered kosher enough for the retail trade.

"That embarrassed me, as I'm the head mashgiach [kashrut supervisor]," said Rabbi Bensalmon. "My reputation is at stake."

The incident is one of several since Badatz began to challenge the market domination over kashrut supervision in Toronto that has been held for years by the Kashruth Council of Canada, which administers the COR hechsher and is also known by that name.

Several suppliers and caterers contacted by *The CJN* had their own complaints about COR. Among them were allegations that its rules appeared arbitrary and are subject to inexplicable change, costs are uncertain, as if subject to whim, and that COR's practices have led to unnecessarily high fees.

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There are also concerns that COR's practices have limited the availability of Badatz-supervised products to the kosher market.

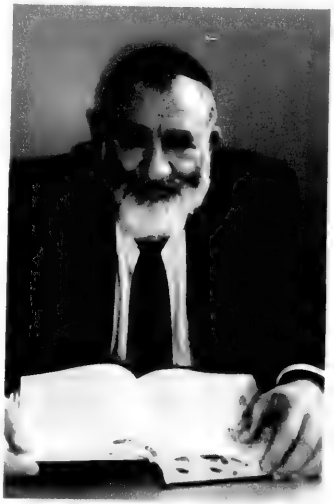
To date, Badatz has attracted around 25 clients. Rabbi Bensalmon believes it could be more but for questions being asked about the company's kashrut credentials. More egregious, he said, is that COR has let its clients know that if they switch to Badatz, their products won't be permitted in COR-sanctioned premises.

"We did lose many clients, caterers, manufacturers," he said.

For more than 20 years, Rabbi Bensalmon worked for COR, supervising the kosher food operations at Sobeys Clark Avenue supermarket for much of that time. His departure from COR did not end amicably. Issues pertaining to his termination ended up in arbitration before a rabbinical court, or beit din. The court's 2008 decision called on COR to pay Rabbi Bensalmon $100,000, including $10,000 for injury to reputation. The beit din also called on COR to provide a favourable letter of reference – which Rabbi Bensalmon says he never received – and on the parties to "obligate themselves not to disparage or speak negatively regarding the other."

While Badatz is a relative newcomer to the kosher certification scene, COR has been around for more than 60 years.

It started life as the Kashruth Committee of Canadian Jewish Congress, but after rapid growth, "which made the job of effective management by Congress difficult... it was decided that COR should become its own legal entity," COR stated in an ad that is running in today's paper. It was incorporated as a non-profit entity in July 2000 and began to operate independently in 2004.



Rabbi Moshe Bensalmon

Critics say COR charges too much for its services. Caterers and manufacturers who have moved to Badatz say the rival agency's fees are lower and the supervision just as extensive as under COR.

One company, Hubberts, which produces cooking oil, ended a longstanding contract with COR when it forecast its annual bill would reach $45,000. Instead, it found alternative supervision under Triangle-K, an American kashrut agency, and Badatz for about half that price. Prior to Hubberts' decision to let its contract with COR lapse, it was involved in several disputes with the agency over practices at its Brampton plant that COR felt jeopardized the kashrut of its product and that required a full review. COR suggested several changes to Hubberts' practices and proposed raising its supervision fees from $67 a visit to $90.

Craig Simpkins, systems manager at Hubberts felt the disagreements with COR were a pretext for raising the fees.

Raphy Amar and his wife, Joelle Edery, operate Beverly Hills Catering. From 2004 to 2008, they ran Gladstone's, a kosher restaurant. That business folded because of high operating costs, including a $2,000 monthly fee to COR, said Amar.

According to Morley Rand, a former COR mashgiach who has been involved in litigation with his ex-employer on several fronts, COR faced competition last year for its kashrut supervision at Sobeys store in Thornhill. The Montreal Vaad Ha'ir, which administers the MK hechsher, offered to do the job for $100,000, about half of COR's annual fee. COR dropped its fee by $60,000 to retain the contract, Rand said.

MK would not comment on the amount of its bid. Sobeys did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

COR refused to answer questions posed to it by *The CJN*. In an emailed statement, the kashrut agency wrote, "COR is not afraid of competition and indeed, we work closely with all of the major kosher certifiers."

Zuchter Berk, one of the city's biggest kosher caterers and a longstanding client of COR, has had a positive relationship with the kashrut agency.

"The relationship with COR is the same as we have with the health department," says Zuchter Berk's co-owner, Isaac Drookman. "At the end of the day, you have rules and regulations, and you have to follow the rules and regulations."

COR, he added, "is flexible, there's always give and take. I think they proved to me that they showed flexibility in many areas. There's give and take and [the relationship with COR] is collegial."

Edmund Duarte, founder of Uptown Gourmet, which has had the catering contract at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue for 5-1/2 years, says COR initially refused to grant him kosher certification because he is not Jewish, but said he could overcome that by taking in a 25 per cent partner who is Jewish.

After 18 months with his partner, Duarte bought out him out. "It cost me [a lot of money] to get back what belonged to me," he said. "It appears the religion is very elastic and the rules change."

A few years ago, Applause Catering, was approached by Beth Tzedec Congregation to bid on its catering contract. With Badatz providing its hechscher, Applause won the contract in 2011. When COR found out, it sent an email to board members of COR. The email, sent by Rabbi Tuvia Basser, CEO of COR, on Sept. 14, 2011, noted that the Beth Tzedec had solicited bids for its catering service, including from a "high-end treif caterer who also operates a rarely used kosher division under Badatz Toronto, who gives certification even to caterers who run treif catering as well."

Later that day, Badatz responded with an email of its own. Addressed to COR board members, Badatz alleged the earlier COR email was meant "to protect COR's financial interests at Beth Tzedec" and "misrepresent[ed] the facts."

The Badatz letter noted that Applause Catering is not a treif business, that one of its partners is shomer Shabbat, and that "Badatz only certified premises that are completely separate where only a kitchen under lock is operated with a full-time mashgiach." The Badatz letter also pointed out that two COR-certified establishments prepare both kosher and non-kosher foods and operate on Shabbat and Passover.

Beth Tzedec also responded angrily to the COR email.

In a letter dated Sept. 27, 2011, sent to Rabbi Yacov Felder, vice-chair of COR and to Rabbi Basser, Carolyn Kolers, president of the synagogue, called the suggestion that the shul was considering hiring a "treif caterer... untrue and defamatory." She asked that COR send a retraction notice to all recipients of the previous email.

On Oct. 6, 2011, Rabbi Basser wrote COR board members saying his "lack of precision in the wording of that email... led to a misunderstanding of his position."

As a "clarification," Rabbi Basser wrote that "Beth Tzedec Congregation has always provided, and intends to continue providing, a high standard of kashrut and would only hire a caterer that upholds those values. I retract any implication otherwise."

Only a few months before the Beth Tzedec incident, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto had looked into its kashrut policy and agreed to sanction events supervised by Badatz Toronto.

In a May 19, 2011, letter to Badatz representative Moti Bensalmon, UJA Federation stated that the organization's executive committee "voted to approve using venues and caterers under Badatz Toronto supervision. We have confidence in the high level of kashrut supervision provided by your agency and look forward to working with Badatz approved caterers and venues."

Despite the approval of an important community agency, Badatz has found it difficult to attract clients.

"Once COR heard we were getting into the catering business, they spoke to those people to persuade them not to go with us," said Rabbi Bensalmon.

"They claim sovereignty on an entire city that belongs to them, and nobody else is allowed to open up another kosher organization," he said. ■

To what extent does COR's dominant market position in kashrut certification affect the prices paid by consumers? Next week *The CJN* looks at this issue and whether, as a $5-million charitable organization, COR is giving enough back to the community.

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OPINION

It's not enough to remember and feel bad

Avrum Rosensweig

Yom Hashoah is when we remember the Holocaust and the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis.

Around the world, events are held to help us understand the atrocities, which included the brutal murder of 1.5 million of our children. Survivors remind us of the death marches, Jewish sex slaves and the medical torture of Josef Mengele.

Technology has enhanced our ability to remember the lives and deaths of one-third of our people, two million Roma, homosexuals and the disabled. On Yom Hashoah, you can watch March of the Living events on your phone from the comfort of your home. You can listen to former Israeli chief rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, a survivor of Buchenwald, lead memorial services in Poland, along with the sweet voices of Israeli singers and orators.

Millions have been spent on such events. This year 10,000 young people flew to Poland for the March of the Living and joined in "death marches" and prayers at Auschwitz, draped in Israeli flags and singing loudly. The esthetics are breath-taking. The idea that we're reclaiming our history in Europe through spirited horahs in the streets of Poland is encouraging.

Holocaust education is alive and attracts participants and donors at every turn. Books, theatre and buildings continue to be underwritten, so that we can remember. Kol hakavod!

However, here is a most disturbing fact: Holocaust education is predicated almost entirely on one thing, and that's remembrance, not action.

Let's look at the March of the Living as a case in point. Since it was launched in 1988, more than 150,000 teens from around the world have made the trek to Poland and Israel to, according to its website, "study the history of the Holocaust and to examine the roots of prejudice, intolerance and hate."

There's absolutely no requirement that alumna do anything but learn about what happened to our people (and so many others). There's no obligation to commit time and sweat to remedy the injustices and inequities happening today, both in the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds. This is very troublesome.

A couple of years ago, two philanthropists decided there was something terribly wrong with this scenario – that young people would return from such a powerful and sometimes traumatic trip with angst in their soul and yet not have to, for instance, help impoverished Jews in Ukraine or Iran, fight on behalf of underfunded survivors living in Israel today, advocate on behalf of Jewish and non-Jewish shut-ins in Vaughan, Ont., or downtown Toronto, or help ensure the safety of Roma in Hungary and the rest of Europe.

The two set about implementing a plan whereby March alumna would tap into various tikkun olam programs and initiatives. The plan failed. Among the reasons were a lack of Jewish federation support and the belief among March leaders that we cannot demand that our youth become involved in follow-up activism.

The outcome, as Hillel professionals will tell you, is that March of the Living (and Birthright Israel) participants don't flock to programs on campus to counter anti-Israel/Jewish programs. Ask Jewish volunteer organizations if they're having problems attracting young people to counter the very serious challenges we're living with today, including the rise of anti-Semitism, and they'll answer "yes."

So what of Holocaust education? What exactly are the lessons we're trying to teach? Is remembering enough?

As we move forward, I call upon all Holocaust education organizations to establish sound and authentic follow-up programming, including leadership development and on-the-ground activism.

Similarly, I ask that a philanthropist reading this step up and pledge funds specifically for the purpose of getting our young people to become directly involved in issues affecting the Jewish world, the impoverished and the "stranger."

It's not enough to remember. It's not enough to know why. It's not enough to feel bad. We must act, for if we do not, those who perpetrate evil will leave goodness far behind. ■

Quebec teaches us a valuable lesson in civility

Bernie Farber

Last month, we learned a valuable lesson about public discourse. And it came from, of all places, Quebec.

Former premier Pauline Marois should have won the provincial election handily. She believed that by playing the intolerance and bully cards, Quebecers would finally hand her the majority she craved.

The Parti Québécois' proposed "charter of values" – I called it the charter of intolerance – that made certain faith groups second-class citizens was her touchstone. Targeting those who wear kippahs, niqabs and turbans, Marois believed she had found the secret ingredient that would bind most Québécois together. She was wrong. Yet intolerance, bullying and libel are still very much with us.

A recent editorial in this newspaper outlined the parameters of acceptable behaviour. Kol hakavod to editor Yoni Goldstein for articulating a modern worldview utilizing the ancient Jewish concept of lashon hara (the sin of the evil tongue).

According to Jewish law, any statement – written or verbal – that leads to hurt or humiliation or damages the well-being of another is lashon hara. More serious is the sin of defamation, or *motzi shem ra*. Judaism strongly recognizes the importance of one's character and the danger of gossip and slander. And perhaps much to the chagrin of those who claim to hold the truth as a defence, in Judaism, no such defense exists. In Jewish law, the only deciding factor is whether the statement causes harm.

Thus you would think that Jews more than most would know better. Sadly, too many who publish bigoted political blogs that utilize bullying words and the worst forms of both lashon hara and *motzi shem ra* come from our own community

In the past, it was difficult for bullies to gain a public pulpit. Letters to newspapers were closely monitored to ensure that slander and intimidation were not published. Likewise for magazines and TV. Professional mainstream media, for the most part, undertook the responsibility to self-regulate. Today, anyone can publish anything and distribute it through blogs, Twitter and Facebook to potentially thousands in the blink of an eye.

Whether from the hard right, where many of these blogs originate, or the far left, which also engages in personal attacks, it's time we return civility to public discourse.

Make no mistake: I'm not advocating that uncivil behaviour be regulated. I suppose people have a right to be rude, ignorant and ill-mannered. And for the most egregious of hate speech, Canada already has some very robust anti-hate laws. My point is to make a case for what Canadians do best: engage in vigorous, passionate civil debate.

Our tradition is rich with stories that tell us of the importance of guarding our tongues. We're told the tongue is so powerful that it requires two gates (the lips and teeth) to restrain it.

Marois aptly demonstrated over the course of the election campaign what happens when both the lips and teeth fail to do their job. And while the PQ remains a political party to be reckoned with, Quebecers thankfully did not let her tilt toward intolerance and bullying and instead chose respectful engagement.

My dear friend and former Canadian Jewish Congress colleague Eric Vernon got it right when he wrote of John F. Kennedy's 1961 inaugural address admonishing both sides of the Cold War divide that "civility is not a weakness."

More than 50 years later, Vernon expanded on Kennedy's admonition quite wisely, noting that "civility is an essential component of a healthy, vibrant democracy that encourages civic engagement and the frank discussion of opposing perspectives in the public square."

When it comes to public discourse, let's not settle for mediocrity. Let's work toward true civility. In that regard, I'm always reminded of the words of my late mentor, Louis Lenkinski, a Holocaust survivor, tough trade unionist and former chair of CJC's community relations committee, who advised: "Never engage in a pissing match with a skunk. Just let the skunks pee amongst themselves." ■

OPINION

Reform Jews must look at themselves

Rabbi Dow Marmur

Reform and Conservative Jews feel discriminated against in Israel. The rabbinic establishment shuns them. Though the state pays salaries to some non-Orthodox rabbis, it ignores and discriminates against them in many other ways.

Polls indicate many secular Israelis favour equal rights for all religious streams, yet most non-observant Jews choose Orthodox synagogues and rabbis for life-cycle events. Of those who turn to Conservative and Reform congregations, only a few actually join them, and even fewer are actively involved.

Nevertheless, non-Orthodox Jewish movements remain committed to Israel. They show it, for example, by insisting that their rabbinical students spend at least a year there. If some return less than enthusiastic about the state, it may be due to a sense of not really being wanted.

I perceived some of that when I heard a Shabbat sermon last month at the Jerusalem campus of Hebrew Union College, which trains Reform Jewish professionals. The weekly portion was Metzora, which deals with an affliction called *tzara'at*, often erroneously rendered as leprosy but is better identified as "a mysterious and causeless malady that renders you utterly incapable of partaking in society."

That's how it was described by the speaker, Sam Kaye is completing a year in Israel before returning to the United States for the rest of his five-year rabbinical training. Referring to the ritual unfitness that may cause the affliction and deem sufferers to be outside the camp yet still inside the Israelite community, he suggested that's how many Israelis perceive Reform Jews.

I believe he reflects the feelings of most of his fellow students: "All too often, especially in this city, it feels as if Reform Jews are the modern lepers of the traditional Jewish world, described as unfit and unqualified to participate in matters related to spirituality. While we remain in the secular realm, we're tacitly accepted… but when we desire to enter into the realm of that which is holy, suddenly our infection bubbles to the surface."

He believes the reason is that "Reform Judaism lifts up a mirror to Jewish society and reminds it of an uncomfortable truth" about the Orthodox establishment. He argued that "those that society has traditionally deemed 'spiritually unfit' are actually quite capable of embodying spirituality."

Kaye seems to have had in mind the "big tent" that Conservative and Reform Judaism advocate. They and other liberal groups seek to make room for as many Jews as possible, irrespective of halachic status and chosen lifestyle.

He urged perseverance in the face of establishment intransigence: "Even if authorities don't believe in our message or when they invalidate the messenger, it doesn't change the need to continue holding up the mirror and show our people the flaws, the cracks, and the impurities they would rather pretend did not exist."

Escape into victimhood is common among those who feel discriminated against. Self-righteousness to the point of claiming higher moral sensitivity than others is part of the defence mechanism.

But Kaye went further. He urged the future Reform rabbis, cantors and educators whom he was addressing to apply the same scrutiny to themselves as they do to others. Our critics, he said, are also holding up a mirror "that is shedding light on our failure to maintain Jewish identity" and they're sending us a message "eerily similar to our own: 'turn inward; acknowledge where you have left others behind.'" Instead of self-pity and self-righteousness, he advocated self-scrutiny.

Hence his sober conclusion: "When we demand that others face their reflection, it is fundamental that we do not find ourselves unable to bear that same self-scrutiny when our own turn arrives." Being victims doesn't entitle us to be smug. Responding to our critics includes being steadfast in our commitment, yet learning from them, despite their belligerence.

I can think of no more apt way to articulate my own Judaism: stand my ground as a critic, but apply the same rigid standards to myself. I'm grateful for the reminder. ■

Citizenship revocations as national security tool

Danny Eisen and Sheryl Saperia

Bill C-24, the Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act, has headed to a parliamentary committee for further study. From a national security perspective, the bill's most interesting provisions are those allowing the government to revoke the citizenship of Canadians convicted of terrorism or treason, or who engage in armed conflict with Canada.

These crimes fall under a narrow category of egregious misbehaviour. Treason and armed conflict are actions perpetrated against Canada as a national entity and political community. The same can be said for terrorism, particularly when committed in Canada, against a Canadian target, or in association with a terrorist group banned by the Canadian government (in effect a public enemy of Canada). It's therefore fitting that one consequence of these crimes may be loss of citizenship to the country the offender either seeks to harm or utilizes to inflict damage abroad.

To be sure, a measure as severe as revocation of citizenship must be drafted to ensure conformity to Canadian laws and international obligations.

In accordance with the UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the bill provides that if a person holds only Canadian citizenship, it's not possible for that citizenship to be revoked – regardless of the offence – because no person can be stateless.

However, this has opened up the argument that the bill unfairly creates two classes of citizens: those with dual or multiple citizenship who are at risk of having their Canadian citizenship revoked, and those with only Canadian citizenship who may be punished in a variety of ways but cannot lose their citizenship.

For dual nationals who have chosen that status – often because of personal connection to, or benefit from, more than one citizenship – this is not a compelling argument. Dual citizenship was not forced upon them, and they can choose to renounce their other citizenship so as to be solely Canadian and, therefore, not subject to these provisions.

But what about foreign states that do not permit renunciation of citizenship? Would this subject an individual from such a country to unfair treatment under the bill?

Fortunately, citizenship revocation is not automatic and decisions are to be made on a case-by-case basis. Our recommendation in these cases, more specifically, is to have the immigration minister assess the extent of the person's "active relationship" to the other citizenship. Does the person maintain deep ties to the other country? Has he invoked any rights of that citizenship? Has he travelled with the passport of that country or served in an official capacity only open to citizens? The more active the citizenship, the weaker would be any claim that his other citizenship was forced on him and that he would renounce it if the option were available.

While citizenship revocation is an important tool to deal with those convicted of the most serious crimes against Canada, preventative and disruptive action must also be part of the package. Counter-radicalization programs are essential.

Strengthening exit controls for both sole and dual citizens is another option. Ray Boisvert, a former assistant director of intelligence at CSIS, once suggested that "there has to be an easy way to trigger a denial of a passport – or the removal of somebody's passport – if there is sufficient information to demonstrate this person has become highly radicalized and or made threats, or done things to threaten lives or the welfare and well being of others." The RCMP's recently disclosed High Risk Traveller Case Management system, which is intended to "prevent radicalized youth from leaving for conflict zones like Syria, Somalia and North Africa," seems to employ just such a mechanism, among others.

Western security agencies are concerned that their citizens are travelling to Syria and other theatres of jihad, gaining the skills to pursue similar acts in their home countries. If the citizenship revocation provisions in C-24 help prevent bloodshed from being exported to or from Canada, they are worth parliamentary consideration. Let's remember that it took only 19 hijackers to perpetrate the 9/11 attacks. ■

News | GTA

Ukrainian Jewish leader says Russia a threat

SHERI SHEFA
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Ukrainian-Jewish community leader Josef Zissels was in Toronto last week to urge Canadian Jews not to fall for Russian propaganda that paints Ukraine as a fascist, anti-Semitic country and implored them to lobby the Canadian government to impose aggressive economic sanctions against Russia or risk paying a "very high price" later.

During a visit to *The CJN* office, Zissels, the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress' chairman, explained that a little more than two months ago, 40,000 Russian troops invaded the Crimean peninsula.

"They came, based on their propaganda, to save the Russian [-speaking] population [and to protect Jews] from the fascists. And for two months, 40,000 Russian soldiers have been looking for fascists and they have not been able to find one," he said, tongue placed firmly in cheek.

Speaking through a translator, Zissels, who was invited by the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter – a non-profit cultural group that promotes stronger ties between Ukrainians and Jews – to talk about what is really happening in Ukraine, said Jews in the west have so easily accepted the Russian propaganda because of Ukraine's "dark" history with anti-Semitism.

Josef Zissels SHERI SHEFA PHOTO

"But Ukraine has changed significantly. The changes happened not only since the Soviet Union broke up, but the changes began in the '50s and '60s," Zissels said, adding that it's hard for people who have not lived in Ukraine for the past 30 or 40 years to understand that.

"When Russian propaganda says that there are fascists in Ukraine, it's hard for those who are not able to check the facts not to believe the propaganda."

Zissels went so far as to "guarantee" the new Ukraine is safe for Jews.

"I'm not saying [anti-Semitism] doesn't exist. It always exists," he said. "But we see in the new Ukrainian government that they battle against xenophobia and anti-Semitism… But if they at some point move away from this direction, we will be the first to criticize them."

Zissels, who was once jailed for six years in Russia as a political prisoner, spoke about the skepticism he faced when he was the first Jewish leader to endorse the Maidan movement, the anti-Russian protest that succeeded in toppling the government of former Ukrainian president Viktor Yankovych.

Many Jews who opposed the Maidan movement were wary of the support it received from a party called Svoboda, which used to hold anti-Semitic views.

"In Svoboda, some of the leaders did make anti-Semitic statements in the '90s, but they were a marginal group at the time… In recent years, they've completely moved away from anti-Semitic propaganda, and because of that, they won places in Parliament, because people stopped being afraid of them," Zissels said.

He added there are people in the party who are anti-Semitic and have posted disparaging content on their personal blogs, but they're in the minority and don't represent the party's official views.

Zissels also downplayed the significance of leaflets distributed in Donetsk urging Jews to register or risk deportation, saying that it was nothing more than a "provocation."

"Even the Donetsk Jews aren't panicking over the flyers, because they understand that it is a provocation, and these flyers didn't add much to the anxiety, because there is already anxiety because of the militarized situation."

Rather than focus on the perceived threat of anti-Semitism in Ukraine, the international community should focus attention on Russia's obsession with "renewal of the empire," Zissels said, adding that it's imperative to "find a mechanism to stop this aggression. If we don't stop this in time, then we will have to pay a very high price for this like this we did in the 1940s. In 1935, it was easier to stop, but to stop in 1945, we had to kill 50, 60 million people."

He said stronger economic sanctions need to be put in place against Russia, which is already struggling economically.

He emphasized the importance of western governments putting pressure on Russia, but said Canada "has done actually quite a lot, because I think Canada understands the situation better than the United States." ■

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Patrick Martin is Senior Correspondent for the Globe and Mail, with special attention to the Middle East. He did two postings (1991-95 and 2008-12) as Jerusalem- based Middle East correspondent. Between these postings, he served as the paper's Foreign Editor and Comment Editor. Mr. Martin has been a witness to history in the region. He reported on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Yitzhak Rabin's election as prime minister in 1992 and the IDF offensive in Gaza in 2008-09.

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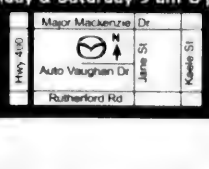

Seen are some of the Ve'ahavta staff's Live Below the Line team. From left are Ruth Hart, Ilana Linden, Robyn Segall and Avrum Rosensweig. They are making a V with their hands to signify the Ve'ahavta team.

Ve'ahavta poses the question:

Can you live below the poverty line?

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Close to 10 per cent of Canadian households live below the international extreme poverty line of $1.75 a day, according to some Children's Aid Society statistics.

For five days, staff from Ve'ahavta, the humanitarian and relief organization, took up the challenge of trying to eat and drink on that dollar amount, taking part in Live Below the Line, a global movement that raises money to combat extreme poverty.

Participants in the challenge experience the struggle that more than 1.2 billion people face every day.

"When you actually put yourself in an environment where you, on some level, have to feel that level of hunger, it becomes more real," says Avrum Rosensweig, Ve'ahavta president and CEO and *CJN* columnist.

For the challenge, Ve'ahavta's staff participants pooled their money together and strategized how to make the most of their budget. Mornings consisted of half a cup of oatmeal and half a banana, while lunches were lentil potato stew. Cheap fruit and eggs were also available at the office to help those craving a snack.

"You become so conscious of how you're rationing," said Robyn Segall, director of communications and operations, when *The CJN* interviewed her on the first day of the challenge. "I'm already so hungry and cranky. People have foregone their morning coffee."

Rosensweig said that even though he has shifted his diet to more fruits and vegetables because his son is vegan, Live Below the Line is still challenging.

"It's not easy," he said. "You're also thinking about what people who are truly impoverished go through. Emotionally, that's a challenge as well."

The committee raised $14,000 over the April 28 to May 2 period for three initiatives, with the goal of alleviating poverty, locally and around the world. People can still register and take the five-day challenge until June 30. The target goal is to raise $50,000 for these three programs. The organization has an anonymous donor who will match the grand total.

One of the recipients of the funds is the Ve'ahavta Street Academy (VSA), an eight-week education course for homeless and at-risk Torontonians that prepares them to go back to school and get off the street.

Classes empower these people by teaching them how to take the first steps on the road to a post-secondary education, as well as how to take on volunteer and leadership positions. Two of the original VSA participants will graduate with diplomas this June, Segall said.

The funds raised also went to Br'iut, a new program launched in Northern Ontario to assist with health initiatives on underserved First Nations reserves. The organization places graduate-level social work or public health students in these communities.

The last recipient was Muso, an international organization focused on eradicating disease in vulnerable areas around the world.

Live Below the Line began in Melbourne, Australia, in 2010 and has since spread to four other countries. The Global Poverty Project runs the campaign, as part of the company's focus on equipping people with the power to combat extreme poverty.

"It's one thing to live on $1.75 a day for an individual, but if you pool it together with as many people [as possible], it becomes a bit more manageable," said Danny Richmond, director of youth leadership for Ve'ahavta.

Richmond brought the idea of doing the Live Below the Line challenge to the organization this year. More than 20,000 people worldwide, from Australia to North America, also participated in the challenge last week.

Rosensweig said Live Below the Line reminds him of Passover, when he reads in the Haggadah that people should really feel as if they were among the Israelites coming out of Egypt.

"I think what [the Haggadah is] saying is to metaphorically superimpose what the Jews of Egypt went through over today's experience," he said. "Understand what the trials and tribulations are of families here in Toronto... who perhaps have one meal a day, maybe two. There should not be a child in the world who has to go through hunger."■

Ontario to open Israel office to promote economic ties

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

The rain is falling, flowers are budding and if you breath deeply, you can make out more than just a faint whiff of an election in the air.

Coincidental with the season, the government of Ontario last week announced it was opening an office in Israel to help promote business and trade between the two jurisdictions.

The government will soon solicit applications for an official to run the office, someone with his or her finger on the business pulse of both Ontario and Israel, to better bring together potential partners for joint ventures or investments.

The office will likely open in the summer, said Eric Hoskins, minister of economic development, trade and employment. When it does, likely in proximity to the Canadian embassy in Tel Aviv, it will mark only the second Ontario representative office abroad during his ministry, joining one inaugurated in Sao Paulo, Brazil in 2014. Other Ontario offices are located in New York, San Francisco, Mexico City, London, Paris, Munich, Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo, and New Delhi.

"This should be a strong signal of the priority the government gives to this relationship," Hoskins said.

The government of Ontario created the ministry headed by Hoskins in 2013, with the mandate of "Going Global" when it comes to trade and growth.

"Increasing the number of Ontario companies that export and help companies expand their trade to new markets is fundamental to growth," the ministry stated.

Ontario and Israel did around $800 million in two-way trade in 2013, but, "I believe nothing can replace the ground focus to build and foster those ties, said Hoskins.

"Ontario and Israel have a long history of working closely together," the minister stated. There is opportunity for co-operation in the high-tech, energy and water sectors.

"Israel is an economically thriving nation with many strong connections to our province. An on-the-ground presence in Israel will forge new partnerships between businesses, and help Ontario companies grow and create jobs here at home."

Last week, Hoskins hosted a roundtable at the Ontario Investment and Trade Centre. Close to 30 business and community leaders gathered to brainstorm ideas to help the project succeed.

"We brought the cream of the crop around the table to guide us through this process going forward," said Hoskins, who has visited Israel four times, including twice as head of a trade delegation.

"Israel is a natural priority," he stated. Pointing to the significant Jewish population in the province, Hoskins said, "We have a great relationship between Israel and Ontario...so the business and other ties between Ontario and Israel are strong."

Israeli Consul General DJ Schneeweiss said Israel would co-operate to ensure the project succeeds, bringing benefits to both Israel and Ontario. "This is a reflection of our strength but also a reflection of the Ontario leadership to identify the opportunities," he said.

Joel Reitman, founder and president of Jillcy Investments, said "I'm a proud Jewish Ontarian who loves Israel.

"It's fantastic what's being done in Israel," said Reitman, whose company has invested in Israel's high-tech sector. "We're looking for investments all the time. Israel is certainly a wonderful place to invest in.

"Ontario is a treasure trove of very brilliant people too."

Barry Sherman, chair and CEO of Apotex, a pharmaceutical company, said the success of a representative office in Israel will be judged on the extent it helps make things happen.

"Apotex is eager to find any collaboration that makes sense," he said.

The company currently does not do business in Israel, largely because the industry is dominated by a big Israeli player.

But there's a lot of potential for business in Israel, he said. A trade officer "could be helpful as long as he works hard and sees the opportunities to synergies."

"We need someone to identify the opportunities and bring them to us."

Canada and Israel signed a Free Trade Agreement in 1996, and in 2005, Ontario and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote industrial research and development. To date, 14 industry-led joint R&D ventures have been approved in the areas of medical devices, information and communication technology, manufacturing, clean tech and life sciences. ■

Seen here, from left, are Barry Sherman, chair and CEO of Apotex; Eric Hoskins, Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment; Larry Tanenbaum, chair of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment; DJ Schneeweiss, Consul General of Israel; and Monte Kwinter, MPP for York Centre.

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'Panov program' to study individualized cancer treatment

Part of a $3.8-million, three-pronged sarcoma research project at Mount Sinai

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Yaron Panov is flanked by his wife, Dr. Rochelle Schwartz, left, and his physician Dr. Sharla Lichtman. PAUL LUNGEN PHOTO

Four years ago, Yaron Panov's oncologist gave him what could be considered a death sentence. Panov was suffering from sarcoma, a particularly aggressive form of cancer, and doctors in Toronto had no solution. Their advice: go home and get your affairs in order.

Not content with that suggestion, Panov and his wife, physician Rochelle Schwartz, searched for options available in other jurisdictions. They found one developed by an American-Israeli company, Champions Oncology, which has proven effective and kept Panov alive longer than the months he had been given to live.

Now they want other Canadians to benefit from the same innovative technology that has helped Panov.

On May 4, a fundraiser was held to launch the Panov Program in Precision Chemotherapy, a co-operative venture of Mount Sinai Hospital and Champions Oncology.

It's one part of a $3.8-million, three-pronged sarcoma research project at Mount Sinai, said Kevin Goldthorp, president of the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation. The others will study the effectiveness of drugs on treating the disease and its genetic component. Contributors can designate that their donation goes only to the Panov program.

Panov and Schwartz say their goal is to raise $1.5 million over the next six months to fund three to five years of research into the efficacy of the treatment promoted by Champions. If successful, the results could prove persuasive when it comes to convincing OHIP to fund the technology, which can cost $15,000 to $20,000 for three to five chemotherapy trials.

That's down from the $40,000 it cost Panov and Schwartz four years ago.

Schwartz said the approach developed by Champions, and employed in England, Singapore and Israel, has proven more successful than traditional chemotherapy.

Tissue samples are taken from the patient and implanted in immune-deficient lab mice. The cancers are allowed to grow, and then the mice are treated with various chemicals to determine which drug works best.

Once that pharmaceutical is found, it can be used on the human patient, with 90 per cent assurance that if it worked in the mice, it will work in the person.

In addition to proving remarkably effective, it saves the patient the experience of undergoing the hit-and-miss, trial-and-error process that is currently employed. The cocktail of chemotherapy drugs may or may not work, but they often leave the patient feeling terrible, Schwartz said.

There is a tremendous need for new approaches to treat sarcoma. Fifteen per cent of all cancers in children are sarcomas, and it's the cancer that took Terry Fox's life, Schwartz added.

A recent study published in the journal *Cancer* showed there was a high degree of correlation between the results in the mice and in human patients.

The findings were published online in a study titled *Patient-derived xenografts for individualized care in advanced sarcoma*. Commenting on the findings, David Sidransky, director of head and neck cancer research at Johns Hopkins University and chair of Champions Oncology said, "It has been a long-time goal of the oncology community to develop therapeutics and treatment protocols that can be tailored to individual patients for the best outcomes. These data support the promise of using TumorGrafts to accurately predict drug response in clinical settings."

Sidransky was guest speaker at the weekend fundraiser.

Schwartz said a meeting about a year ago with physicians from Mount Sinai led to the current pilot project. Once funded, the program will see 50 sarcoma patients in Toronto undergo the same procedure that helped Panov. Because of the cancer's aggressive nature, he continues to take drugs to keep it under control.

Sharla Lichtman, Schwartz's medical partner at the Genesis Professional Group and Panov's physician, said the "shidduch" between Champions and Mount Sinai is "a win-win proposition."

"Nobody's making money here," added Schwartz. "We're making history."

As for Panov, he is hopeful others can benefit from the treatment developed by Champions.

"As a patient, I don't need to go through the trial and error and be told after three or four months, 'Sorry, it doesn't work.'

"When I go to this chemo, I know it's working. There's a reassurance that it worked in the mice, it will work on me.

"It gives such a boost to your morale and you feel better about yourself, that it can succeed since it was tested on a piece of my body.

"That's huge in healing," he said. "It's better for you mentally and physically." ■

TLF

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The Toronto Jewish Literary Festival returns! A full week of literary programs geared towards diverse audiences in different locations and in partnership with other Jewish organizations across the city. All programs are FREE or pay-what-you-can (PWYC); registration required.

SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2014 | 4:30 PM | FREE
TJLF @ Yidishtog, Annual Simcha Simchovitch Lecture: Goldie Morgentaler on Chava Rosenfarb
Miles Nadal JCC, Room 318, 750 Spadina Ave.

"'I Am Still There': The Recreation of Jewish Poland in the Canadian Novels of Chava Rosenfarb," a lecture on one of the most important Yiddish writers of the 20th Century. Readings by Eileen Thalenberg in Yiddish and English. Presented together with UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish and as part of Ontario Jewish Heritage Month. This event takes place as part of Yidishtog, a day of lectures and music, celebrating the *mameloshn*. Check **kofflerarts.org** or **milesnadaljcc.ca** for more information.

MONDAY, MAY 26, 2014 | 7:30 PM | PWYC

Matti Friedman: The Aleppo Codex
Temple Emanu-El,
120 Old Colony Rd.
Matti Friedman, hailed by the *Canadian Jewish News* as a "modern-day Indiana Jones," speaks about his book *The Aleppo Codex* and the thousand-year-old mystery surrounding this precious copy of the Hebrew Bible.

TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2014 | 8 PM | FREE
Helen & Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards Bram and Bluma Appel Salon, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.
The 26th annual Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards ceremony, celebrating excellence in Canadian writing on Jewish themes and subjects. Hosted by Cynthia Good

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2014 | 7:30 PM | PWYC

Ira Robinson, Canada's Jews: In Time, Space and Spirit
Temple Emanu-El,
120 Old Colony Rd.
Ira Robinson speaks on his latest book, a collection of essays about the history, geography, and spirit of one of the world's largest Jewish communities.

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2014 | 7:30 PM | FREE

Nora Gold: Fields of Exile
Artscape Youngplace,
Flex Studio, 180 Shaw St.
Nora Gold launches her new book, *Fields of Exile*, the first novel about anti-Israelism in the academe. It was selected by *The Forward* as one of the "5 Jewish Books to Read in 2014."

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014 | 1 PM | FREE
Chantal Ringuet: Voix Yiddish de Montréal
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.

Scholar, poet and translator Chantal Ringuet presents her recent French-language anthology of Canadian Jewish writers with an introduction by Lazer Lederhendler. Lecture in English. Readings in English, Yiddish and French. Presented together with UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish, Friends of Yiddish, and the Toronto Workmen's Circle

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014 | 3:30 PM | PWYC
A Basket of Apples: Stories by Shirley Faessler
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.
Toronto-based journalist, author, publisher, public speaker and noted genealogist, Bill Gladstone launches a new edition of Shirley Faessler's beloved *A Basket of Apples*, a group of short stories about Jewish characters in Kensington Market in the 1920s and 1930s. Karen Hines, the author's granddaughter, reads from the stories.

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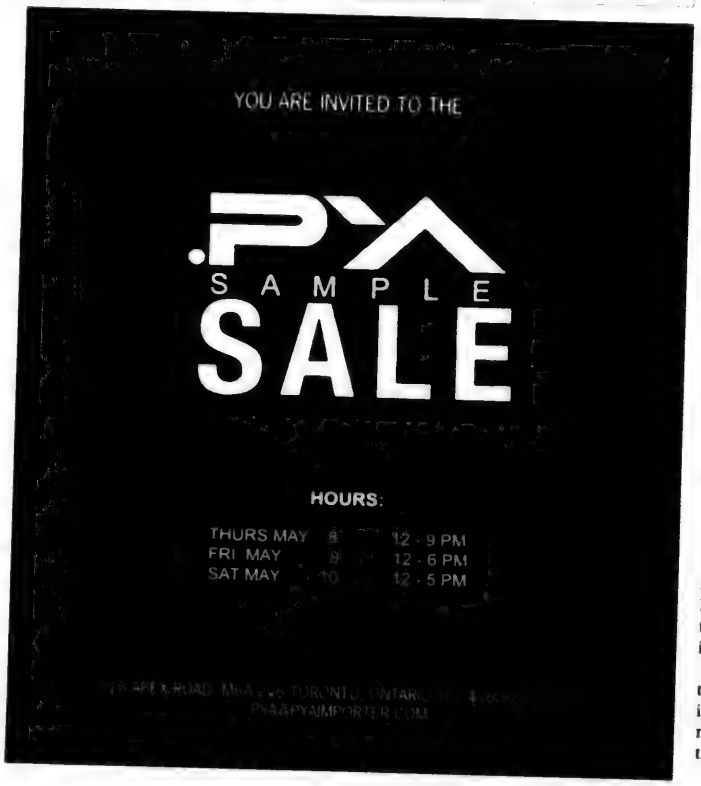


Empowering students through kindness

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Kindness Week, a program designed to empower students through acts of kindness, will engage hundreds of Toronto-area students from kindergarten to Grade 12 in an effort to address issues of stress, anxiety and isolation, while building school spirit and stronger community ties.

Modya Silver, a 52-year-old father of five with a 25-year background in marketing and technology, is the founder of Kindness Week, which will run for the first time from May 5 to 9.

Silver said his desire to do tikkun olam work and to try to inspire others to be kinder to one another was an evolutionary process.

"Part of the evolution was that I got very interested and passionate about the school of Mussar," he said.

Mussar is a Jewish movement that focuses on character strength development, Silver explained.

"So I had a teacher for a number of years and we would work on a particular trait for at least a year and a half and when we got to the trait of kindness, of *chessed*, then it really spoke to me. There was this resonance, like, this was my trait, meaning that this was a trait that I needed to develop."

He said he was inspired to start a website called Kuppah, which lists about 30 Jewish and/or Israeli charities to which one can chose to donate.

"Because I have a technology background it all made sense for me to build this website... but I wanted to get my hands dirtier and help people," Silver said.

After running some local projects in the community, he decided to approach the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a grant.

He said their message to him was that he should think bigger.

"These projects that I was doing were beautiful, but they were only helping a limited number of people and it just seemed like I could do something even bigger than that and that is where Kindness Week came from," Silver said.

"This is really about empowering students to showcase who they really are," he said, adding that the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) partnered with him on the event, as did a number of schools in York Region, and Jewish day schools including Tiferes Bais Yaakov, Associated Hebrew School's Hurwich campus, and the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

"Kindness Week isn't about giving kids the opportunity to be kind, it's really giving them a platform to showcase the kindness they already have and celebrating that kindness."

Modya Silver, Kindness Week founder

Silver said this idea borrows from a relatively new psychological approach that focuses on nurturing positive traits rather than trying to eliminate negative ones.

"The school of positive psychology says... let's just start building on the positive traits like kindness, compassion and love and empathetic joy and all those things," Silver said.

"My thinking is that we have serious problems with students like bullying, stress, anxiety and depression and there are some wonderful organizations that deal with that. But maybe there is room for a new organization like mine to focus on building the positive traits for the kids who suffer from depression and anxiety and so on."

Although this program is only in its first year, it has already garnered attention from Toronto City Council. On May 6, Toronto city councillors Joe Mihevc and James Pasternak will proclaim the week as Kindness Week.

Silver and his Kindness Week participants were also invited to take part in TDSB's annual Social Justice Fair at York University on May 7, during which Kindness Week representatives will make a presentation to the head of the TDSB.

"A lot of the programming is going to be happening in the schools, like a school cleanup, or a whole class will write gratitude cards and then walk over to the local fire station or to their custodian or crossing guard, or whoever, and hand these gratitude cards to them," Silver said.

"I was just working with a school this morning that might go to a grocery store and help people bag or carry the bags out to the car and load them in the car."

Silver said that when some people learn about Kindness Week, they ask, 'and then what?'

"We're looking forward to a long-term relationship with the TDSB and in future years we want other school boards to be involved," he said.

"I'm looking to evolve this into a charity that would focus on proactive engagement of students, and character strength development."

For more information, visit www.kindnessweek.ca. ■

GUEST VOICE

Film offers truer account of Jesus' death

JIMMY BITTON
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The film *Son of God* portrays the life and death of Jesus with such sensitivity that Anti-Defamation League national director Abraham Foxman stated that the film will be "the antidote to the poison that [Mel Gibson's film] *The Passion of the Christ* became." The latter was accused of fanning the flames of hatred by reviving the claim of deicide (killing God), while the former is being celebrated by many Jewish leaders for being the most earnest and gentle attempt to tell the story of the most important trial in human history in a way that's not bad for the Jews.

Gibson revived the old canard of Jewish guilt, in contradiction to historical truth and to the repudiation of the Catholic Church and most Protestant churches. *Son of God* is being warmly received by many Jewish leaders because it embraces historical truth rather than the biblical narrative, which uses literary devices to lay the blame for Jesus' death squarely on the Jews.

The historical truth accepted by most modern scholars of antiquity is that the biblical narrative found in the Gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke calumniate the Jews by way of literary devices. The Gospels are polemically charged sources whose goal is the advancement of theology, not the accurate recording of history.

According to Mark's account, the high priest asks Jesus if he is "Christ the Son of the Blessed." For a Judean high priest to construct this question in the way purported by Mark is theologically peculiar, and thus unlikely, because it would suggest his recognition that the Messiah would be the son of God – an idea completely foreign to early Judean exegeses.

It seems plausible that the author has fabricated this as a literary technique to lay the blame for Jesus' death at the door of the Sanhedrin, whom intentionally overlook a truth they purportedly admit – that Jesus is the Christ. This condemnation of the Sanhedrin is, more importantly, a rhetorical ploy aimed at demonstrating that even the Judean legal and religious leadership believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but nevertheless, their wickedness overcame them, resulting in them handing over Jesus to Pontius Pilate.

The narrative of the trial of Jesus contains distinct differences compared to the one told by Mark. Matthew adds that the high priest and the council "sought false testimony" against Jesus, whereas Mark only writes that they "sought testimony." And to the question, "Are you Christ?" Mark's Jesus replies, "I am," which is in contrast with the author of Matthew, who changes the text to read, "You have said I am."

The addition of "false" in the book of Matthew is a rhetorical device intended to further attribute Jesus' death to the wickedness of Judean legal institutions. Interestingly, Matthew is silent on the timing of the trial (at night), and the sentencing to death of Jesus by the Sanhedrin. By overlooking these items found in Mark's narrative, Matthew by inference endorses them, thus affirming that the trial took place at night and that the Sanhedrin passed a death sentence.

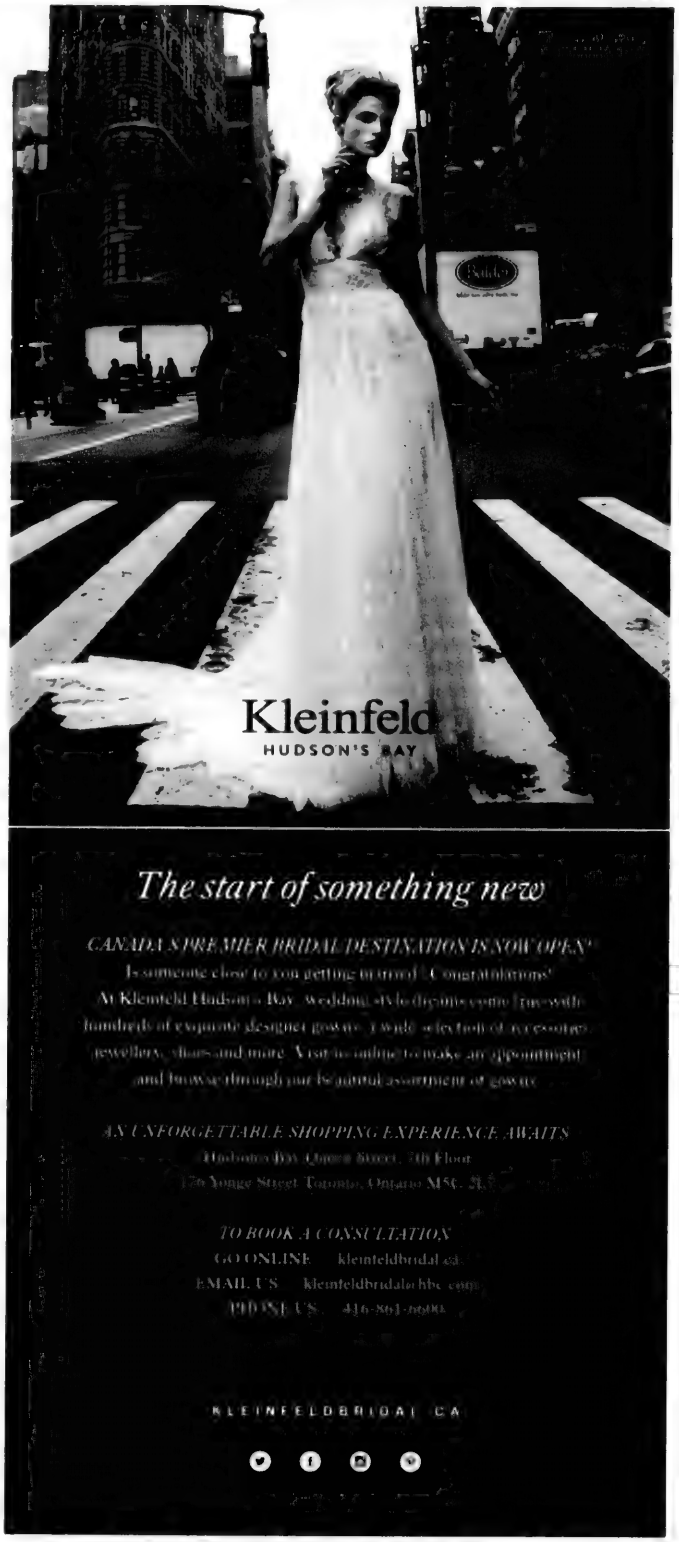
In contrast to Mark and Matthew, who largely corroborate each other's account of the trial, Luke deviates from their narrative in several significant ways. For one, the weight of responsibility for Jesus' death is moved from the Romans to the Jews – possibly out of a politically motivated apologetic purpose, that is, to legitimize Christianity in the eyes of the Romans.

Differences that are more germane include: a) Luke situates the proceeding in the morning (not at night), perhaps to give the trial legal validity; and b) "And they led him away to their council" means, according to historians Steve Mason and Thomas Robinson, that "he moves the scene of the trial from the high priest's house to the Sanhedrin's council chamber."

Confusion between narrative and historical truth exists as a common hazard in the writing of history. In the case of Jesus' death, the results have been untold and unspeakable Jewish suffering for millennia. A new era in a Jewish-Christian relations has begun with the shifting of accountability from the Jews to the Romans. *Son of God* reinforces this historical fact, which can only be good for the Jews.

The film will be released on Blue-ray and DVD in June. ■

Jimmy Bitton is head of the Jewish history department at the Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Kimel Family Education Centre.



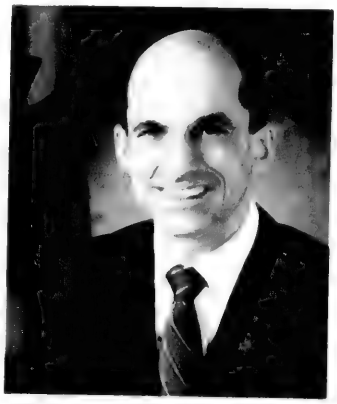
NATIONAL

Relief organization named terrorist entity

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

The now moribund website of the International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy (IRFAN-Canada) claims it is "an international humanitarian... organization; dedicated to overcoming poverty and providing hope for the poor and the destitute worldwide."

But the reality is quite different, according to the government of Canada. On April 28, the federal Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness designated IRFAN-Canada a "terrorist entity." It joins a number of other similarly designated organizations, including Al Qaeda, the Taliban, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah and Hamas.



Steve Blaney

"It is now a criminal offence to knowingly deal in the property or finances of this entity," the ministry stated on its website.

The announcement coincided with RCMP raids on IRFAN's headquarters in Mississauga, Ont., and a residence in Montreal.

"An extensive amount of documentary evidence along with stored media, money and other records were seized," the RCMP stated.

According to Public Safety Minister Steve Blaney, IRFAN transferred $14.6 million "to various organizations associated with Hamas," between 2005 and 2009.

"The government of Canada is unwavering in its commitment to protect Canadians from the threat of terrorism. By listing IRFAN-Canada, we are sending the strong message that Canada will not tolerate terrorist activities including the financing of terrorist groups. IRFAN-Canada has knowingly financed Hamas, a listed terrorist entity, for many years. The well-intentioned and charitable Canadians who sought to support humanitarian relief through this organization deserve better," Blaney said.

The developments caught IRFAN and its lawyer by surprise. The organization had been preparing to go to Federal Court this month to challenge a 2011 ruling by the Canada Revenue Agency that revoked its charitable status.

"We're very concerned about the timing [of] this listing... which completely undermines any ability for this organization to work as a charity," IRFAN's Ottawa-based lawyer Yavar Hameed said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

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Weizmann lauded for helping women pierce glass ceiling

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Naama Geva-Zatorsky, who was honoured April 29 by Weizmann Canada at its "Wonderful Women" event, said it's the support of the Weizmann Institute of Science that allows her to thrive as a female scientist in a field dominated by men.

Geva-Zatorsky, a Weizmann PhD and former post-doctoral fellow who is currently completing a post-doctoral fellowship at Harvard University, said she was honoured to be recognized by her alma mater, which she considers a "world-class institute."

"Every time I get recognized, it enriches my self-esteem and encourages me to continue. The route has quite a few challenges... It's a lot of hard work... you can survive it only if you're really passionate about it," Geva-Zatorsky said.

"At this stage, most of the Israeli women – because of the two- to three-year army service, or because of our culture, or both – we are usually married, or approaching marriage with perhaps a kid or a plan for a first child. At the end of my PhD, I had two kids, and moving abroad with a husband and kids is quite a challenge, so this is a kind of glass ceiling for women scientists," said the mother of three, who travelled to Toronto for the fundraiser with her two-month-old daughter.

Naama Geva-Zatorsky GIL TAMIN PHOTO

She said in her field of biology, PhD candidates are usually split 50 per cent male and female. But at the post-doctoral level, the number of women drops dramatically.

> *"I'm studying good bacteria, the symbiotic bacteria in our body.*

She applauded Weizmann for creating the Women in Science award, which she received in 2011, because it "encourages women, lets them know they're good enough, that they're strong and encourages them to go further to the next step, the post-doc... It is difficult to be a woman scientist, but these enlightening initiatives really help to push us forward."

Geva-Zatorsky, 36, who was named Europe's top young researcher of the year in 2012 by the United Nations Education and Science Organization (UNESCO), talked about the elements of her research that are garnering attention in the scientific world.

"I'm studying good bacteria, the symbiotic bacteria in our body. Our body contains 10 times more bacteria cells than human cells, so we can think of ourselves more as bacteria than human," she said in an interview with *The CJN*.

"They are living within us in an intricate bond. We are eating our food, but cannot digest everything. They help us digest, and in turn, we provide them with an enriched environment for them to live in. It's an emerging field, and in the past few years, I joined a lab that studies these bacteria and their effects on our immune system."

She said her findings could also help treat diseases such as inflammatory bowel disease, colitis, irritable bowel syndrome and even multiple sclerosis.

Three other women were honoured alongside Geva-Zatorsky at the event, which welcomed more than 250 guests to Casa Loma.

Jennifer Weiner, the *New York Times* best-selling author of 10 novels, including *In Her Shoes*; Karen Kain, the National Ballet of Canada's artistic director; and Sherry Cooper, celebrity economist, sought-after speaker, writer and adviser, were each honoured for their success in their respective fields. ■

Community comes to rabbi's aid after pre-Pesach fire

DIANE KOVEN
OTTAWA CORRESPONDENT

When fire destroyed the home of Rabbi Chaim and Yocheved Boyarsky on April 2, 2014, leaving them and their five children homeless, one of their first concerns – once they knew everyone was safe – was for the students who would be counting on them for Passover meals.

The Boyarskys, co-directors of the Ottawa Chabad Student Network, were planning to host two seders for students who were unable to return home for the holidays, as well as to provide kosher-for-Pesach meals for them throughout the week. They had expected to do the cooking and host the students in their home, but this became impossible.

The Boyarsky family moved to a hotel, where they will remain until their home is rebuilt. According to Rabbi Boyarsky, the damage was estimated at $100,000. Fortunately, insurance will cover the repairs, but it will take some time before the home can be inhabited again.

Bram Bregman, vice-president of community building for the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, led the community effort to aid the Boyarskys so that they, in turn, could help the students.

"When we heard that a Jewish organization in Ottawa was in trouble, we took action. We helped them make alternate arrangements for their food preparation, and we set up a fund to help with any additional expenses they would be incurring to continue to offer their Pesach food and Pesach programs," said Bregman.

"The community raised over $5,000 for this effort."

Jenny Roberge, Ottawa's first and only female mashgiach, also came to their aid.

"We and the Boyarskys arrived in Ottawa at about the same time five years ago and have become very good friends. My husband found out about the fire on Facebook and told me. We were shocked. I stopped by the house on my way to work [at nearby Congregation Beth Shalom] and left a note for them to call me as soon as possible," she said.

It happened that none of the local synagogues was planning to kosher their kitchens for Passover, as no local caterers would be preparing food for the holidays, so the Boyarskys arranged to rent the kitchen at Congregation Beth Shalom.

Rabbi Levy Teitlebaum, head of the Ottawa Vaad Hakashruth, and Roberge, pitched in to help.

"It usually takes two weeks to prepare for Passover," said Roberge, "but we made that kitchen kosher for Pesach in two days!"

The Boyarskys and their team of helpers which included students and community volunteers – pulled off the amazing feat.

"We had a record number of students and volunteers, and we served about 800 meals throughout the week," said Rabbi Boyarsky.

They held two seders at Congregation Beth Shalom for 125 guests and served meals throughout the week at the University of Ottawa. No meals and no programs were cancelled.

"We are still running our programs, and we are looking forward to building bigger and better with God's help," Rabbi Boyarsky said. ■

Bram Bregman presents a cheque to Rabbi Chaim Boyarsky.

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IRFAN's ability to issue tax receipts revoked in 20111

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

The CRA revoked IRFAN's ability to issue tax receipts in 2011, saying, "CRA's findings indicated that IRFAN-Canada provided resources to operating partners that were run by officials of Hamas, openly supported and provided funding to Hamas, or have been listed by various jurisdictions because of their support for Hamas."

And last summer, IRFAN-Canada announced it was suspending operations, after CIBC said it would no longer provide it with banking services.

David Koschitzky, chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), commended the government for designating IRFAN-Canada a banned terrorist organization.

> *This move really should highlight for Canadians that terrorist groups are fundraising in Canada*
>
> **Noah Shack**

"All Canadians should be alarmed that millions of dollars were raised in Canada to support a foreign terrorist group with a long record of suicide bombings and other attacks against civilians," he said.

"This decision has been long in the making, and we note the tireless efforts of former parliamentarian and current CIJA board member, Stockwell Day, who called attention to IRFAN-Canada's disturbing activities nearly a decade ago.

"This move really should highlight for Canadians that terrorist groups are fundraising in Canada. This does happen and hopefully the listing will send a clear message that Canadians won't tolerate the abuse of their charity," said Noah Shack, CIJA's deputy director of research.

Security expert David Harris said the terrorist designation "suggests yet another situation in which Canada was vulnerable... as a kind of repository for extremist and related activity."

Harris, director of the International and Terrorist Intelligence Program of INSIGNIS Strategic Research, said Day, a former federal opposition leader, first alerted the Canadian public to the problematic nature of IRFAN in November 2004.

Relying on Israeli intelligence information, he warned the government of then-prime minister Paul Martin that there were "difficulties" associated with IRFAN, Harris said.

"It bears noting that if between 2005 and 2009, $14.6 million was channelled to inappropriate recipients associated with Hamas, that seems to be an indictment of the delay... Given the amount of harm it could cause, it should give us pause," he said. ■

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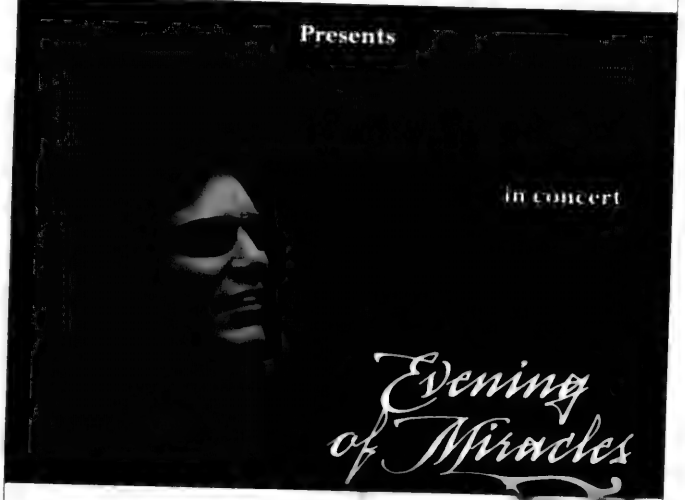

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Israelis stand silent for 25,664 fallen

ADIV STERMAN
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Millions of Israelis stood still in solemn silence Monday morning as sirens wailed throughout the country for two full minutes to mark Yom Hazikaron and to commemorate the 23,169 fallen soldiers and 2,495 terror victims who have died throughout the history of the State of Israel and the Zionist movement.

The sirens sounded at 11 a.m., bringing the country's bustling city centres and highways to a complete freeze. After the sirens, ceremonies commenced throughout the country, with some 1.5 million Israelis taking part in memorial events.

The official state memorial ceremony was held at Mount Herzl in Jerusalem and was attended by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Shimon Peres, and IDF Chief of Staff Benny Gantz, as well as other representatives of the IDF and the government.

"On this day, with a heavy heart and with our heads held high, with a sense of deep pain and pride, we all salute the fallen soldiers of Israel, our brothers and sisters, the heroes," Netanyahu said at the ceremony.

"We hurt over the sorrow of the widows and the grief of the orphans and the grief of the siblings. No pain in the world compares to the pain of parents who are informed of the falling of their children."

"I saw it up close when my parents were thrown into the dark pit of grief after the fall of my older brother," the prime minister said, referring to Yonatan Netanyahu,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

The IDF and Israel's security forces are the only thing that prevents past slaughters of Jews from being repeated, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday in his speech at the Yom Hazikaron ceremony on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem. ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

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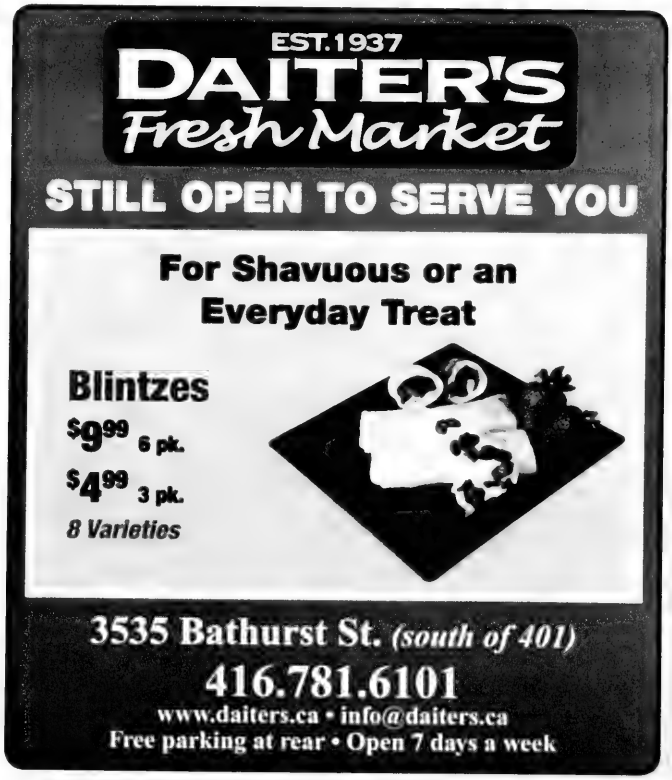

OPINION

Forty years in the wilderness

Sagi Melamed

I had lunch recently with the ambassador to Israel of an Asian country. The ambassador told me about his various ambassadorial duties, then added, smiling faintly, "One of my main tasks is to report back on what is happening in Israel, particularly with regards to the chances of reaching a peace agreement. I have to summarize and analyze the issues and indicate the opportunities and risks, the main topics and the obstacles. But to tell the truth, that's a relatively easy job. All I have to do is find the computer file of one of my predecessors' reports from five or 10 years ago, change the date and the signature, and the report is 90 per cent ready to go… Not too much has changed. You're still squabbling with the Palestinians over the same issues: borders, refugees, Jerusalem, security… it gets a bit boring for us to keep reporting that to our governments."

Driving south to Tel Aviv, I listened to the morning news on the car radio. To mark the 35th anniversary of the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, the radio station had dusted off various items of archived reportage, interviews and commentary from the political stars of that time: Menachem Begin, Ezer Weizman, Moshe Dayan, Ariel Sharon, Shimon Peres (of course) and others.

One of the commentators compared the fierce opposition 35 years ago to the peace agreement with Egypt to the opposition to a possible peace agreement with the Palestinians today. Here are three slogans of the time and their parallels today:

- "Uprooting settlements (in Sinai/in Judea and Samaria) will be the beginning of the end of Zionism."
- "We can't trust our bitterest enemy (the Egyptians/the Palestinians)."
- "Only the physical presence of the IDF (in Sinai/in Judea and Samaria and the Jordan Valley) can ensure Israel's security."

The first time I crossed the Israel-Jordan border via the Sheikh Hussein Bridge, some dozen years ago, I was moved almost to tears. I recalled how, as a child, I would visit my grandparent's tiny one-bedroom apartment on Kibbutz Ashdot Yaakov in the Jordan Valley. The sight of the Gilad Mountains on the eastern side of the Jordan River would cause me nightmares during my visits, as I was terrorized by thoughts of Jordanian mortar attacks and malevolent infiltrators. I have now crossed the Jordan more than 10 times since that first occasion, and my initial excitement has gradually given way to the feeling that this is a routine event.

Thinking back over the years, one can see that what today is routine and taken for granted was once thought to be impossible, a wild fantasy. Who, 60 years ago, would have believed that tens of thousands of Israelis would choose to live and work in Berlin? Who would have dared to dream, 70 years ago, that the United States would choose an African-American president?

Pesach is the Festival of Freedom, and Yom Ha'atzmaut is Israel's Independence Day. They represent more than just political freedom from the rule of others. They also represent our release from the chains of history and perception, of fear and trauma.

Moses needed 40 years in the wilderness because it was so difficult to find a patch of land in the Middle East without oil, says the famous joke (now outdated, with Israel's discoveries of natural gas and oil shale). But the more serious explanation ascribes the wilderness years to the long psychological journey from slavery to freedom, a transition that required a full 40 years to remove the slave's mental shackles and allow the Israelites to enter the Land of Israel as a free people, born to freedom.

Who will venture to predict the historical events, the drastic operations, the difficult steps that today seem to us to be impossible, yet will, a few decades hence, be understood in retrospect to have been the imperative of the hour? ■

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Bereaved Israelis mourn next to graves of fallen soldiers at the Mount Herzl military cemetery in Jerusalem, during Yom Hazikaron ceremonies. MIRIAM ALSTER/FLASH90 PHOTO

Ceremony held at Mount Herzl

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

who was killed during the rescue of Israeli hostages in Uganda during Operation Entebbe in 1976.

"It is a deep pit with slippery walls. It was difficult to emerge from it, and in a sense [my parents] never left it," he continued. "But it is possible to deal with the pain. You can continue, you can reintegrate again with the flow of life, you can create and build and contribute and strengthen others. But you must not forget, always remember and be comforted by the fact that the fallen gave their lives to build our state and to safeguard it."

According to the Defence Ministry, preparedness at the 44 military cemeteries nationwide was increased due to the extreme heat.

At 1 p.m. Monday, a separate commemoration for Israel's terror victims began at Mount Herzl.

Yom Hazikaron ended abruptly Monday evening with the start of celebrations marking Independence Day.

Israel came to a standstill Sunday evening at 8 p.m. for a minute-long memorial siren. The siren was followed by the lighting of a memorial flame to the fallen at the Western Wall, the site of the official state commemoration ceremony.

Speaking at a ceremony in the southern town of Kiryat Gat, Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman accused the Palestinians and their "sponsor," Iran, of rebuffing Israel's peace overtures.

"Each generation, the Israeli government has made every possible effort," to make peace with its neighbours, Liberman insisted. "But when there is no readiness from the other side, the matter becomes almost impossible.

"Our obligation, as a government, is first and foremost to take care of the security of the citizens of Israel," he continued.

"That obligation is absolute, and there will be no compromise on the matter, even with the threats from the Palestinian side… To every threat and provocation from the Palestinians, or their sponsors – that is to say, Iran – we will know how to give a proper and painful response. Our hand is outstretched in peace, but we will cut off any hand that threatens us." ■

Timesofisrael.com

Netanyahu aims to make Israel a Jewish nation-state

HAVIV RETTIF GUR
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu repeated his promise on Sunday to advance a constitutional Basic Law expressly identifying Israel as a Jewish nation-state.

Speaking at the start of his weekly cabinet meeting, Netanyahu rebuffed criticism of the plan, saying the state currently lacked "adequate expression" of Israel's "existence as the nation-state of the Jewish people" in the country's set of Basic Laws.

"It will define the national right of the Jewish people to the State of Israel, and will do so without harming the individual rights of all Israeli citizens in the State of Israel," he said. "It will fortify the Law of Return as a Basic Law. It will anchor in Basic Laws the status of the national symbols – the flag, the anthem, the language and other components of our national existence."

Explaining the immediate trigger for the bill, Netanyahu said Israel's Jewish status is under "constant and increasing assault from the outside, and even from within."

Israel doesn't have a constitution, but the country's set of Basic Laws have been given the standing of one by the courts.

As he did when announcing the legislative campaign last week, Netanyahu tied the new bill to the Israeli demand that the Palestinians recognize Israel as the Jewish nation-state.

"There are of course those who do not want the State of Israel to be defined as the nation-state of the Jewish People," he told the cabinet ministers. "They want to establish a Palestinian nation-state next to us, and that Israel slowly transform into a binational Arab-Jewish state in its shrunken borders.

"The State of Israel grants equal rights, full individual rights, to all its citizens. But it is the nation-state of one nation only – the Jewish nation – and not of any other nation. Therefore, in order to fortify Israel's status as the nation-state of the Jewish people I intend to lead the legislation of a Basic Law that will anchor this status," he said.

> "The State of Israel grants equal rights, full individual rights, to all its citizens."
>
> **BENJAMIN NETANYAHU**

Netanyahu first proposed the new initiative at a May 1 press event in Tel Aviv. His announcement immediately sparked debate between the right-wing and centre-left elements of his coalition on balancing the Jewish identification of the state with the country's democratic constitutional commitments. Netanyahu signaled on Sunday that he welcomed the debate, and that all sides would be heard.

"The new law will be drafted in a dialogue with all elements of the coalition, so that it protects the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state," he said.

Jerusalem's demand that the Palestinians recognize Israel as a Jewish state had been one of the major sticking points in the recently ended round of peace negotiations, with Netanyahu saying he will never sign an agreement without it and the Palestinians refusing adamantly.

Even outside the framework of peace negotiations, Netanyahu's plan is likely to cause controversy, as some 20 per cent of Israel's population is not Jewish. ■

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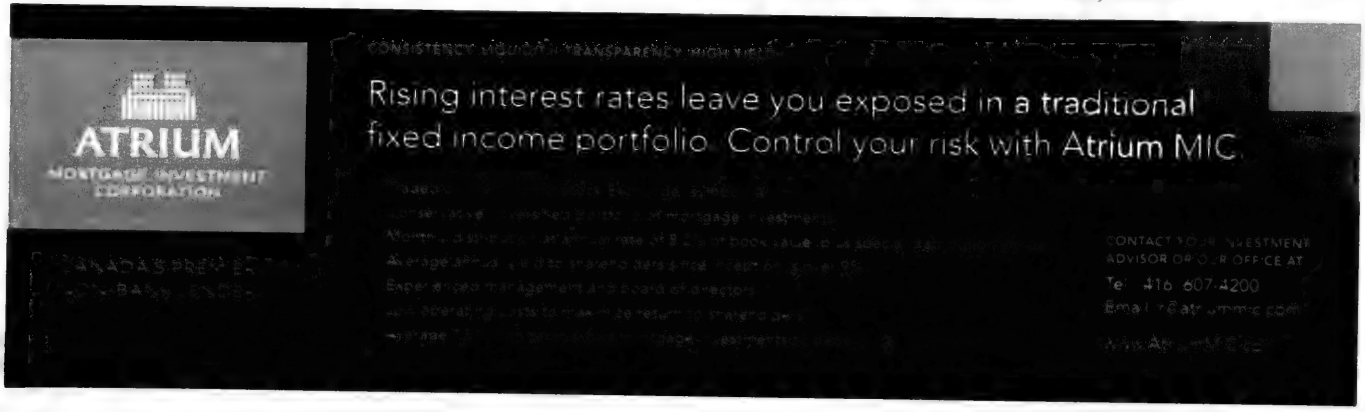
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OPINION

J Street vote: between fiasco and disaster

YEHUDA KURTZER
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

The surprisingly one-sided vote by the Conference of Presidents last week to reject J Street's membership reveals three major fallacies in American Jewish life, and provides us a moment – whether we revel or reel at this news – to learn something significant about our community.

The first major fallacy at play is the prevailing belief, suggested by this vote, that American Jews still constitute a polity whose consensus boundaries can be named and contained. If once upon a time "Jews earned like Episcopalians and voted like Puerto Ricans," we must now start to acknowledge – as was clear in the contentious Jewish debates about U.S. President Barack Obama and Israel leading up to the 2008 and 2012 elections – that Jews no longer think of themselves as an ethnically contained voting bloc, but rather are now divided, as is the rest of the country, into Jews who happen to be Democrats and Jews who happen to be Republicans.

Voting for J Street to stay on the sidelines is an attempt to sustain a polity that no longer exists and to imagine a firm dividing line between internal community dissent and external public debates. Consider: when right-wing Jews protest publicly outside UJA-Federation in New York as they did this week, blowing shofars and making noise against the policy of the Jewish community to include progressive Israel organizations such as the New Israel Fund in the Celebrate Israel Parade, they are ironically acknowledging that Jewish policy debates can no longer be defined as the internal workings of a coherent community. Intra-Jewish tensions are no longer the province of the board room, but apparently belong out in public at 59th Street and Lexington Avenue.

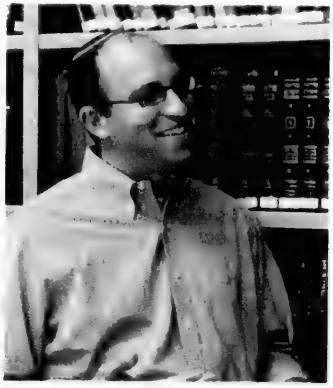
The fact J Street wanted in to the establishment meant that, in spite of policy differences with many of its members, it was ostensibly willing to try to belong to and perhaps even help sustain the declining Jewish consensus. The fact it's been kept out, essentially told to keep doing its work outside the framework of the normative community, actually reinforces the very breakdown of the communal structure from which Conference of Presidents is now a relic.

If once upon a time Jews agreed not to hang our dirty laundry in public, the American public square has become a Jewish laundromat – all with the tacit endorsement of what was once the community's mouthpiece and most influential instrument.

The second fallacy is the belief that the Jewish communal debate on Israel necessarily becomes more contentious when competing voices are brought around the table and that keeping ideas out of the room will succeed in suppressing them.

The debate on Israel and its policies is real, and ignoring or delegitimizing competing views that describe themselves as Zionist and pro-Israel – even if you think they are wrong – is both conceptually and strategically foolish. The theory behind keeping J Street out of the room is that its views are beyond the pale of reasonable debate and that bringing it to the table will poison the consensus. In truth, the naysayers have now actually constrained their ability to participate in and manage a debate that is now far larger and wider than what goes on at the conference and is outside the capacity of the conference to control.

No doubt the Jewish communal conversation on Israel needs a lot of work, though there are good initiatives underway (including by my own organization) that give room for optimism. But who thinks the conversation will improve when we reinforce the gravity of our differences rather than try to collaborate on the areas of agreement? The truth is, J Street won this vote: it and its supporters have campaigned for years to change what they have implicitly described as the echo chamber of the Jewish establishment. If ever there was proof of the point they have been making…



Yehuda Kurtzer

> *The fact that J Street wanted in to the establishment meant that in spite of policy differences with many of its members, they were ostensibly willing to try to belong to and perhaps even help sustain the declining Jewish consensus; the fact that they are kept out, essentially told to keep doing their work outside the framework of the normative community, actually reinforces the very breakdown of the communal structure from which Conference of Presidents is now a relic.*

The third major fallacy of the vote was the belief of Jewish organizational leaders that you can remain a leader and retain leadership while failing to respect and represent the views of those you are trying to lead. In the wake of the Pew Study, the *Forward* asked major Jewish leaders about the growing chasm between the attitudes on Israel expressed by their organizations and those expressed by the majority of the Pew respondents. Their response – as well as that of Evelyn Gordon of *Commentary* who came to their defence – was to create a hierarchy of authority privileging those who "know more" and "care more."

As Rabbi Jill Jacobs and I wrote then, this is partly true: leaders do possess a moral responsibility to sometimes act autonomously in the best interest of the people we represent, even if those actions are at times at odds with the people's own attitudes. But that approach is risky and must be managed carefully. To be credible, it must operate within a broader context of consistent curation of the consensus of the community.

One of the strange phenomena on the rise in the organized Jewish community is the belief that if people ask difficult questions, maintain dissenting views or even violate norms, the most effective response by leadership is to lash out, attack the questions or the questioners and close ranks.

Israel – like every other aspect of Jewish life today – is competing in the marketplace of ideas for American Jews. American Jews privilege their autonomy, and those who want to stay involved in Jewish life – especially younger Jews – are seeking honesty and authenticity from their leadership.

All is not lost for Jewish leaders seeking to be out in front, as people will still follow in search of meaning, community and all the other reasons why so many Jews still opt in to serious Jewish life. But foolhardy is the Jewish leader who believes the people will stay behind an organization because it has a history, an acronym or a history of successes leading a community that no longer shares the characteristics of the community of today.

So the conference vote is, frankly, something between a fiasco and a disaster. At best, the only thing we gained was a reality check on how the Jewish community and its leadership perceive itself in contrast to the realities in which it is living. Perhaps an outpouring of disappointment will help sway our leaders to understand this – maybe not to correct the vote, but at least to help them see things as they are and not hold on to some notion of what they once were. Otherwise, these fallacies become holes, and what use are umbrella organizations full of holes? ■

Timesofisrael.com

Yehuda Kurtzer is president of the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America.

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THOMAS (MINUK) ALI

Open Letter to the Jewish Community

כשר COR

The Kashruth Council of Canada (COR) would like to initiate a dialogue with the community about our services and in the interests of transparency, discuss our fee structure, our business model and our origins.

COR is a not for profit registered charity dedicated to serving our community by providing kosher supervision. COR traces its origins back to 1952 when a group of committed lay and rabbinic leaders formed an organization that would look after the community's kosher needs. This effort was done in concert with the Canadian Jewish Congress and "Congress" looked after many of COR's administrative office functions.

As the food industry and its supply chain grew in complexity, so did the demands of effective kosher certification. COR was growing at a rapid rate which made the job of effective management by Congress difficult, and as a result, it was decided that COR should become its own legal entity. In 2000 the Kashruth Council of Canada was incorporated as a not for profit corporation.

During the latter 30 of the 50 years when COR was under the auspices of Congress, COR's practice was to operate with a small annual surplus for contingencies. So, a $20,000 annual surplus for 30 years invested at reasonable returns yielded over one million dollars. Congress realized that building an organization would require significant start-up costs so the cash reserves that COR had accumulated were earmarked for these expenses. New premises were rented, additional office staff was hired, accounting systems were developed and software was developed.

These start-up funds were put to good use on behalf of the kosher community. COR has built itself into one of the world's most respected kosher certifiers, implementing industry wide best practices and employing people who are experts in both food science and Jewish law. COR is available as a free consumer resource for anything kosher: from koshering people's homes to answering kosher questions. Last Passover alone COR answered approximately 2000 consumer questions. We appreciate the confidence that has been placed in us by the Jewish community and are honoured to serve you.

COR is a not for profit organization and all fees collected go towards covering our operations and providing services to the community. In the food service division (i.e. restaurants and caterers) we actually operate at a financial deficit – our expenses are greater than our fees. We are able to marginally compensate for this loss from our other divisions. Customers choose COR because they know that we are reliable, we provide professional service, and our prices are in line with the other major kosher certifiers.

COR offers its food service clients (i.e. restaurants and caterers) two options of supervision:

1. A full-time working mashgiach; or
2. Route supervision

A working mashgiach is an employee of the business who works in different capacities as required by the proprietor but is also trained by COR, responsible for the kosher program, and reports to a COR Senior Mashgiach. Establishments that choose a working mashgiach are charged only $300 per month. Those that choose route supervision are charged an average of $650 per month, not including the inspection of fruits and vegetables. Included in this fee are the multiple daily visits by a regular mashgiach and several monthly audits by a senior mashgiach. In the course of a month, a COR route mashgiach provides an establishment with between 25-35 hours of supervision.

COR's financial statements are audited annually by Grunwald and Co., an independent accounting firm and our financial data is available to the public on Canada Revenue Agency's website listed below[1]. COR's entire operations are supervised by both a board of rabbis and a board of lay representatives appointed by local synagogues in our community and includes accountants, lawyers and business people who ensure that our organization is being run responsibly and in the best interests of the Jewish community.

There is nothing COR wants more than to see our certified establishments prosper and for consumers to have access to kosher food at competitive prices.

Ira Marder, Chairman | Jack Feintuch, Vice Chair | Shimshi Gross, Vice Chair | Naftali Winter, Vice Chair

www.cor.ca

[1] http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/lstngs/menu-eng.html

If you have any feedback, we would very much like to have a conversation with you.

Please contact our offices at 416.635.9550 to speak with either Richard Rabkin, Managing Director or Rabbi Tsvi Heber, Director of Community Kosher or via email at info@cor.ca.

Jewish Life

Russian violinist Vladimir Spivakov comes to Toronto. *Arts.* **PAGE 31**

A monument showing a Turkish soldier rescuing an Anzac soldier, and, right, a cove below the battlefield

Gallipoli a solemn reminder of war

NANCY WIGSTON
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

On a hot, cloudless afternoon our bus stops on a wild stretch of Turkey's coastline. A storybook shepherd pauses, allowing us to pass, his flock clustered behind him. Apart from a mild wind rustling through the pines, this acreage above the Dardanelles Strait seems empty, silent. It's hard to believe that this is Gallipoli, site of one of World War I's bloodiest battles.

Half a million soldiers fell here between April 1915 and January 1916. Though losses were massive – including an entire Turkish regiment – the Turks were successful in defending their homeland.

As for the young colonists from the far reaches of the then-British Empire, after being "nailed on the beach," in the words of Ikud, our guide – a mere 90 metres below these cliffs, the last troops from Australia and New Zealand withdrew from their trenches under cover of night in January, 1916.

Soon after the war, however, grieving Aussies and Kiwis began visiting the beaches, fields and trenches where their sons and countrymen had fallen. Eventually, Mustafa Kemal, or Ataturk, the charismatic Gallipoli leader and legendary father of the 1923 Turkish Republic, penned a moving letter to the Anzacs – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. His warm greeting is today inscribed in stone above Anzac Cove:

"Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives, you are now lying on the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us, where they lie side by side. You, the mothers, who sent them from far away, wipe away your tears. Your sons are now sleeping in our bosom and are at peace after having lost their lives on this land. They have become our sons as well."

Ikud tells us that the French, however, who lost some 5,000 men at Gallipoli, tend not to visit. "They say they have other things to talk about." But Gallipoli became a transformative event for both Turks and Anzacs. The Aussies and Kiwis among us are visibly moved by seeing the places their troops nicknamed Lone Pine and Johnston's Jolly. As David, a traveller from Sydney, explains, "Every Australian child grows up knowing these names."

Down Under, they love their nicknames. "Tall? We call you 'shorty'. Red hair? We call you 'blue.'" The Turkish defenders were called "Johnny Turk." That's part of the legend. But no nicknames could make these unforgiving hills seem familiar to a youthful army that soon dug into trenches – which we see at a later stop – while plagued by heat, flies, dysentery – and the stench of their comrades' bodies.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

Renowned Russian violinist to perform in Toronto

Vladimir Spivakov, centre with baton, with members of the Moscow Virtuosi chamber orchestra

MARVIN GLASSMAN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

In honour of Toronto-based impresario Svetlana Dvoretsky's 10th year showcasing mainly Russian artists, violinist Vladimir Spivakov and the Moscow Virtuosi chamber orchestra will be in concert May 9 at Roy Thomson Hall.

Spivakov and the Moscow Virtuosi will perform classical works by Mozart, Shostakovich, Piazzolla and Tchaikovsky.

After a chance meeting with Spivakov in downtown Toronto in 2003, Dvoretsky was given an opportunity to promote the violinist, an opportunity that seemed improbable at the time. Dvoretsky was a recent immigrant to Canada from Russia in 1998 and worked in retail sales, but had no background as an impresario.

However, she impressed Spivakov with her knowledge of the arts at their meeting, and he knew Dvoretsky's mother, a pianist Spivakov had studied with at the Rimsky-Korsokov Conservatory in Moscow.

"Mr. Spivakov told me, after a few more meetings, that he wanted me to meet his manager in New York so that I can be the presenter of his concerts throughout Canada. I was surprised, and I really appreciated having his trust. At the time, I had no budget, no background and no reputation yet as an impresario," Dvoretsky said.

Dvoretsky forged links with the growing Russian-Jewish community in Toronto and spread the word in Russian that Spivakov would be performing in Toronto. She had a sold-out audience for her first concert with Spivakov in 2004 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, netting $5,000 in profit for her company, Show One Productions.

"At the time, nobody in Toronto was promoting the classical artists from Russia that I knew about. Also, because of my fluency in Russian and knowledge of the community, I discovered that others I met grew up with a love of the classics, and I had an eager audience."

In her 10 years as an impresario, Dvoretsky has spread her wings to produce concerts in Montreal and Ottawa in addition to Toronto. Although she is including some non-Russian artists, among them Belgian singer Lara Fabian, on her roster of clients, Dvoretsky has found a loyal audience who have attended Show One Productions with Russian artists such as comic Maxim Galkin and singer Diana Arbenina.

She also has a strong affinity for her Jewish roots, becoming more immersed in celebrating holidays within the Russian Jewish community.

"I am proud to be Russian, but also to be Jewish as well, growing up proud of my Jewish background when I lived in St. Petersburg. I attend synagogue services for the High Holidays and for Pesach at a few Russian congregations in North York."

Dvoretsky wanted Spivakov to showcase her 10th anniversary, anticipating robust sales at the box office. "Spivakov is regarded by classical musicians as one of the best violinists in the world. The Moscow Virtuosi chamber orchestra that he founded is celebrating its 35th anniversary, so it is an honour to have him return to Toronto."

Born in Moscow, the 70-year-old Spivakov was a child prodigy, mastering the violin by age 13. He gained international prestige after his American debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1979.

He has worked with famed musicians such as Leonard Bernstein and Israeli conductor Pinchas Zukerman. Spivakov is the principal conductor of the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Russia.

Despite his fame, Spivakov never forgot being discriminated against in his youth because he is Jewish. "I was bullied as a child for being Jewish and took up boxing lessons to defend myself against gangs. I was also denied initially from attending the Rimsky-Korsokov Conservatory because I am Jewish. Fortunately, the ban on Jews was lifted when I was a teen."

Ironically the musician who was denied entry to the famed Russian conservatory won the highest honour in his country for his music, the National Cultural Heritage Award. ■

Vladimir Spivakov and the Moscow Virtuosi perform May 9, 8 p.m., at Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St., Toronto. The audience is invited to a post-concert reception featuring jazz artist Daniel Nardi. Tickets, 416-872-4255 or www.showoneproductions.ca

Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

NOVEL CHRONICLES DESCENT INTO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Montreal-born novelist **Eric Rill**, whose first two books were the political thrillers *Pinnacle of Deceit* and *The Innocent Traitor*, was working on a third thriller when he put it aside to pen *An Absent Mind*, a novel describing a descent into Alzheimer's disease. Rill, who now lives in Panama, said he wrote the book after watching his father struggle with the disease for eight years.

"My goal was not only to write good fiction, but also to provide readers with a true picture of this dreaded disease that afflicts more than 35 million people worldwide," he explained. "I knew I had to write this book to share the challenges faced by caretakers and loved ones as they watch someone they love deteriorate before their eyes."

The book focuses on the fictional Saul Reimer, husband and father, whose slide into declining mental health is shown alongside the emotional rollercoaster ride shared by his wife and children. *An Absent Mind* was published this spring by Avante Press. www.ericrill.com

• • •

Concert and Lunch: KlezKanada is hosting a fundraising concert, featuring its own students and master musicians, in aid of an ambitious scholarship program. For years, the Quebec-based Jewish cultural organization and music camp has been holding an international contest to find and bring the best 100 music students around the world to Klez Kamp to study and perform. The program costs about $100,000 per year. The concert luncheon is at the Oakdale Golf and Country Club, June 8, noon. Tickets $150 include a tax-deductible receipt. jgreenbe78@gmail.com or 416-252-8055.

• • •

Idan Raichel Project: Motek Cultural Initiative's third annual gala features The Idan Raichel Project; **Raichel**, who was lauded by the *New York Times* as a "singer of the world," performs with a 10-piece orchestra. Motek's post-concert VIP gala in Massey Hall's Centuries Bar & Lounge features dancing, themed cuisine, open bar and an opportunity to meet and greet Toronto dignitaries, philanthropists, businesspeople and members of the Idan Raichel Project. VIP tickets at $360 also include valet parking and other surprises. Massey Hall, May 10, 8 p.m. 1-855-556-6835.

• • •

Glitter, Doom, Shards, Memory: The inaugural 21C Music Festival at Toronto's Royal Conservatory features the world premiere of *Glitter, Doom, Shards, Memory*, a composition for string quartet by Pulitzer-Prize winning composer **Shulamit Ran** and performed by the **Pacifica Quartet**.

The composition was inspired by an exhibit of German artists of the period of the Weimar Republic (1919-1933), some of whom perished in the Holocaust; also by the haunting works of artist **Felix Nussbaum**. "Knowing that their days were numbered, yet intent on leaving a mark, a legacy, a memory, their art is triumph of the human spirit over annihilation," Ran explained.

Royal Conservatory of Music, 273 Bloor St. W., May 24. The "After Hours" concert follows the mainstage concert and should begin about 10 p.m. www.rcmusic.ca

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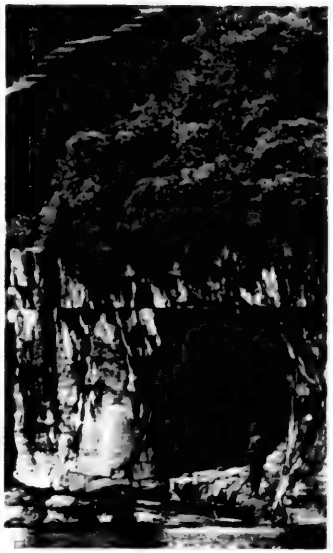
Stars of David: Harold Green Jewish Theatre and Angelwalk Theatre present *Stars of David*, the off-Broadway musical



***China – Back to the Future* is an exhibit of photographs by Brenda Hoffert.**

that offers a snapshot of modern North American Jewish identity set to music. It features words by many Jewish celebrities and songs by notable Broadway composers and lyricists. Conceived by **Aaron Harnick**, directed by **Avery Saltzman**, featuring **Darrin Baker, Gabi Epstein, Lisa Horner** and **Will Lamond**. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, May 10 to June 1 (opens May 14). $25 to $65. www.hgjewishtheatre.com, 1-855-985-2787.

• • •

Names in the News: Toronto-based Selfconscious Theatre and the Abilities Centre in Whitby have launched a crowdfunding campaign to support an upcoming production of *The Book of Judith*. The musical play was inspired by the friendship between theatre artist **Michael Rubenfeld** and **Judith Snow**, an artist and disability advocate who is quadriplegic. The show runs June 12 to 14 in Whitby. www.bookofjudith.com

Arts in Brief

- "In Conversation with Alan Borovoy" features the well-known champion of human rights and civil liberties in conversation with **Marvin Schiff**, discussing his recent memoir *At the Barricades* and his five decades of activism. Presented by Toronto Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W., as part of Jewish Heritage Month; free admission. May 13, 7:30 p.m.
- *Carnegie Hall 1938 – The Birth of Swing* is a commemoration of **Benny Goodman's** famed concert of 75 years ago, featuring the 15-member Galaxy Orchestra. Sanderson Centre, Brantford, Ont. Wednesday, May 14, 2 p.m. $38. 1-800-265-0710, www.sandersoncentre.ca
- Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** presents a two-part lecture on "Jewish Film Stars Who Influenced American Cinema," focusing on **Barbra Streisand, Woody Allen, Mel Brooks** and **Richard Benjamin**. Miles Nadal JCC, May 13 (Allen & Brooks) and May 20 (Streisand & Benjamin), 1 p.m. The Active 55+ series costs $20 for both lectures or $12 (drop-in) for each. Registration, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

At the Galleries

China – Back to the Future is an exhibit of photographs by **Brenda Hoffert** showing off a "new shiny China, unabashedly proud of its love affair with western culture, living alongside a China still steeped in antiquity." Presented as part of the Contact Photography Festival. Gallery 133, 1260 Castlefield Ave. Opening reception May 8, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. with artist in attendance. www.gallery133.com ■

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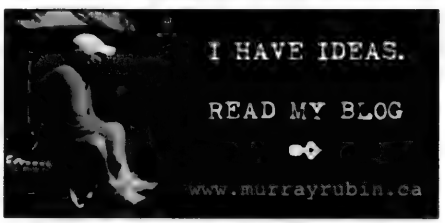


Captivating book examines Mussolini and Pope Pius XI

MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Although the slaughter we call war has been a constant of human history, the first half of the last century may well be regarded in the infinite horizons of the future as the most gruesome period of time through which humanity lived and suffered.

The war to end all wars between 1914 and 1918, alas, did no such thing. It was merely the melancholy precursor to the unimaginably horrific killing that began in Europe in the mid-1930s, swept across the world like red, hot fire destroying dry sage and that stopped, if only officially, in 1945.

Europe was then a nasty, boiling stew of demagogic politics, seething resentments, economic fears, exploitative finger-pointing, xenophobia and vile scapegoating. The black-shirted Fascists of Italy, led by Benito Mussolini, were among those who lit the flame and ensured the cauldron would boil without cease or relent.

Mussolini was an intriguing individual.

A man of massive vanity but empty of moral substance, haughty ways but low education, pompous bearing but crude character, he mesmerized most of his countrymen for more than two decades. He abolished parliamentary democracy, beat up political opponents, and in some cases had them killed, ruled by intimidation and brutishness, enacted grotesque "racial laws", despised the Church and its encumbering moralities and yet gained the loyalty, if not also the affection, of a majority of his countrymen.

In the early 1920s Adolf Hitler considered Mussolini his mentor. (The Nazi pupil, we know, would vastly surpass the Fascist teacher in devising fiendishly evil plans.) Mussolini and his squadristi (gangs) of bullies and henchmen led their country to national ruin and shame.

That a thug could reach the pinnacle of political power in his country has many examples, ancient and modern. Rule by gun and truncheon can be very effective. But a structure built by fear eventually crumbles underneath the weight of its own cruelty.

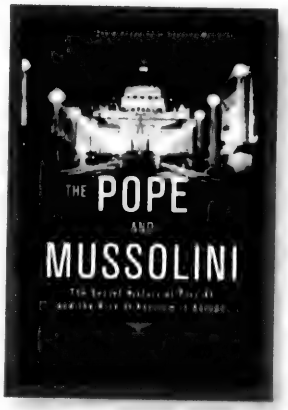
What has intrigued historians and has been the subject of argument and discussion over the years is the extent to which the Vatican opposed or aided him. Did the leadership of the Catholic Church in Italy inveigh and rail against the aggressive, roughhouse policies of Il Duce? Did they seek an accommodation with the dictator, as a way of lying low, so to speak, until the storm passed? Or did they actively and deliberately try to harness the storm, steering its wild winds away from causing harm to the clerical edifice they ruled?

In *The Pope and Mussolini*, Kertzer, a historian at Brown University, offers a definitive answer.

"The Vatican played a central role both in making the Fascist regime possible and in keeping it in power," Kertzer writes. "Far from opposing the treatment of Jews as second-class citizens, the Church provided Mussolini with his potent arguments for adopting just such harsh measures against them. The Vatican made a secret deal with Mussolini to refrain from any criticism of Italy's infamous anti-Semitic 'racial laws' in exchange for better treatment of Catholic organizations."

Not all the leaders of the Vatican were equally culpable in this enterprise. Indeed, Pope Pius XI grew increasingly to distrust Mussolini and regret his accommodations with him. It was his hope, as a last act before he died in 1939, to set the record straight and to unburden his conscience regarding Mussolini's "Un-Christian" policies with a specially written encyclical. But even this last act was thwarted by his fellow clerics who refused to distribute it.

Kertzer is uniquely qualified to write about the Vatican's relationship with Mussolini. The author of nine books, *Mussolini and the Pope* follows upon Kertzer's previous work, *The Popes Against the Jews*. In that book Kertzer examined the larger, equally delicate and difficult subject of how doctrinal Vatican teachings contributed to the proliferation of modern anti-Jewish sentiments.



The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe
David I. Kertzer

(Random House)

> *The Vatican played a central role both in making the Fascist regime possible and in keeping it in power*

In researching these books, Kertzer relied upon the previously sealed Vatican archives for his primary material. Indeed it was the recently canonized Pope John Paul II himself who unsealed that period of Vatican archives and who invited Kertzer to examine the vast library of documents and to draw the appropriate conclusions from them.

Faithful to the pope's instructions, Kertzer followed the evidence and pulled no punches in both books.

For *The Pope and Mussolini*, Kertzer spent more than seven years in archival research, which included poring over previously sealed Vatican documents and thousands of pages of Italian, French, British, American and German diplomatic correspondence, diaries and memoirs.

Afterwards Kertzer could write: "That the Duce and his minions counted on the men around the pope to keep Pius XI's increasing doubts about Mussolini and Hitler under control is a story embarrassing for a multitude of reasons, not least the fact that the central player in these efforts was Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, the man who would succeed Pius XI.... With the opening in 2006 of the Vatican archives covering this dramatic period, the full story of these years, in all its richness, emotional highs and lows and surprises can finally be told."

The Pope and Mussolini is a captivating work told with a scholar's attention to detail and the narrative skill of a journalist. Kertzer lets the documents and the words written more than 75 years ago tell the story that history, morality and truth demand be told.

This was Pope John Paul II's wish. Kertzer has honoured the late pontiff's wishes with solemn clarity. ■

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Cape Breton version of *The Big Chill*

KATHRYN KATES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Actor Dov Mickelson makes his main stage debut at Toronto's Factory Theatre in a play described as a Cape Breton version of *The Big Chill*. Written by Governor General Award winner Daniel MacIvor, *Bingo!* is running until June 1.

Bingo! had its world premiere in MacIvor's home province of Nova Scotia and has since toured the country.

The play is about a group of 40-somethings in Nova Scotia getting together for their 30th high school reunion. Bingo is the name of the drinking game they play in their hotel room.

"I play Jeff MacInnis, but his nickname is Heffer. We all call ourselves by our nicknames," Mickelson says. "The other two guys are Dookie and Nurk. Boots and Bitsi are the girls. Boots, Bitsi and Heffer have not left town. Nurk has gone out west and is very successful, and Dookie is a big real estate guy in Halifax."

Mickelson says, tongue in cheek, that there is very little acting required because in some ways the cast is very close to the people they represent, as they are similar in age.

"Sometimes you have these friendships that last your whole life and sometimes you are friends with people, just because you were friends in high school. At any age this happens, when you reflect back at stages of your life, it is like time travelling and sometimes when you are with old friends, it's like picking up even though 30 years has passed between you.

"It is certainly the way my memory of how *The Big Chill* was, with all these old friends getting together," Mickelson says. "Although that movie was about the death of a friend. But, there can be comparisons for sure. The play is seemingly simple but it's complex, there are these little layers like an onion in it that are beneath the comedy that are discovered. It is a really beautiful script and I urge people to come see it for a great night of theatre."

The actor think it appeals not just to those in their 40s but to those of all ages because of the sense of looking back at our lives and where we are at. He thinks the play speaks a lot to love and friendships and to some of the quirkiness of small town living.

"Daniel MacIvor has a wonderful dark sense of humour. People who know his writing will appreciate it. There are several versions of how he wrote this play but one of them was that his brother challenged him to write a play for him that appeals to everybody."

Mickelson says his Judaism is part of his makeup and who he is. "I have done some playwriting and being Jewish has influenced some of the subjects that I have written about for sure."

Before moving to Toronto 13 years ago, Mickelson worked with Catalyst Theatre in his hometown of Edmonton. His other stage credits include *On the Other Side of The World, The Winslows of Derryvore, Wizard of Oz, The Jones Boy, Dying to Be Sick* and *The Right Road to Pontypool*. On film and television he was in *Found Objects, The Associates* and *Finding Christmas for Hallmark*. ■

The Toronto premiere of Bingo! is directed by Factory Theatre's co-artistic director Nigel Shawn Williams and also features John Beale, Sarah Dodd, David Keeley, and Jane Spidell. Call 416-504-9971 or online at www.factorytheatre.ca

Dov Mickelson

SeeJN | A stellar attraction

Tel Aviv outfit Stellar Lane are in Toronto this week to perform as part of Canadian Music Week.They played on May 6 at the Bovine and will be at Wrongbar on May 10.

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To the Anzacs, Gallipoli is their Somme

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

For Canadians, Gallipoli may conjure memories of the 1981 Peter Weir film starring a fresh-faced Mel Gibson. English majors – I am one – might find themselves suddenly quoting out loud snatches of TS Eliot's dedication to his French friend in *The Wasteland* – "mort aux Dardanelles" inadvertently startling a Romanian tourist who's never heard of Eliot.

But just as it's said that our Canadian identity was forged at Ypres, Vimy Ridge, and the Somme, so Australians and New Zealanders consider that their national souls were forged right here, on this thin line between Europe and Asia Minor.

We walk past row upon row of neatly-kept headstones marking lives that ended at 17 and 20; a separate wall of names is brightened with red poppies. In Kabatepe War Museum we read letters and view history up-close – notably a bullet-pierced Turkish skull. Curiously, the same men who wrote home from "hell" voiced their respect for the "clean-fighting" Turkish soldier, leaving behind personal mementos such as watches, clothing, letters, as well as food rations for the enemy when they slipped away that winter night.

During some of the worst fighting – Aug. 12, 1915 – Second Lieutenant Stewart Fawkes wrote home that he suddenly "came round again." Looking up, he "saw many Turks around me with kind and tender looks. In the Turkish trench that I was previously trying to subjugate, they gave me water and food, and brought me to a first aid place, carrying me on their shoulders. I am really thankful for this magnanimous…humane treatment." Such was Aussie/Kiwi respect for the Turks that they refused the issue of gas masks because they didn't believe "Johnny Turk" would use gas against them.

A guide points towards the route of the advance to Gallipoli NANCY WIGSTON PHOTO

About a month into battle, a ceasefire was called so the dead could be buried. Our guide tells stories about soldiers offering chocolates and sweets to one another while trying to communicate in sign language. "Why are you invading us?" asked the amazed Turks when they discovered their enemies came from Australia and New Zealand. Why indeed. In Ikud's words, "Churchill had blundered." That April day proved a disaster for the British Empire. In today's ANZAC Day's parades, the only foreign flag flown belongs to the Republic of Turkey.

The First Lord of the Admiralty's plan seemed feasible: wrest control of the vital Dardanelles Strait in a naval battle, thereby securing supply routes to Russia and hastening the war's end and the fall of the tottering Ottoman Empire, "the sick man of Europe." Instead, the British, French, and colonists from Newfoundland and the Anzacs – those soldiers whose graves are at our feet, "just boys wanting an adventure, a trip," says one Australian – encountered an implacable foe.

Anzac Day forever marks April 25, 1915, when troops landed on these shores, losing 2,000 men to gain 900 yards. "Getting ashore was not hard," wrote one soldier. "Hanging on, up on that ridge, for eight months, that was hard." Their stories live on. As many as 15,000 visitors have attended dawn Anzac Day services on this meticulously kept national park, welcomed by those whose forefathers fought them a lifetime ago. ■

Na'amat Canada

INVITES YOU TO ATTEND

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SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2014

1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

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1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT
2. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
3. NEWS FROM ISRAEL
4. PRESENTATION FROM LEADERSHIP SEMINAR
5. APPOINT AUDITORS FOR NA'AMAT CANADA.

The Shaarei Tefillah Educational Committee presents its

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MAY 15 — UNDERSTANDING THE KADDISH: Meaning, Mystery and Majesty

MAY 22 — JEWISH PASSION: Living a Passionate Judaism

MAY 29 — MASHIACH BEN YOSEF: Another Missionary Dead End

JUNE 12 — MUSSAR PATH OF PERSONAL GROWTH: Connecting Head to Heart

JUNE 19 — UNDERSTANDING AYIN HARA (EVIL EYE): Do You Really Need a Red String?

JUNE 26 — THE NOACHIDE LAWS: The Torah's Path for Non-Jews

Note: There will be no lecture on June 5th because of Shavuot.

Time: 8:30 PM — Admission: FREE
Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, 3600 Bathurst St.
For Info: (416) 789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca

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What's New

MAY 8 - MAY 15

by Lila Sarick

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	Find a job at JVS' job fair.	Idan Raichel Project plays Massey Hall	Mother's Day	Award-winning author of *The Lion Seeker* speaks		

Thursday, May 8

LITERARY LEVEE

Anthony De Sa, author of *Kicking the Sky*, is the guest speaker at the Atid Chapter of Canadian Hadassah's Literary Levee, Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community, 2 Neptune Dr. For tickets, call 416-630-8373.

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

- The Yiddish classic *Mamele* will be shown at the Famous Players Canada Square Cinema, 2190 Yonge St at 3 p.m. Sponsored by Friends of Yiddish.
- *Birthplace*, a film about Holocaust survivor **Henryk Grynberg,** will be shown at Koffler House, 569 Spadina Cres. at 1 p.m. Director **Pawel Lozinski** will be in attendance. For tickets, call Toronto Jewish Film Festival 416-324-9121.

JEWISH HISTORY

Gerald Ziedenberg discusses "The Dreyfus Affair," 7 p.m. at Beth Torah Congregation. May 15, the topic is "The trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg."

Friday, May 9

JOB FAIR

JVS holds a job fair 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. Bring a resume and dress professionally. For pre-registration, email lebovicjobfair@jvstoronto.org.

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

Burton Visotzky, professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, speaks at Beth Sholom Synagogue about the relationship between the Jewish People and other religious cultures this weekend. For more information, call 416-783-6103.

Deadline Reminder:
The deadline for the issue of May 22 is May 12 All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Mamele

Catch *Mamele*, the 1938 Yiddish film classic (with English subtitles), May 8 at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival.

Saturday, May 10

IDAN RAICHEL PROJECT

The Idan Raichel Project performs at 8 p.m. at Massey Hall. For tickets, call 1-855-556-6835.

Sunday, May 11

MOTHER'S DAY

Celebrate Mother's Day at Cafe DANI, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Brunch at 10:30 a.m.; high tea at 3 p.m. Reserve by May 9 at 905-889-3264, ext. 231.

STARS OF DAVID

Director **Avery Saltzman** discusses the play *Stars of David*, 10:15 a.m. at Temple Sinai.

Monday, May 12

THE LION SEEKER

Author **Kenneth Bonert** discusses his award-winning novel *The Lion Seeker*, 8 p.m. at Temple Sinai. Sponsored by Na'amat Canada.

FILL THE VOID

Shlomo Schwartzberg discusses the film *Fill the Void*, Beth Tzedec Congregation, 10:30 a.m. $20. Call 416-781-3511.

MIDDLE EAST UPHEAVAL

Prof. Gabi Ben Dor discusses "Upheaval in the Middle East," 7:30 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. May 14, the topic is "Israel 2014: New Society, New Politics?"

LECTURE SERIES

Mike Daley discusses "Bob Dylan: His Life and Music," 2 p.m. at Temple Emanu-El. $12.

LEARN ABOUT ARTHRITIS

A discussion on "Arthritis: An ongoing problem," will be held at Beth David Synagogue, 1:30 p.m. RSVP **Rose** 905-764-8141.

Tuesday, May 13

THE EX-FILES

The Ex-Files is a new, single parents support group, meeting at 7 p.m. Guest speaker, therapist **Andrea Share.** To RSVP go to Facebook.com/theexfilestoronto.

ALAN BOROVOY

Alan Borovoy is the guest speaker at Toronto Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W., 7:30 p.m.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Marc Gorbet discusses "From RCMP to lawyer," 12:15 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $20. Call 416-221-3433.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

Shaar Shalom Synagogue shows a Holocaust-related film, followed by discussion, 7:30 p.m.

CHUG HA-TANACH

Chug ha-Tanach meets at Beth David Synagogue, 8 p.m. **Rabbi Pinchas Brummer** discusses Chapter 148 of the Book of Psalms.

Wednesday, May 14

JEWISH HISTORY

Hana Werner discusses "Jonah: An Example of Struggle," 2 p.m., Beth Tzedec Cogregation.

INTERFAITH DINNER

A three-person panel representing Judaism, Islam and Christianity discusses "Social Justice in Our Traditions," at the annual interfaith speakers dinner, Noor Cultural Centre, 123 Wynford Dr., 6:30 p.m. $25. RSVP **Mollie** 416-733-3634.

TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE

Rabbi Yossi Gansburg teaches a 6-week course on "Transformational Life Teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe," Jewish Learning Institute of Thornhill. Call 905-731-7000.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

COUNTER-MISSIONARY SEMINAR

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Real Messiah: Part Two," First Narayever Congregation, 8 p.m. Course continues until June 11. To register, call 416-789-0020 or email: toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca

Thursday, May 15

HUGGING & WRESTLING ISRAEL

Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs presents a workshop entitled "Hugging and Wrestling with Israel," to the Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 7:30 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr. 416-385-3910.

THE TWO-STATE SOLUTION

Journalist **Patrick Martin** discusses "What's Next for the Two-State Solution," 7:30 p.m., First Narayever Congregation. Sponsored by Canadian Friends of Peace Now, 416-322-5559.

COMING EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Reena is looking for volunteers to work as "Rec Buddies" at Camp Reena this summer. No experience needed. Call **Millie Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112.

KIDS BASEBALL

Clanton Park baseball for boys and girls has resumed. Visit ClantonPark.com/baseball.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **Widows/Widowers over 60:** A 6-session group for men and women who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Starts May 8, at 1 p.m.
- **Demystifying Alzheimers and Dementia:** A 1-session workshop for anyone wanting to know more about cognitive impairment. May 20 at 7 p.m.
- **Adolescent Anxiety and Depression: When to Worry, What to do:** A 1-session workshop for parents and/or professionals. May 21 at 7 p.m.
- **Effective Parenting:** A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2 to 10. Starts May 21 at 7 p.m. at Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 9600 Bathurst St.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents

- Grief counsellor **Andrea Warnick** discusses "Supporting Families When Death Touches Our Lives," May 26 at 7:30 p.m., Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave. Call **Beth Feffer** 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses "Jewish film stars who influenced American cinema," May 13, May 20, 1 p.m. **Dr. Carol Greenwood** discusses "Brain Food: Are Your Really What You Eat," May 15, 1 p.m.To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. May 13, **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses "Joseph Kennedy: Part 1," 10 a.m.; May 14 Spring Fling and Concert, 12-2 p.m., $13/$17. May 15, **Elizabeth Stanton** discusses "Bone Health and Osteoporosis," 1:30 p.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine May 28 (register in advance); Dance with live music, May 25, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise 10 a.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

- **Jordan Klapman** discusses the Jewish history of popular songs, May 15 and May 22, 1 p.m. Pre-registration required, call ext. 4235.
- **Iain Scott** discusses singer Marilyn Horne, May 12, 1 p.m.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of Francis Bacon and Henry Moore, May 27 and June 3, 1 p.m.
- The book club discusses *Americanah* by **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** May 26, 1 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

- Graphic novelist **Reinhard Kleist** discusses the story of boxer **Hertzko Haft,** with his son **Alan Haft,** May 11 at 3 p.m.
- Yom Ha'atzmaut community celebration, May 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is presented by Alexander Showcase Theatre, until May 11, Al Green Theatre. For tickets, call 416-324-1259 or www.alexandershowcasetheatre.com.
- **Adam Nayman** looks at the impact of **David Lynch**'s films, May 12: *Blue Velvet*, 6:30 p.m.
- Photos by **Rafael Goldchain** are at the gallery until May 19.
- Yiddishtog: A day of lectures and music celebrating Yiddish, featuring **Yael Chaver, Elly Gotz, Goldie Morgentaler** and a concert by **Vira Lozinsky,** May 25. For tickets, call 416-907-0468 www.ticketwise.ca
- Tickets on sale now for the MNJCC community choir spring concert, May 28 and May 29, 8 p.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition (male voices needed) July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. Call ext. 250.
- The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.
- Harmonia, a choir for youth aged 8-18, meets Sundays 4 p.m. until June 1. Email: harmonia@mnjcc.org.
- Tikkun Leil Shavuot, June 3. Call ext. 154.
- Health and fitness: MELT Method hand and foot, Mondays until May 12, 2:30 p.m. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays until June 18, 12:15 p.m. To register for fitness programs, email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

- A workshop for men and women over 50 about dating will be offered June 1, 7 p.m. Register by May 18.
- Learn about money management in an 8-session class Thursdays, until June 26, 7:30 p.m.
- Kids club for kids in JK to Grade 8 meets Saturday afternoons, 2-6 p.m. Kids enjoy swimming, drama, arts and crafts and more.
- Red Cross babysitting course for children 11 and up, will be offered June 6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

To register for programs, call **Jennifer Appleby** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275. ■

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SENIOR SIDE OF LIFE

Hanging on to life

Dr. Michael Gordon

We all know that we are not immortal. But most people go through life thinking of the end as "over there," sort of like the end of a rainbow.

We usually talk about death in the abstract unless it occurs to someone dear to us. Then, a whole range of emotions surfaces. But our own death is an abstract, even for the practical and action-oriented people who plan for their funerals, make sure all their documents are in order, write their eulogies and carefully construct their wills and living wills. But it is still, for most, "over there."

With all the discussion in the past few years about advance care planning, with its emphasis on conversations with your loved ones accompanied by the implementation by many of living wills, one would think that attempts to stretch out the end would be rare, and perhaps only for those with strong religious reasons.

It might be thought that most people, especially when there are few if any medical options and quality of life is severely compromised, would accept death with a degree of equanimity. In such cases, whether it is the person making the decision or a substitute decision maker (SDM), such decisions might be made with the main focus of treatment on comfort, compassion and care, which would be within the usual principles of palliative and end-of-life care.

In the usual models of palliative and end-of-life care, the focus is primarily on symptom management, with a special but not exclusive focus on pain. Many people erroneously believe that pain is the primary source of suffering at the end of life, especially in the face of malignancies. Actually, other symptoms are no less important, but within the broad practices and principles of palliative care, most disquieting and uncomfortable symptoms can be controlled and people's suffering alleviated.

With this background, I found it somewhat surprising that, according to a large-scale study that's repeated on a periodic basis, the percentage of individuals, be they patients or SDMs, who request more acute medical interventions at the end of life is in fact growing.

This spread between those prepared to accept symptomatic care as they approach the end of life and those who ask that "everything medically that can be done should be done" flies in the face of the expectations of the medical community and of those who have promoted advance care planning.

So how does one explain this quest for prolonged life even when many would say the life is without any quality, or there appears to be excessive suffering or that further treatments would be futile?

The study looked at as many factors as possible that might explain such expectations and hopes, and there was no consistency from religious, social, ethnic or other parameters that stood out. Maybe it is something more profound and a reflection of the absence of the rituals and rites associated with the end of life that existed prior to the modern medical era.

Families hovering, religious people saying prayers, family members reciting favourite poems or singing favourite melodies, or the aroma of scented candles or special herbs and spices, the chanting of hymns – all these old-fashioned rituals have been replaced by the pinging of monitors, the wrist band of identification, the computer-generated test results and the discussions of evidence-based options and salvage treatments.

Even the idea of using CPR on a person who is clearly dying is now sometimes considered part of the "normal" menu offered by modern medicine. It's important because after it is all over, when family and friends discuss and review the person's life and the last days, family members can say that "everything that can be done was done." Rarely is there any acknowledgment that much of what was done had no impact on the actual outcome, but it may have affected how loved ones look back on the event in ways that reinforce their feelings of love and devotion to the person who "passed away," the phrase often used euphemistically for "died." ■

Family Moments

Eden & Daniel Fienberg announce the birth of Elianna April 18 in Israel. First grandchild to Melanie & Robert Sagman, and Maureen & Richard Fienberg, Cape Town.

Elise Nochomovitz, granddaughter of Les Heather Nochomovitz of Toronto, will become a bat mitzvah on May 24. Love, Granny and Grandpa.

Happy birthday to Eliyahu Chaim (May 14, 1991) and Frayda Blumа (May 19, 1992) Gluck from their loving father Nissim Gluck.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click on "Family Moments"

Mazel Tov!

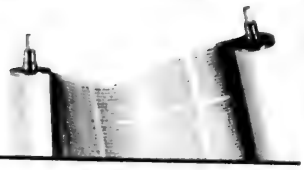
מזל טוב

SeeJN | Emunah Family in Israel Dinner

Emunah Toronto will hold its annual Family in Israel Dinner, May 13 at the Terrace Banquet Centre. A portion of the funds raised will go to the Judith Rubinstein Centre at Neve Sarah Herzog Girls High School in Israel. This centre will expand the arts therapy program at the school, helping at-risk students reach their maximum cognitive and emotional potential through the vehicle of creative expression. Pictured with Judith Rubinstein, centre, is son Eli Rubinstein and daughter Rochelle Rubinstein.

Parshah

Behar | Leviticus 25:1 - 26:2



Yacov Fruchter explores Judaism's revolutionary slavery laws and the concept of arevut
Rabbi Shalom Spira searches for the sweet spot between capitalism and socialism
Rachael Turkienicz considers two important Jewish numbers: seven and 50

Yacov Fruchter

For most young Jews today, feeling a connection to, and respect for, people who aren't Jewish is a given. What's becoming more challenging to grasp is the value of *arevut* – the idea that Jews have a special connection and responsibility toward one another.

Recently, one of my bar mitzvah students questioned whether helping one person over another simply because they're Jewish is a form of racism. This question isn't unique.

In Parshat Behar, we're presented with what Rabbi Jonathan Sacks describes as a "revolutionary template for a society of justice, freedom and human dignity." Reminded that we were slaves in Egypt, the Torah commands us against charging interest on loans to fellow Jews and offers clear guidelines on how to treat a Jewish slave who is under our control: "They are to be treated as an employee and as a resident."

Southern U.S. slave-owners treated their slaves as property. Considered in that light, the laws in this Torah portion are revolutionary. But are they enough?

Maimonides famously asked why the Torah doesn't go further and completely abolish slavery? My student would surely ask: "Why are only Jewish slaves given special treatment, and why are we only forbidden to charge interest to Jews? Shouldn't all people be treated justly?"

Rabbi Sacks quotes Maimonides in saying that humanity must be ready to take the next step. "God wanted mankind to abolish slavery, but by their own choice, and that takes time."

If the Torah introduced these restrictions on slavery as a way to move us toward justice, is the same true about our relationships with non-Jews? Our value of *arevut* should continue to be a model for how a group can care for one another. As we count the days from freedom to responsibility, we should remember that we can have a unique relationship with our fellow Jews without treating others unjustly. ■

Yacov Fruchter is spiritual leader of Toronto's Annex Shul.

Rabbi Shalom Spira

"Do not take from him usury… and your brother shall live with you" (Leviticus 25:36). This verse presents an economic paradigm that blends socialism with capitalism.

On the one hand, loans must be extended interest-free, as detailed by the Talmud in the fifth chapter of Bava Metzia. On the other hand, the final phrase of the verse is elucidated by Bava Metzia 62a to mean that a thirsty desert traveller possessing a canteen must drink his own water to save his own life, before irrigating his thirsty compatriot. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (*Iggerot Mosheh*, Yoreh De'ah I, no. 145) derives from the latter exposition the principle that no one is obligated to give charity until his own needs are already met.

True to form, *Iggerot Mosheh* subsequently rules (Even ha-Ezer II, no. 1) that a junior brother may marry before a senior brother, because every person is authorized to ensure his own welfare before addressing the needs of others. (Finding a spouse for a single gentleman is encompassed under the rubric of charity, as per the Gemara in Ketubot 67b.)

The canteen scenario also presents a corollary question: how does a self-sufficient canteen-owner choose between one of two thirsty compatriots dying before him? Interestingly, Chazon Ish contradicts himself: in his *Likutim on Bava Metzia 62a*, he says to give all the water to one compatriot, yet in his glosses on *Chiddushei Reb Chaim le-Hilchot Yesodei ha-Torah*, he says to divide the water between the two. The latest edition of *Jewish Law Annual* features an article by Dr. Mark Wainberg, director of the McGill AIDS Centre, endeavouring to reconcile these contradictory pronouncements and using them as a basis for addressing the current HIV global pandemic.

Ultimately, Leviticus 25:36 teaches us that selfishness (capitalism) ennobled by selflessness (socialism) can best secure humanity's welfare. ■

Rabbi Spira is a research assistant at the McGill AIDS Centre in Montreal.

Rachael Turkienicz

Parshat Behar details two important time elements: the sabbatical year, occurring every seven years, and the jubilee year, occurring every 50, which involve agricultural restrictions as well as land transaction reversals.

Today, many Jews might feel a disconnect, since agriculture and land transfer transactions in Israel are not part of our daily existence. The words "sabbatical" and "jubilee" sound wonderful, since we know they mean rest and celebration. In fact, they seem to mean rest and celebration in the extreme, as we don't usually describe things using those words. They're quite positive and should begin to speak to us again beyond their technical definitions.

The sabbatical year is the seventh year and jubilee is the 50th. The Torah brings these two numbers to us as focal points in our lives. The technical details give us the roots we need, but we might miss the overlay of meaning.

In Judaism, seven is the number of completion. The universe was created in seven days. The first verse of the Torah contains seven words. There are seven laws of Noah and there are seven matriarchs and patriarchs. Under the chupah, there are seven blessings and the bride circles her groom seven times to weave their souls together. The Hebrew word for completion is *shalem*, which gives us the word shalom, peace. Peace is the embodiment of Jewish completion.

The number 50 connotes age and wisdom. According to Jewish tradition, at 50 you may advise others, for you have understood that there are 50 windows in the sky that lead to 50 gates of reason. In other words, the world is seen through prisms of perspectives.

Just as our head is reeling with thoughts of grandeur and pride, the parshah reminds us that all our land belongs to God and that we ourselves are owned by God. The word *behar* means "at the mountain," and like mountains, we keep our feet on the ground, but our thoughts can soar. ■

Rachael Turkienicz is executive director of Rachael's Centre in Toronto.

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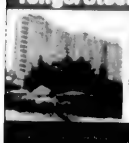

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 8, 2014

Rabbi Englander: Reflecting on past 40 years at Solel

FRANCES KRAFT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Mississauga's Congregation Solel will honour Rabbi Lawrence Englander and his wife, Cheryl, at a gala dinner May 25. The rabbi, 65, will retire at the end of June. He first served Solel as a student rabbi in 1973, when only a dozen families were involved. The Reform congregation has since grown to 300.

A member of the Order of Canada known for interfaith community work, Rabbi Englander shared reflections and memories in a recent interview.

Many people still think of you as the rabbi who plays guitar. What role has music played at Solel?

I think I was the first rabbi in Canada to play guitar for services. Now there's hardly a rabbi ordained from Hebrew Union College who doesn't play guitar or some kind of musical instrument. I think that's reflective of a change in the Reform movement in general to much more accessible folk melodies that people want to sing, not just listen to. Music is a huge part of our service.

What stands out in your memory about the early days of the congregation?

There was no organized Jewish community when I first came out. One of Solel's founding members was a postman, and when he saw a mezuzah, he'd knock and say, "We're starting up a shul." I think our founding members made a huge sacrifice to get the synagogue on its feet. Every board member had to pledge money in trust. That was a very brave measure. When I was ordained in 1975, the congregation had grown to about 55 families, and they made a stretch to hire me.

How has the Jewish community in Mississauga changed over the past few decades?

One of the things I'm really proud of is that we've established a presence in the Mississauga community. Mississauga as a city came into existence [in 1974] by sewing together all kinds of small towns. We've really grown up together, which means we've been able to have an impact.

Solel was one of the founders of what was then called Foodpath – now the Mississauga Food Bank. I think it's the second biggest in Ontario.

How is Pathway connected to Foodpath?

Rabbi Lawrence Englander

> *One of the things I'm really proud of is that we've established a presence in the Mississauga community. Mississauga as a city came into existence [in 1974] by sewing together all kinds of small towns. We've really grown up together, which means we've been able to have an impact.*
>
> *Solel was one of the founders of what was then called Foodpath – now the Mississauga Food Bank. I think it's the second biggest in Ontario.*

Pathway [a non-profit housing corporation] kind of spun off from Foodpath. We wanted to see if there was a way to get people out of this cycle of poverty. Solel [and two churches] got a government grant, and put up an apartment building. I think at least one-third of the units are heavily subsidized. We also built a second building. We feel very proud that hundreds of families have been able to get a leg up through the program.

Was it a culture shock when you moved to Mississauga after growing up in Toronto?

It was. I think Toronto Jews have the impression that – Jewishly – the world falls off at [Highway] 427. Nothing can be further from the truth. My colleague in Oakville, Rabbi Stephen Wise, has a very active congregation, too. We have joint programming together, and with Rabbi Jordan Cohen in Hamilton. We have our own beit din among our three congregations. [Actually] four – Rabbi Lori Cohen in Kitchener-Waterloo is also part of that, and we run our own conversion program.

What type of interaction do you have with the Toronto Jewish community?

I meet with the Toronto Reform rabbis every month, as do rabbis Wise and Cohen. I'm a member of the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

What highlights stand out for you at Solel?

Kids that were bar and bat mitzvah are now having their children becoming bar and bar mitzvah. I've had a couple of instances where I've married a couple and now I've married their children. We've had people who took our teacher training program and have become wonderful teachers. And people who studied the Torah trope, and chant very beautifully. That, to me, has been very fulfilling.

What is your role as a teacher at Solel?

I think it's one of the most important parts of my rabbinate. I teach an adult Tanach class and the confirmation class. Also, the kindergarten class invites me in every year to do a mock wedding.

What type of relationship do you have with Chabad of Mississauga?

Rabbi [Yitzchok] Slavin and I see each other from time to time. I'd say we've each built our own constituency. I think we attract a different type of person so, you know, we get along fine.

What have been your biggest challenges?

I guess the biggest challenge was just to get the congregation going. I think the current challenge is one that congregations in general are facing. People in their 20s and 30s have a different concept of community, and of joining. So to connect them with congregations requires a bit more creative thinking than in the past.

Why are you retiring now?

I think, after 41 years, I'm ready to try new things. Also, I wanted to quit at the top of my game. What influenced me a lot is a book called *Encore*, by Marc Freedman.

Did you always plan to become a pulpit rabbi?

I planned to become an academic [after ordination]. Then along came Solel, and everything changed. It was like the congregation of my dreams. However, academic studies have always been important to me. I did get a doctorate in 1984 through Hebrew Union College.

What has your wife's involvement been?

Cheryl has been extremely active not only in the shul, but in Mississauga. She was chair of Credit Valley Hospital and served 12 years on its board. She founded Pathway Community programs in our two buildings. She's been on Solel's membership committee and is the international languages co-ordinator for our school. She also worked for the Canadian Council for Reform Judaism as their social action co-ordinator.

Is someone in place to be your successor?

Solel very wisely decided that they're going to have a one-year interim rabbi, which I think is catching on a lot in synagogues. Rabbi Ilene Bogosian will start in July.

What are your post-retirement plans?

Spending more time with my wife! Certainly we hope to spend more time in Israel. I'm chair-elect of [the Reform Zionist organization] Arzenu. I'll be in Israel at least three times a year for meetings. I'm also hoping to do more teaching, especially adult education. ■

One people?

Backstory

CARL EHRLICH

One often hears Jews complaining about how good it must have been in the past, when we truly were one people united in our religious and political practices and beliefs. How idyllic things were until the (fill in the blank with your least favourite Jewish group) came along and messed everything up!

The problem is this attitude is a load of kosher hogwash. When one looks at the long history of the Jewish People, one discovers we have rarely, if ever, been united on issues of central concern to the Jewish community.

One of the great myths of Judaism is that it has remained unchanged for thousands of years. To some extent, this is a consequence of the success of rabbinic Judaism's imposition of its religious worldview on what had been a disparate religious community until the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE.

The rabbis were able to assert their authority by means of their theology of the Oral Torah, through which they claimed – with great success – that their idiosyncratic interpretations of Jewish law and custom were as old and as authoritative as the Written Torah itself.

But the Tanach, the Hebrew Bible, bears witness to differing interpretations of religion and peoplehood. While the biblical text implies that prophetic monotheism was the original and proper form of worship in ancient times, the truth appears to have been more nuanced than that. The overwhelming majority of modern scholars would posit that the common religion of biblical times until relatively near the time of the destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians (586 BCE) was not what we would consider a monotheism in the strict sense. These scholars would assert that it was only following the Babylonian destruction that the religion propagated by the prophets became pre-eminent.

Another tension in the biblical text is between north and south, Israel and Judah, the two Israelite kingdoms. It is axiomatic that winners write history. Since Israel was destroyed about 150 years before Judah, and since Judaism is derived from the religion of Judah, it is no surprise the Bible should reflect a Judean perspective on religion and politics, arguing for the centrality of Jerusalem and its central sanctuary, the Temple, in addition to the sole legitimacy of its ruling dynasty of David and his successors. Nowhere is this clearer than in the encoding of explicit criticism of the northern cult in the story of the Golden Calf.

But even the prophets themselves were not above some propagandizing on behalf of their chosen communities. Sitting in exile in Babylon, the prophet and priest Ezekiel responded to accusations that those in exile had been cut off from their land and their God as divine punishment for their sins. On the contrary, he argued it was the people who remained in the land who had forfeited their religious and political rights. God had abandoned Jerusalem and was now to be found among the exiles.

In this manner, Ezekiel unwittingly gave birth to a Diaspora theology that enabled Judaism to adapt and survive through the ages. Indeed, it has always been Judaism's ability to reinvent itself in response to crisis that has ensured its survival.

First, biblical Israel responded to Babylonian conquest and exile by becoming a community that declared a diaspora kosher, in contradistinction to the expected rules of behaviour. Later, the rabbis responded to failed revolts against Rome by turning inward and replacing Temple and priesthood with synagogue and rabbinate.

We are currently in another period of crisis, as Judaism and the Jewish community attempt to respond to the challenges of modernity, of the Holocaust and of the redemptive rebirth of Israel, all within a relatively short span of time. Many answers have been put forward, but no consensus on how to proceed has emerged.

While we all harbour our own opinions on how to respond, we must remember that Judaism has always struggled with different responses to various challenges. These responses are examples of Judaism's ability to adapt and survive. Although we may disagree with each other about how to respond, we must remember that these are *machlokot le-shem shamayim*, "struggles for the sake of heaven." ■

Carl S. Ehrlich is a professor of Hebrew Bible in the department of humanities at York University in Toronto.

OBITUARIES AND RELATED NOTICES

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Susan Rosenberg	Apr 13/14	131 Torresdale Avenue	Phyllis Sterling	Apr 20/14	625 Avenue Road
Saul Leese	Apr 14/14	645 Castlefield Road	Mendy Sharf	Apr 19/14	425 Walmer Road
Barbara Obar	Apr 12/14	484 Steeles Ave., West	Dora Ladovsky	Apr 20/14	645 Castlefield Avenue
Louis Goldberg	Apr 14/14	645 Castlefield Avenue	Joyce Barnett	Apr 21/14	5351 Yonge Street
Shaynka Farber	Apr 14/14	1066 Avenue Road	Mary Glucksman	Apr 21/14	51 Brownstone Circle
Murray Kirsh	Apr 14/14	484 Steeles Avenue West	Colin Marik	Apr 21/14	45 Windsor Court Road
Mollie Rogin	Apr 14/14		Ann Schwarz	Apr 24/14	603 Clark Avenue
Jack Hill	Apr 12/14	360 Mt. Pleasant Road	Sheralyn Rugman Morton	Apr 22/14	125 Wellington St. W.
Bernie Dorfman	Apr 14/14	48 Millcroft Way			
Carole Ann Epstein	Apr 16/14	3560 Bathurst Street	Mark Dubinsky	Apr 24/14	19 Graymar Avenue
Bertha Stekel	Apr 14/14	11 Townsgate Drive	Dina Shyllit	Apr 25/14	2 Neptune Dr
Fela Jaskolka	Apr 15/14	541 Finch Ave. West	Carl Horowitz	Apr 24/14	546 Steeles Ave. West
Bea Kirshenbaum	Apr 17/14	3181 Bayview Ave.	Malca Muskin	Apr 22/14	6140 S.W. Boundry St.
Robert (Hy) Kay	Apr 17/14	7 Townsgate Drive	Bernard Lacome	Apr 25/14	51 Invermay Avenue
Batia Safir	Apr 19/14	65 Spring Garden Ave.	Abe Wertman	Apr 27/14	89 Skymark Dr., # 1207
Florence Strean	Apr 20/14		Sylvia Price	Apr 28/14	9800 Yonge Street
Allan Beitel	Apr 20/14	210 Victoria Street	Mikhail Milrud	Apr 28/14	7460 Bathurst St., # 310
Nathan Martyn	Apr 18/14	131 Torresdale Avenue	Elsa Broder	Apr 28/14	330 Spadina Rd, # 1906
Robert Singer	Apr 19/14	36 Gatcombe Circle	Lillian Biel	Apr 28/14	175 Bamburg Cir., # 518
Lottie Garfield	Apr 19/14	9 Romney Road	Irwin Lightman	Apr 28/14	3560 Bathurst Street

HEBREW BASIC

Herb Guttman	Apr 13/14	77 Dunfield Road	Esther Isaacson	Apr 14/14	32 Wilfrid Ave.
Sulamith Avram	Apr 14/14	125 Hidden Trail	Mark Temins	Apr 24/14	910-2191 Yonge St.

Berger, Jeanne (Swaye) ז"ל

on April 17th, 2014

Loving mother of Marshall and Wyn Berger.

As she wished no funeral services will be held.

Jeanne donated her body to the Division of Anatomy of the University of Toronto.

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late

Bernard Kott ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, May 18th at 12 noon

Dawes Road Cemetery, 3169 St. Clair Ave. East

(Toronto Hebrew Benevolent Society Section)

Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late

Rose Shore ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, May 18, 2014 at 10 am

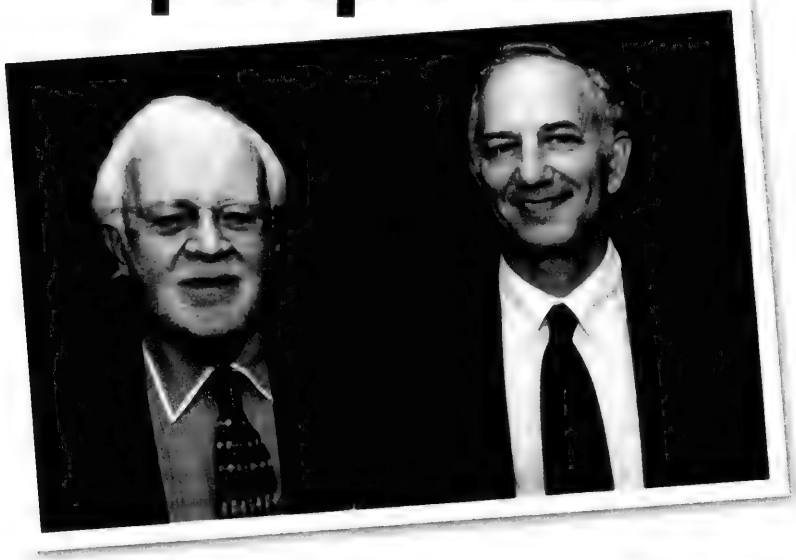
Lambton Cemetery

1305 Royal York Road

(Chmielniker Section)

Following the unveiling everyone is invited to 2 Covington Rd. Toronto, Social Room for refreshments.

This is what happens when people care.



Joseph Lebovic and Dr. Steven Gallinger, who treated Joseph's brother Wolf

When a surgical team saves your brother's life, his return to health is your reward. Imagine then, another scenario.

Joseph Lebovic's brother Wolf needed surgery and he was referred to renowned specialist, Dr. Steven Gallinger, at Toronto General Hospital. The outcome was successful, and the story might have ended there – but for the brothers' gratitude and generosity.

Their donation of $5 million recognizes the effort and excellence of Dr. Gallinger and his team in UHN's Division of General Surgery and supports UHN's Hepato-Pancreatico-Biliary Surgery Program. The largest program of its kind in Canada, it's led by Dr. Gallinger and provides comprehensive care for patients with liver, pancreatic and/or biliary disorders.

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of **Joseph and Wolf Lebovic**, Dr. Gallinger and his team have experienced what leadership, compassion and innovation looks like when it comes full circle.

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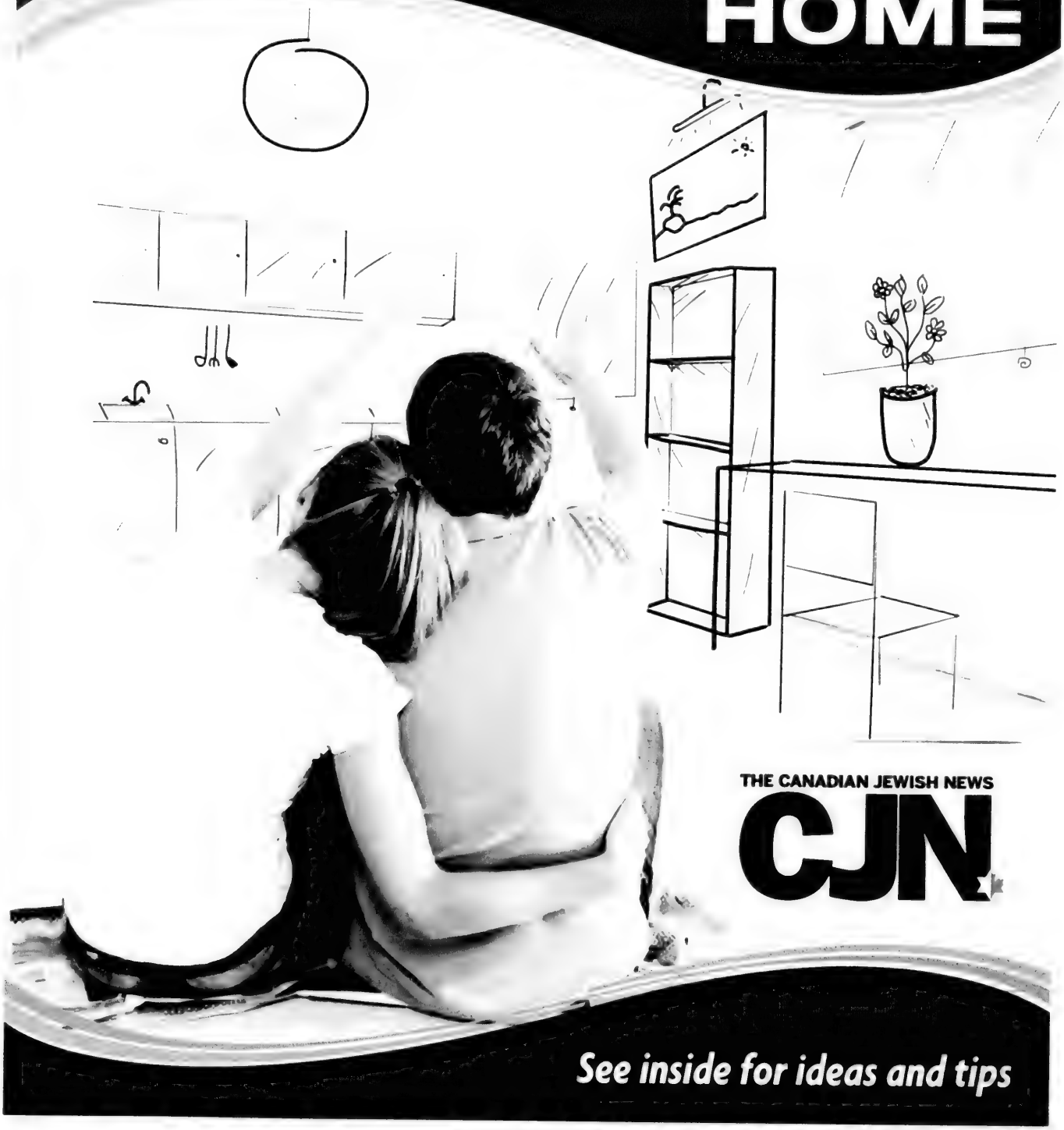

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS

CJN

See inside for ideas and tips

Samuel sells you cottages

STEPHEN SWEET
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

There is a piece of paradise to be had not too far from Toronto.

And Jack Samuel can help you own it.

The Harvey Kalles realtor (416-441-2888), who has been practising real estate for 30 years, has spent the past decade selling lakefront property on the west side of Lake Simcoe.

"About 10 years ago, I began this niche area, which wasn't being served by anyone from Toronto," Samuel said. "It was being served by local agents, but most of the buyers and sellers are from Toronto.

"Because I'd spent so many years up there, I knew a lot of the people selling, and understood the area very well."

Samuel has been going up to Belle Ewart for years and has fond memories there.

"My family has owned a cottage property for generations," said Samuel, who was also a camper and counsellor at nearby Camp Arrowhead, a popular day camp for those cottaging in the area. "Ever since I was a child, we spent our summers on the Lake Simcoe waterfront."

The proximity to the Greater Toronto Area is a big reason why a lot of people look for cottages off of Lake Simcoe.

"One of the big selling features is that many of the cottages are less than an hour from Toronto," Samuel said. "It may not be as rustic and remote as Muskoka, but you're saving the commute of at least two hours each week.

"If you're a weekender who goes up Fridays and comes home Sunday evenings, then those saved hours are much appreciated by the end of the summer."

Samuel sells properties from as far south as Lefroy up to Big Bay Point, which are various areas all within the municipality of Innisfil.

"There's a lot of Jewish people who have had cottages there for years and a lot who buy, and there's two synagogues that operate up there every summer," Samuel said. "The day camp up there, Camp Arrowhead, is affiliated with the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and operates on the level of an overnight camp with sailing, kayaking and canoe trips, but the children come from the area and go home at night.

"You have religious people buying, secular people buying, and everyone in between," Samuel added. "You're 50 minutes from Toronto, 25 minutes to Rama, near golf courses, synagogues, and theatres in Barrie, which is 15 minutes away.

"When you're sitting on your dock on your property, looking at the lake, you feel isolated from the world and have this serenity and beautiful relaxing experience, but then if you need to be near a big-box store, you're a 10-minute drive away."

Lake Simcoe provides a number of different options when it comes to both the waterfront and the cottage.

"Every kind of place is there," Samuel said. "There are places strictly for summer, and there are winterized homes with lots of [luxuries] that can be used in all four seasons, so it's very broad in terms of price point and amenities.

"As far as the waterfront goes, it can range from deep water to sandy beach and everything in between."

Whatever the place is, Samuel has seen the meaning it can have to a family.

"I'm really a firm believer that the sale of a waterfront property is way more emotional and traumatic than that of a home

Jack Samuel

a family has had for 20-30 years," Samuel said. "There are way more memories connected to a cottage experience that are intergenerational and very meaningful.

"I think it's a great investment for families that want to spend time with their kids in a casual, comfortable environment, and you can really cement some wonderful experiences."

You can reach Samuel directly at 416-568-5300 or by e-mail at jack.samuel@rogers.com. ■

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STEPHEN SWEET
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Redoing a bathroom can be a long, expensive ordeal.

But that won't be the case if you go through Bath Fitter (416-742-0429).

For three decades, Bath Fitter has been making faster and less expensive alterations than most home renovators, and they look good and work great.

"We do acrylic tub liners and seamless one-piece wall units. As opposed to a typical bathroom renovation where you rip everything apart, we're able to come in and fit the acrylic over an existing bath or shower, saving a lot of the time, expense and mess of a typical bathroom renovation," said Craig Snooks of Bath Fitter.

"We're typically two-thirds to half the cost of a typical bathroom renovation, and we're able to do most installations in one day."

Putting it over the existing setup is still a very sturdy and strong option, he said.

"It's a vacuum-formed acrylic wall," Snooks said. "We do all kinds of vacuum-formed tile appearances as well as 'marble walls,' meaning it's acrylic but has the look of marble."

Bath Fitter only employs licensed plumbing contractors and licensed home renovators, and since nothing is subcontracted, they can stand behind their work.

"We also give a lifetime guarantee for as long as you own the home," Snooks said. "We've got something in the neighbourhood of 200 offices across North America now, and they all give free in-home estimates."

> *Very sturdy and strong option*

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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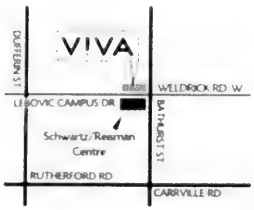

Independent Living | Assisted Living | Respite Suites

New bathroom – no muss no fuss

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Snooks has found some of his most common work has been to make tubs and showers more comfortable and convenient for the older generation.

"The conversion units [in which we] take out a bathtub and put in a walk-in shower are becoming quite popular," Snooks said. "For seniors, it's popular to help them maintain mobility at home, as they can get in and out of a tub.

"It's a home adaptation that really helps people stay in their homes longer," Snooks added. "We do all of the safety things as well, in terms of hand-held showers, shower seats, grab bars, and a wheelchair-accessible shower that we're able to install."

Another popular item from Bath Fitter is the soaker tub.

"It's a bit more comfortable than a typical tub [because it allows] you to lie back, and it has armrests as well," Snooks said.

There isn't too much complication involved when working with Bath Fitter.

"People can call us and we give out free estimates with no obligation," Snooks said. "What it does is allow us to get into the home and see what they might need specific to their bathroom, and then we're able to give them an exact price."

From there, customers can either come into the showroom to get a look at options, or they can proceed with the estimate.

"Typically, in two or three weeks, we're ready to come in and do the installation," Snooks said. "They're ready to use the following morning, so there's a minimal disruption to the home.

"We do offer very competitive finance programs, so we're able to finance the job for the customer if necessary."

It's a realistic option for people looking to move or for those planning to stay where they are, he said.

"Some people are doing the upgrade because they want their home to be more marketable, and others [want to] stay in their home and make it more comfortable," Snooks said.

"It's quite reasonable compared to what your options are. We're able to save you a lot of money on the typical bathroom renovation of this nature."

Bath Fitter has an office on Arrow Road, near Finch Avenue and Highway 400. ■

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Pamper yourself with a sensational shower

NEWS CANADA

You do it every day – and sometimes more than once a day – but how often do you actually think about your shower routine? Does it live up to its potential?

You do deserve the pampering, so with the following six simple steps, your shower escape can become sensational and safe – and all of it with only a minimal investment:

Step 1: Start the Shower

When turning on the shower, are you greeted with a sensational stream, or a wimpy wash? To create a sensational shower, be sure you start with a quality showerhead – and upgrading it is simple. Just unscrew your current showerhead, wrap some plumber's tape around the arm, and screw on the new showerhead. A rainshower, for example, is a popular choice to provide quality coverage – and there are many options at affordable prices.

Step 2: Pamper with Products

Did you know that men cite "having too many items cluttering up the space" as their number one pet peeve in the shower? And while we don't want to part with your favourite body wash, shampoo, or conditioner, it's easy to add a bit of organization with a shower shelf. And for safety, go a step further. Moen says their new Designer Grab Bars with Shelves (in the Home Care line) give you a stylish shelf storage solution. You can get both the corner and straight varieties – while also adding the safety of a grab bar.

> Clutter is men's pet peeve in shower

CONTINUED ON PAGE B24

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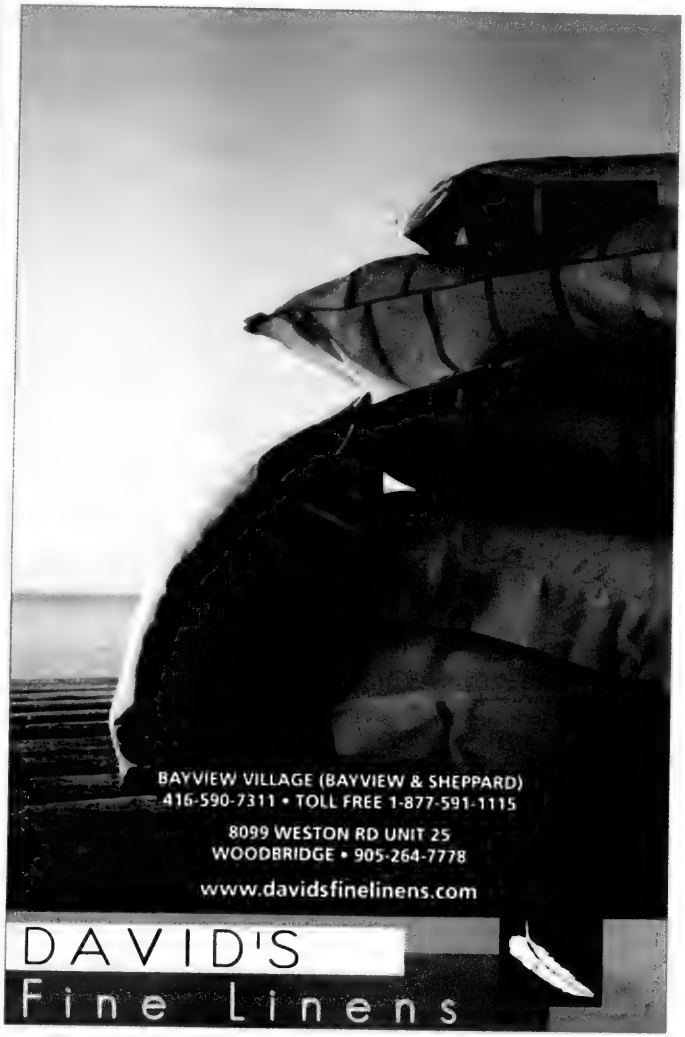

Affordable décor has never looked so good

NEWS CANADA

The idea of redesigning your living space can be an intimidating one, especially when the thought of how much the décor you desire will cost you. We never want to settle, so stretching our dollars to create the home of our dreams is commonplace. However, there are helpful tips for designing on a budget, says Sally Morse, creative director at Hunter Douglas, a leading window fashions company. Take a look at these:

Don't be a match maker: "Décor that's too matchy will date your space," says Morse. Instead of spending extra dollars for a matching set, mix new and old pieces to save and add flair to your style. Choose a favourite colour or match your fun accents instead of aligning major pieces. Or, reupholster existing furniture to refresh your space without spending on new items.

Buy recycled: Today, companies big and small have incorporated recycling and an awareness of the environment into their business models – and Hunter Douglas is no exception, Morse points out. Modern Precious Metals aluminum blinds, for example (now with two new finish options) are made from 95 per cent recycled material and are guaranteed to last a lifetime without fading, bowing or warping, making your investment all the more worthwhile and a savvy buy. Additional items that caught the eye of Morse recently were kitchen counters created of paper (PaperStone) and graceful chairs composed of old mattress springs (Susan Woods of Aswoon).

Make it last: The new Venue fabric (in Applause honeycomb shades from Hunter Douglas) comes with MicroShield antimicrobial fabric protection, which resists the growth of mold, mildew and bacteria, helping to preserve your window treatments. The Vintage fabric option also supports the new recycling trend, and is made of 40 per cent recycled fabric with 10 colours from which to choose. With so many shade varieties and options for light control, don't skimp at the window. "Lighting truly changes the overall look and feel of a room so it's an important aspect of decorating that shouldn't be forgotten," says Morse.

Do it yourself: The best tip for do-it-yourself projects is to think ahead and make sure you have additional materials on hand. "Make sure whatever directions you're following are clear, and use sites like Pinterest for inspiration and fun ideas."

With tips like these, creating a home that shows your style without breaking the bank decreases the intimidation factor and invites excitement into the decorating process. ■

More information is available online at www.hunterdouglas.ca

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Host your guests hotel-style

NEWS CANADA

A beautiful hotel can certainly make an impact, but ultimately it's the service that makes lasting impressions. Successful hotels earn repeat customers by providing top-notch service and making their guests feel special

As a host, whether it's a dinner party or visiting relatives, having our guests leave appreciative and with a smile on their faces is also the ultimate goal – along with surviving the experience, of course. So the hotel experts at Comfort hotels have put together a helpful list of tips to take your guests'w experience to the next level.

Plan a welcome treat: Whether they've got a sweet tooth or love the bubbly, a box of chocolates or a bottle of sparkling wine can go a long way. It's a simple gesture that can have a lot of impact and is the perfect way to greet your new guests.

Stock up on extra toiletries: We all know what it's like to forget something at home when we're on the road, whether it's a toothbrush, conditioner or floss. At hotels many guests rely on the travel-sized amenities, but when staying with family or friends, you could potentially be stuck without or, worse yet, be forced to share the soap. Leave new toiletries in the guest bathroom with a note letting them know to help themselves.

Make a set of spare keys: Just like you have a room key at the hotel, by giving your guests a spare set of keys, it'll take some of the co-ordination out of the visit. With their own keys, guests can come and go as they please without you having to co-ordinate being home from work or staying up if they're going for a night out.

Make a city tip sheet: Assuming your guests are new to the area and you're not available 24/7 to act as tour guide, a list of local attractions and dining options with contact information is a thoughtful way to help your guests plan their days.

Have snacks and bottled drinks: Providing your guests with portable treats and beverages like water and juice is a thoughtful gesture if you know they'll be out and about exploring. It'll save them additional costs and it's a nice touch that is easy to execute.

Plan household chores in advance: Do any laundry you have sitting around before your guests arrive to ensure the machines are free if needed. As well, any meal prep that can be done in advance will go a long way once you are busy entertaining.

A little planning can go a long way towards minimizing your stress and maximizing your guests' trip. So next time you have visitors coming, consider these six tips to make it a memorable and positive experience for all. ■

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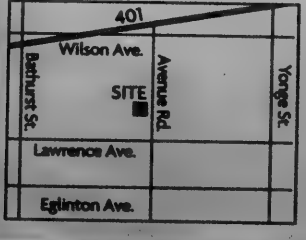

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Solve your clutter problems

VICKY TOBIANAH
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

One of today's biggest challenges in the home is finding enough space to put all your belongings in a place you'll be able to find them again.

The problem continues to grow, as condominium apartments drop in size. In fact, Toronto's average condominium apartment size has significantly dropped over the past six years from 2.5 per cent smaller for one-bedroom units to as much as 16 per cent smaller in some cases.

Even living in a good-sized home doesn't make you immune to the clutter problem, especially when you're buying kitchen items in bulk and looking for a place to store them, or when you're trying to organize your kids' toys.

On the never-ending quest to create storage and space, adding pull-out or sliding shelves can be the simple, inexpensive solution you need. Gliding Shelf Solutions (1-877-895-9766; www.glidingshelf.ca) is Canada's largest and most experienced pull-out shelf company and they saw a big need for an easy solution to help people organize their home. Their custom-built pull-out shelves can fit into any home (old or new), any living space (including those hard-to-find-anything hidden kitchen corners), at a low price.

"You can dramatically increase space with pullouts, with no need for expensive renovations," said Marianna Keselman, Gliding Shelf Solution's dealer for Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area.

"It can be done in your existing cabinets, so there's no need to gut everything. You can have a brand new kitchen at a fraction of the cost." The product is particularly popular for seniors who are downsizing and need to maximize space in their new home, as well as young couples who have limited space.

"You move into a home and you think you have enough space and then babies come and toddlers come and you have to find additional space for [all] types of items and you can't," she said.

"With younger families, you can allocate a pull-out shelf for your kids to be able to set the table or get stuff on their own instead of climbing onto counter tops and injuring themselves, and the same with seniors."

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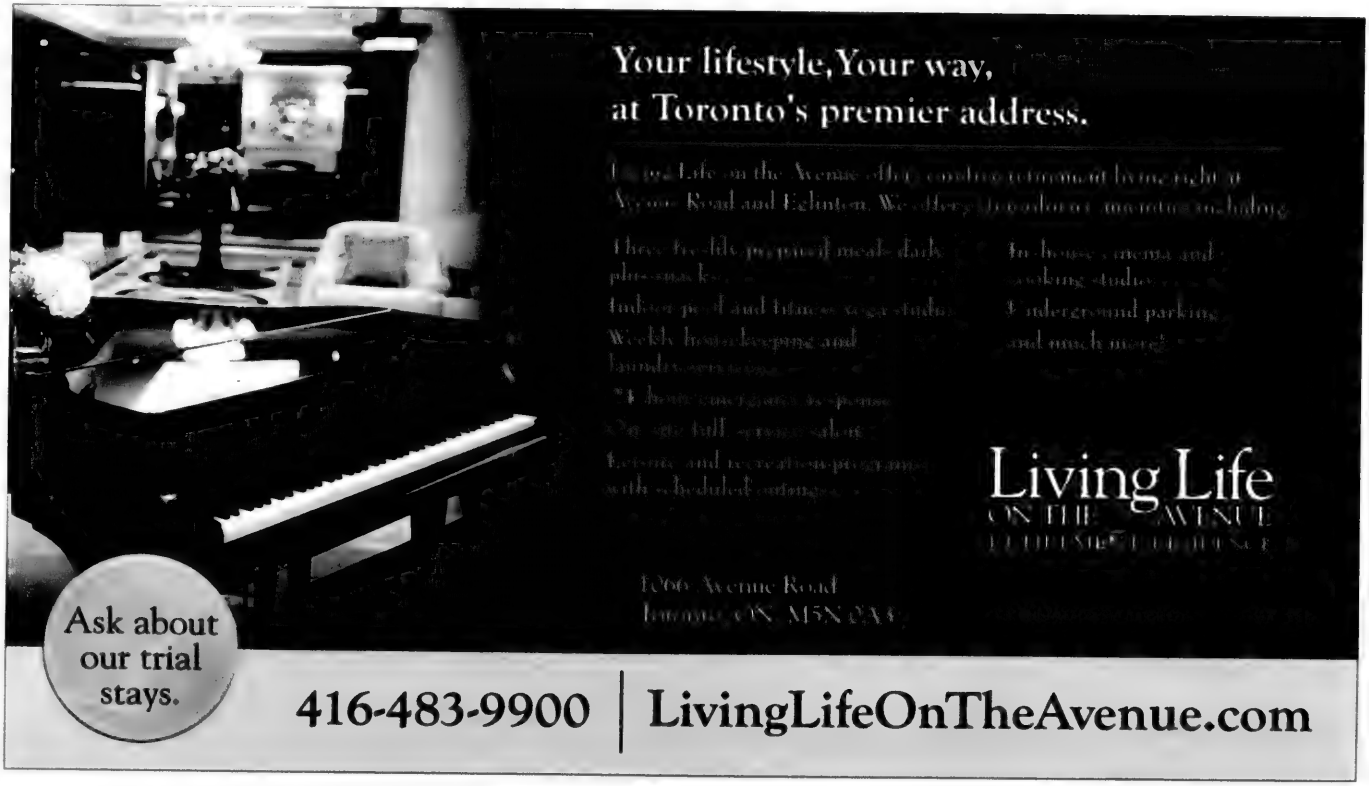

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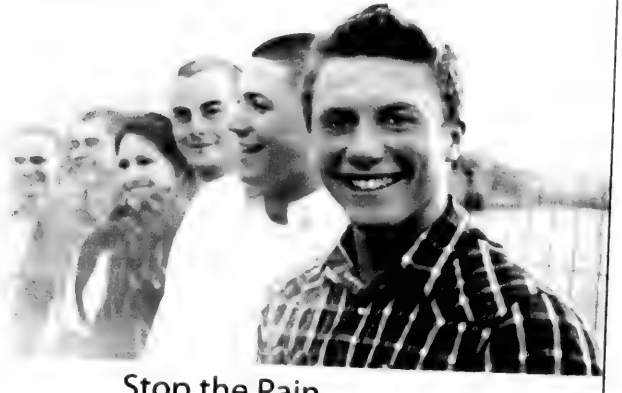

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STEPHEN SWEET
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

There are more financial options out there than just "the big five".

And one new brand of an existing financial institution is leading the way.

Oaken Financial (1-855-OAKEN22 (625-3622), which is a trademark of Home Trust, began its work in November, with Guaranteed Investment Certificates and savings accounts that give better rates than its competitors.

"Some people like to gamble on the stock market, but that's not for everybody," said Benjy Katchen, vice-president of deposits for Oaken Financial.

"But there are people who just want to have simple GICs or savings accounts, and we feel that some of the companies that used to be very competitive in that space are no longer as aggressive or independent as they used to be."

Katchen listed former options, such as Ally Financial, which was taken over by RBC, and ING Direct, which has since rebranded as Tangerine under Scotiabank, as companies that used to offer great rates.

"I don't feel that the interest rates [Tangerine] offers customers now are as competitive as they were in the early days of ING Direct," Katchen said of Tangerine. "That's the space we're trying to fill.

"It's a very simple product suite," Katchen added. "There are no gimmicks, just good GICs and savings accounts."

There are people at various stages in life that Katchen feels this new brand and its excellent rates could benefit.

"It's particularly relevant for folks who are close to retirement or are retired, and in particular, who have a certain amount of money to live on," Katchen said. "At the end of the day, they want to make sure that it will be safe."

Since its inception, Oaken Financial has offered consistently better GIC rates than the big banks.

"People might be shocked and horrified if they go to their bank branch and get a five-year GIC today," Katchen said. "The interest rates in your typical branch might be 2 to 2.5 per cent a year.

"I'm not going to say you're going to swing to the moon with our rates, but ours are 50 per cent higher than theirs," Katchen added. "So two per cent [for them] might be three per cent [for us].

> "At the end of the day they want to make sure it will be safe

"It's a low interest rate environment, I can't control that, but we're out there, really trying to find a way for folks to have a stable alternative where they can earn a little bit more on those safe and secure deposits they have."

Oaken Financial is able to offer that security thanks to its parent company, Home Trust, which has had 27 productive years in the business.

"We're a part of Canada's largest independent trust company, and one of the paramount things is that we can reassure customers about the safety of this business," Katchen said.

It's also part of the reason they've branded it as Oaken Financial.

"We wanted a name that was memorable and distinctive, as well as something that tied in well," Katchen said. "Oaken means oak-like, and that's one of the strongest, most solid kinds of wood that exists.

"We wanted to convey the safety and security that is paramount."

And of course, they're part of the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation, meaning that your money is in safe, regulated hands.

But even with that, the freedom of not being tied to a major bank means that Oaken Financial can do more to help your money grow.

"It allows us to provide a stable alternative, really," Katchen said. "If anyone did a rate comparison among the big five or alternative credit unions, they'd see our rate propositions are very solid.

"Oaken has some of the best GIC rates around, and it's not a teaser rate, it's not a gimmick, it's just what we have."

For more information on Oaken Financial, you can visit their website at www.oaken.com. ■

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Household books enlighten readers

ELAINE COHEN
SUPPLEMENTS CO-ORDINATOR

Advances in the digital age have revolutionized every facet of life; however, sensible household hints and environment-friendly tips remain the same. Whether it's avoiding cross-contamination in the kitchen, taking note of pantry pointers, label lingo, clean air or figuring out a glove size, readers will find concise answers in the following reference guides. *Expert Companions Household Skills and Tips: A Guide to Modern Living* and *Aida Mollenkamp's Keys to the Kitchen: The Essential Reference for becoming a more accomplished, adventurous cook*. These instructive, illustrated texts are distributed by Raincoast Books in Canada.

Young couples starting out as well as seasoned homemakers and chefs will discover innovative ways to maintain a fresh, healthy, energy-efficient home. Although surfers can search Google to find facts, it's hard to surpass the convenience of possessing a readily available, enlightening guide.

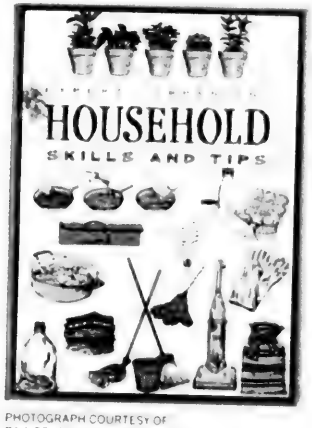
Expert Companions Household Skills and Tips is a small, well-bound guide focusing on energy saving methods in house cleaning, furnishing and lighting. The editors zero in on the kitchen, the linen closet, laundry care, personal belongings, home décor, pets, and safety in the home. Readers looking for an answer but lacking the patience to pore through text will appreciate the editors' succinct style. The boldface type subject headings and artistic line drawings complement the brief explanations.

Certain topics apply to homes, schools, community centres and offices. Many people like to beautify their premises with indoor plants; although not everyone is aware of the role plants play in purifying the atmosphere. Plants clean the air by absorbing harmful chemicals. The editors name and illustrate plants that require sun, need care, in addition to others that tolerate neglect. The chapter dealing with the "green cleaning kit" offers cost-effective alternatives to heavy-duty commercial products.

Instead of rushing out to buy a strong chemical cleaner to remove rust stains from ceramic tiles, try saturating an absorbent cloth with lemon juice and a few drops of detergent. Lay the cloth on top of the stain for a few hours then rinse. To keep microwave ovens clean and smelling fresh, cook the juice of one lemon in a bowl on high for three to five minutes.

Linen storage principles include "do's and don'ts" such as do add a scented soap to each shelf in the linen closet, the soap will last longer plus the cupboard and linen will emit a pleasant fragrance. Don't use cedar blocks as they tend to yellow and damage delicate linens. People save time using a contour bottom sheet to make a bed but folding fitted sheets takes practice. To speed up the process, turn to page 172 in *Household Skills and Tips*.

Keys to the Kitchen, the Essential Reference for becoming a more accomplished, adventurous cook is a hard-covered, beautifully bound book. It serves as a great gift for a housewarming or special occasion. Colourful illustrations and informative chapters can be appreciated over time. American author Aida Mollenkamp includes 118 recipes reflecting on various ingredients. However, the recipes are only one component in this multifaceted book, in which Mollenkamp addresses novice and accomplished cooks. What sets this book apart is the extensive information on kitchen management that applies to every autonomous home dweller.



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> *It's hard to surpass the convenience of a readily available, enlightening guide*

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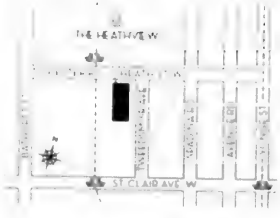

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Celebrate the season with elegant and affordable outdoor updates

NEWS CANADA

Patio season is upon us, which means hosting family and friends for warm-weather gatherings and barbecues. Don't fret; outdoor events don't have to break the bank. With just a bit of creative vision and do it yourself savvy, you'll have an al fresco affair to remember in no time at all.

Is your furniture looking a bit battered and worse for wear from too much exposure to the elements? Not to worry. Outdoor-durable spray paint, such as Krylon® ColorMaster Paint + Primer, can revive your wicker or wood seating for many summer seasons to come. It's simple to create sensational seating; just be sure the surface is clean, dull and dry and then spray in one of the 70 colours and finishes that ColorMaster offers. The unique formulation offers quick and easy results – and dries in 10 minutes or less, so you will have more time to stage the rest of your patio arrangement.

Once your seating is set, create eye-catching centrepieces to welcome your guests. No need to head to the store, as items around your home such as forgotten knick-knacks or candlestick holders can easily be spray painted in vibrant colours to complement your newly revitalized furniture. Finish up your tablescape for upcoming dinner parties with colourful cups, place mats and cloth napkins. Your guests will be in awe of your custom designs.

Set the mood at your soirée with interesting accent lighting. Tiki torches are an easy and inexpensive solution to provide excellent perimeter lighting. Or, for a fun project, purchase standard metal lanterns in various sizes at a local craft or hardware store – or even yard sales – and spray paint the exterior in various complementary colours. Finish by adding citronella candles to allow your creation to work double duty to keep pesky mosquitos at bay, ensuring your invited guests don't bolt because of uninvited ones.

Don't settle for lackluster libations – take time to create a festive offering of refreshing seasonal concoctions. In addition to traditional margaritas and daiquiris, try sweetening water with fresh fruits for an invigorating beverage that is perfect for the patio. And for the last detail, make sure you have music. Plug in a favorite playlist or use an app such as Pandora, to keep everyone guessing what will come on next and enjoy a warm summer night.

You don't have to spend much to create an elegant and impressive gathering. By paying attention to small, inexpensive details, you can easily transform a bland backyard, patio or deck into a stylish spot for entertaining that won't leave you penniless at the end of the evening.

For more information on Krylon products or spray paint projects, visit krylon.ca. ■

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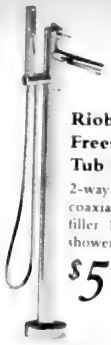

Riobel GS39C Freestanding Tub Filler

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Rubinet Raven Kitchen Faucet

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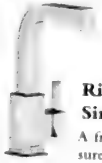

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Making the move: retirement home shopping

LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The CJN

Finding a retirement home for yourself or your parents can be a daunting task, one that's often exacerbated by the stress of the impending downsize and its implications, not to mention frequently conflicting input from friends and family.

Yet when the move becomes a necessity, a clear head is required, so you can act decisively, wisely and according to the right criteria. So what should those criteria be? *The CJN* asked several retirement communities to weigh in.

"Start with a list of key attributes that are important to you," advises Wendy Teperman, spokesperson for V!VA Thornhill Woods Retirement Community. With that list in place, you're in a better position to compare the pros and cons of one community versus another.

Candice Moller, spokesperson for Four Elms Retirement Residence in Thornhill, says realtors love to talk about the value of a good location, and when you're looking for a retirement residence, "location is crucial. Chances are you want to be close to friends and family, and in a neighbourhood that's familiar to you.

"After your tour, stay for a meal, and while on your tour, stop and ask the residents about their experiences living there," she says.

Teperman says that while you're on your tour, be sure to "do a lot of mental note-taking. Assess the retirement community from the driveway all the way to the suite, checking for cleanliness, staff friendliness and knowledge of the salesperson. Ask residents what they like most and dislike about the community. Observe interaction between residents, and between the culinary team and the residents.

"And review the schedule of activities," she advises. "Is the community active? Are there any activities you would enjoy?"

Leslie Westlake, marketing manager at Hazelton Place Retirement Residence, agrees that location is important.

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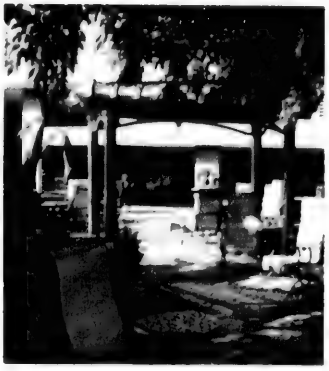
Canterbury Place residents enjoy a meal.



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Resident input is key

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"We're just above Hazelton Lanes in Yorkville. We've got all the hospitals near us and the Royal Ontario Museum. At Hazelton, people can choose either independent lifestyle or assisted living, so they don't necessarily have to leave, because we have age-in-place care," Westlake says.

"Everyone that comes looking at a home gets a sense of a place when they walk in, whether or not it's their style. People say ours looks like a cruise ship: warm, friendly, roomy. We have gardens in the back that residents really like. We have visitors parking for friends and family visiting. We have nurses, a family doctor that visits. We're well known for a program called Brain Gym & More, a multi-sensory stimulating exercise program that helps a resident with motivation, mobility, depression. It stimulates the other side of your brain.

"We have a foot doctor who comes in by appointment, and physio three times a week covered by the government. We have a yoga teacher and a bridge facilitator to organize our bridge players. Health and wellness is key – we have 24-hour nursing staff."

When it comes to emergency response, communication and vigilance is key.

"We have a pendant that residents wear that directly calls our nurses, as well as pull cords in the bathroom, and a push button on the wall. We go even beyond that. We check at every meal and make sure people have come down – if not we look into it," Westlake says.

Community input is another key selling point.

"Our food is very good. We have a chef, a pastry maker, a food committee comprised of residents and a residents' general forum that makes them feel like they are part of the decision making. For instance, when we renovated our hallways, we allowed residents to help choose the pattern and colour. We have ongoing meetings with them where they can add their contributions."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Magical moments with new friends at the Terraces of Baycrest

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Location is big factor in choosing retirement home

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Bev Stroll, a spokesperson for Living Life on the Avenue, on Avenue Road, says "there is a very unique crowd we have here, primarily because of the area and the location. That's a big factor in the people that come here. We're at Eglinton Avenue. A lot of the families live in this area, or the residents are from this area. We're looking at Forest Hill, St. Clair, down to Yorkville, in between Lawrence and Bloor. This is the area they're familiar with, that they grew up in. It's an outstanding neighbourhood with a gorgeous combination of residential, and it's steps from downtown Toronto. People tend to stay in the area they're most familiar with, and children want their parents to be closer to them."

"Another large factor when looking to choose a retirement community, is referrals," Stroll says. "People who are enjoying a wonderful life here spread that news to their friends. It's a small Jewish world, and referral is a very large factor. People choose what they know and what they've heard is great. You're looking for people with whom you have common interests or background. With our residents, the majority of them have people, hobbies, activities and business associates in common from the past. It's like a meeting place for people of similar backgrounds.

"The care component is also important. Kids looking for their parents want to know that the care levels can be met so they don't have to move their parents twice. They want to be safe and secure knowing there's adequate nursing care here, that their needs can be met and that if their parents develop more serious ailments, they can be cared for. Here, if someone is in trouble, a nurse is steps away."

Merav Jacobson, manager of marketing at the Terraces of Baycrest Retirement Residence cautions against touring too many residences in one day.

"Given the amount of observation and reflection required on each tour, don't overload your schedule. Rather, limit yourself to a maximum of two tours per day to give yourself time to digest the information and make comparisons without different experiences blending into each other. And if there's a place you really like, don't limit yourself to just one tour," she says.

Amica offers comfort and understated elegance.

"Take a second tour at a different time of day than your first, and arrive early so you can walk around on your own and observe the environment," she adds.

"Does the site look clean and well maintained? Does it smell clean? Is there a bulletin board that lists daily activities for the week, and if so, is there a good range of interesting things to do?"

Forest Hill Place hosts resident welcome lunches, where residents can invite friends who are potential prospects. If those prospects end up moving in for a minimum of three months, the resident gets a referral fee of $1,000. Referrals are important and can be a good way to get a sense of a community's reputation – especially when they're not financially motivated.

"Use your family and friends as a resource and let them help guide you with the questions you should ask," Teperman says.

The reputation of a retirement home is important, but no less important is how you feel while visiting, cautions Moller.

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Think ahead to future needs when choosing a home

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"Do you feel at home? Is the staff friendly and engaging? And do you think that the person leading your tour understood what you were looking for?"

Marion Hoffman, community relations manager at Amica at Thornhill, advises to look out for the personality of the community you're visiting.

"You want to find a community that's a good fit for you in terms of ambiance, flavour, location, activities, range of offerings and value for price paid," she explains.

Robyn Knezic, general manager for Delmanor Northtown, says Delmanor is "a retirement community. We have multiple religious denominations in our community, so there are opportunities for all of them. At points in time, we've had a rabbi come in and give a talk, and we ensure all the holidays are recognized – Chanukah with menorah lighting, for instance. In my experience, people tend to look for a community that's close by to family or they'll return to an area they may have lived in before, because it's familiar."

"There's no question that every community has its own dynamic. At Delmanor Northtown, we take pride in the way people feel when they're inside our community. They feel very welcomed. They comment all the time that it's such a warm atmosphere – people are so friendly and willing to help."

Moller says the importance of thinking ahead to your potential future needs also can't be underestimated when you're choosing a retirement home. What continuum of care do they provide so that you can age in place?

"Find out if a retirement home has assisted living facilities, and registered nurses on duty who can deal with medications, injections, incontinence and dementia," Moller suggests.

"Do they have a visiting physician? Do they have a secure floor if a resident starts to wander? These may not be issues you are wrestling with today, but no one knows what the future holds, and it's always good to know your home of choice has options available, so another move years or months later won't be necessary," she says.

"Choose a residence that can meet your needs as they change, so you won't have to move again at the worst possible time," Moller adds.

Kensington Place is a heimish community that's unique and elegant.

Find out about the staff-to-resident ratio, and don't be afraid to clarify the meaning of 24-hour staffing. Does it mean round-the-clock nursing care?

At the Terraces of Baycrest, there are several on-site health professionals, including six doctors, a psychiatrist, nurses, occupational therapist, a pharmacist, kinesiologists and a foot care specialist.

"We're able to refer to specialists at Baycrest Hospital, located on the same campus as the retirement residence," Jacobson says.

"Find out what kind of hospitalization prevention strategies are employed, if the on-site doctors are taking on new clients, and if they are, what their weekly hours in the residence are."

If Judaism is religiously, traditionally or culturally important to you, find out if the home is a good cultural match, Jacobson advises. Does it offer kosher food, women-only exercise programs and a synagogue on site? Are there programs and supports in place for Holocaust survivors?

Mira Anidjar of Kensington Place says that "in our case, it's the atmosphere you're looking for. Our community is very unique. There's a lot of Yiddishkeit.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B21

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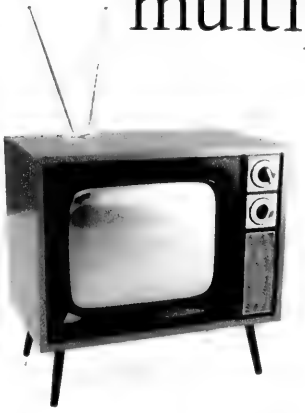

> *It's impossible to imagine a world where piles of old electronics are sitting in landfills, harming our environment*

NEWS CANADA

Canadians are certainly faithful to separating their household garbage all week long, indicating that most of us are determined to pull our weight when it comes to protecting the environment. A growing number of Canadians, however, have added another step.

For several years now, a robust nationwide initiative has made it much easier and safer to recycle our end-of-life electronics.

All recycling is beneficial, but when it comes to safely discarding electronic items like laptops, televisions, printers, and cameras, there are far more rewards in store than first meet the eye, says the Electronic Products Recycling Association (EPRA), an industry-led, not-for-profit organization that operates and regulates recycling programs across the country.

"When you recycle end-of-life electronic products in a safe and secure manner, you're not only helping to keep them out of Canada's landfill, you are also preventing them from being illegally exported or handled by irresponsible recyclers," says Cliff Hacking, the president and chief executive officer for EPRA.

"Furthermore, when electronics are received and dismantled by approved recyclers, you are also helping to recover and recycle valuable resources that can be put back into the manufacturing supply chain."

Today, there are well over 1,000 authorized EPRA collection sites in the country, including official drop-off centres, plus return-to-retail locations, special recycling events – and as a result, many Canadians are doing their part. Collection records show that already as much as 100,000 metric tons of old electronics are kept out of landfills every year – and that is roughly the weight equivalent of 20,000 elephants.

So what happens to all those electronic products instead?

Once received by an authorized collection site, the items are sent to audited and approved recyclers for specialized processing. New technology is used to break down old technology and to harvest the raw materials that went into them, including glass, plastic, and precious metals like gold and copper.

Substances of concern like mercury and lead are disposed of responsibly to protect both the environment and the health and safety of the workers handling them. The recovered materials are then put back into the manufacturers' supply chain and used to make new products.

It's impossible to imagine the world today without electronics. But, says EPRA, we must also make sure that it's impossible to imagine a world where piles of old electronics are sitting in landfills, harming our environment.

As many as 80 per cent of Canadians polled said they had at least one end-of-life electronic item in the house. Do you?

If so, more information about recycling them responsibly – including an informative video– is available online at www.recycleMYelectronics.ca. ■

Rely on your gut instinct

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B19

The people that live here mostly share a common background. Most of them are Holocaust survivors.

"When they come here, there's a feeling like they're back home, there's a familiar home-like feeling and people feel a common bond of the old country. It's a very unique community here. There's also the kosher aspect that draws people to our building. It'ws attractive to either themselves or their children's way of life. With kosher comes a feel of Jewishness, customs and even if you're not religious, if your kids are, then they will be comfortable coming to eat with you here," Anidjar says.

"The beauty of the building is also a plus – it's beautiful but not posh, warm but inviting, a very elegant atmosphere. Along with that comes the special foods we have. It's like what you served your family at home. Most of these women were incredible homemakers, so their pride is reflected in the cooking here.

"All of that connects. Our programming is very focused on residents' backgrounds, too. We have a Yiddish club, our own choir, bubbe's bistro, bakers' corner challah baking, crafters' corner, knitters nook, exercise, and relaxation yoga."

Many activities are within walking distance of Four Elms.

Living Life on the Avenue is steps from downtown.

At the end of the day, though, when it comes down to making the big decision, rely on your gut instincts, says Lisa Hunter, lifestyle consultant at Forest Hill Place.

"We know that when a prospect comes in through our doors, they will either love our community or they won't," she says.

That instinctive feeling and the little voice in your head should never be quieted or ignored. But if you're second-guessing yourself and still unsure, it's okay to ask for a trial stay, says Jacobson, from the Terraces.

"It's a way to learn even more about the facility, get a feel for the atmosphere and rhythms of the place and have the peace of mind that you can still return to your home if the facility is not the right fit for you," she says.

At Canterbury Place, sunshine streaming through the windows will welcome you and invokes a sense of warmth, whether you're relaxing in the comfort of your suite or enjoying a game of cards with friends, says representative Janet Crawford.

"Experience our chefs prepared home cooking or invite the family for your own personal summer barbecue on the terrace. Stay home and be entertained so you can get to know your neighbours," she says.

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Patio, tree establish blissful co-existence

CJN STAFF

Some time after my wife and I purchased our home, we discovered that the patio on the northeast corner of the house had been laid directly on the sprawling root system of a massive Norway spruce tree, some 50 feet high and eight feet in girth. The result? Wholesale upheaval and undulation, culminating in a six-inch "peak," where the tree's foot-thick primary anchor root had lifted the 65-pound concrete patio slabs resting on it like so much dandelion fluff.

The solution? Remove the slabs, raise the entire patio by an average of four inches of new sand – graded from a one-inch increment at the south end to a seven-inch increment at the north end abutting the tree – and rebuild with random flagstone. The alternative – cutting into the beautiful root system that had predated our arrival by more than half a century – was not an option in our books.

At the same time, we also had to excavate and build a connecting walkway, plant a strip of violets between it and the garage, and rebuild the crumbling rear garage door sill, patio perimeter base and patio roof

support posts, which on close inspection we discovered were quite literally hanging by — actually, sitting on — a thread.

After countless summer mornings, evenings and weekends of lifting, schlepping, digging, pickaxing, raking, measuring, mixing, setting, drilling, sawing, hammering, nailing, screwing, stapling, cutting, chopping, chiselling, compacting, cursing, and generally eating dust, I was really starting to get the hang of walkway and patio building.

Along the way, I encountered a myriad of impediments that I hadn't envisioned at the outset. To cite but one, I had to hand-chisel several deep notches in the four by fours anchoring the new perimeter base to allow them to nestle snugly over the roots they encountered. At the same time, the upper surface of these four by fours had to follow the north-south and east-west slopes of the new patio surface. This was necessary both for esthetics and to allow water to drain away from the house.

> *There were a myriad of impediments that I hadn't envisioned at the outset*

The trials and tribulations of the undertaking could fill a book. Here are the broad strokes:

CONTINUED ON PAGE B26

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Window treatments set the mood of your home

NEWS CANADA

When you walk into any room in your home, what's the first thing you notice? Is it the couch? Or your new side table from that antique shop you bought last week?

It could be. What is often overlooked, however, is that the overall ambience sets the tone for how you feel, more so than select decorative items. And what directly affects that mood might surprise you: "More often than not, it's the lighting," says Kim Kiner, the vice-president of product design at Hunter Douglas, a leading window treatments manufacturer.

"Whether it's soft, filtered light or bright sunshine cascading through your shades, the way light enters a room can change everything," she says. With so much at stake at the window, Kiner gives us these popular trends to get the most out of your window dressings:

Motorization: Consumers today want a "connected home" with Internet-ready products that can be operated with the convenience of mobile devices, Kiner points out. "Hunter Douglas has a Platinum App, for example, which allows users to create personalized scenes from morning light to movie night. You can control all the shades in your home with one click," she says. "Time a scene with your alarm clock for a refreshing morning." The app will soon be available for Android as well as Apple mobile devices and is also offered with a sunrise/sunset timer feature that uses GPS data to calculate location-specific times.

The company's custom-crafted Design Studio Roman shades can be operated with the app too, as they have added a battery-powered motorization option.

Energy efficiency: Everyone wants to live more responsibly. Products that offer enhanced energy efficiency to keep homes cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter are very popular. "Energy-efficient window treatments are a smart way to conserve energy in your home," says Kiner. Duette Architella honeycomb shades, for example, can help reduce solar heat gain through windows by up to 80 per cent, while also helping to reduce heat loss by up to 40 per cent. The enhanced UV protection offered by soft, sheer Silhouette window shadings is trending with consumers as well.

Sophisticated textures: Window coverings today are not just about function: they make a style statement. And consumers love the beauty and sophistication that textures add at the window. From natural textures to exquisite textile weaves, such as linens and raw silks, they create a distinctive look that transforms an ordinary window to extraordinary. This spring's Silhouette shadings collection offers textured fabric vanes and sheers that beautifully enhance light at the window.

Whether you're living in a new space and starting from scratch or want to update your window décor, these trends will modernize your home and add unique style. ■

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Shower seats can add to your comfort and safety

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B6

Step 3: Stretch Your Space

If you're feeling a bit claustrophobic in the shower, it may be time for an update. But don't think adding additional shower space means adding a lot of cost. You can easily add additional elbow room by simply swapping your straight shower curtain rod with a curved shower rod.

Take a look at the easy installation of the Tension Curved Shower Rod. Details at moen.ca.

Step 4: Take a Seat

Would you be more relaxed (and feel more secure while shaving your legs, or washing your feet) if you had a nice place to sit? If your current shower doesn't have built-in seating, there is a wide range of options, from freestanding chairs to more upscale fold-down shower seats featuring teak and stainless finishes. But no matter which you choose, you'll soon see that serenity in the shower feels safer in a seated position.

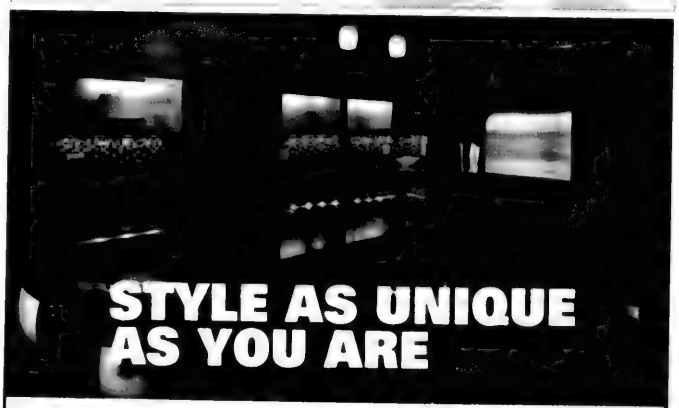
Step 5: Slip and Slide

It's inevitable in the bath – water is going to create slick surfaces. So, before you step in and shower, be sure that you won't fall flat. For less than the cost of a cup of coffee, you can install treads to the bottom of your shower for some sure footing and added traction.

Step 6: Grab a Towel

Once you're squeaky clean and relaxed, you'll want to reach out for a fluffy, warm towel and climb out of the shower. How can you ensure your towels are close at hand? Install a towel bar just outside the shower area. But don't choose just any towel bar – add extra safety with a towel bar that incorporates a grab bar.

"Our research shows that the most challenging and potentially dangerous bathroom activity is getting in and out of the bathtub or shower safely," says Jack Suvak, senior director of market research and insights at Moen. "And, many bathers rely on items such as towel bars or shower door handles, which are not built to hold a person's weight. Our grab bars and towel bars are designed to deliver that kind of security." ■



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LOOKING FOR PHOTO ALBUM

Pull-out shelves for any room in the house

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B10

Not only do pull-out shelves help de-clutter your home and save you space, they also make it much easier for you to find things you're constantly looking for – you won't need to get down on your hands and knees to reach things stuck at the back of your cabinet or get on a chair to find an item high up in your pantry, she said.

"People have one too many cans dropped on their feet or they broke too many dishes or can't find something in their cabinets, they see the value of the gliding shelves."

The drawers are fully extendable, allowing you to pull them out completely and access everything.

While the pull-out shelves are very popular for kitchens, they can be added to any space such as bathroom cabinets or linen closets, said Keselman.

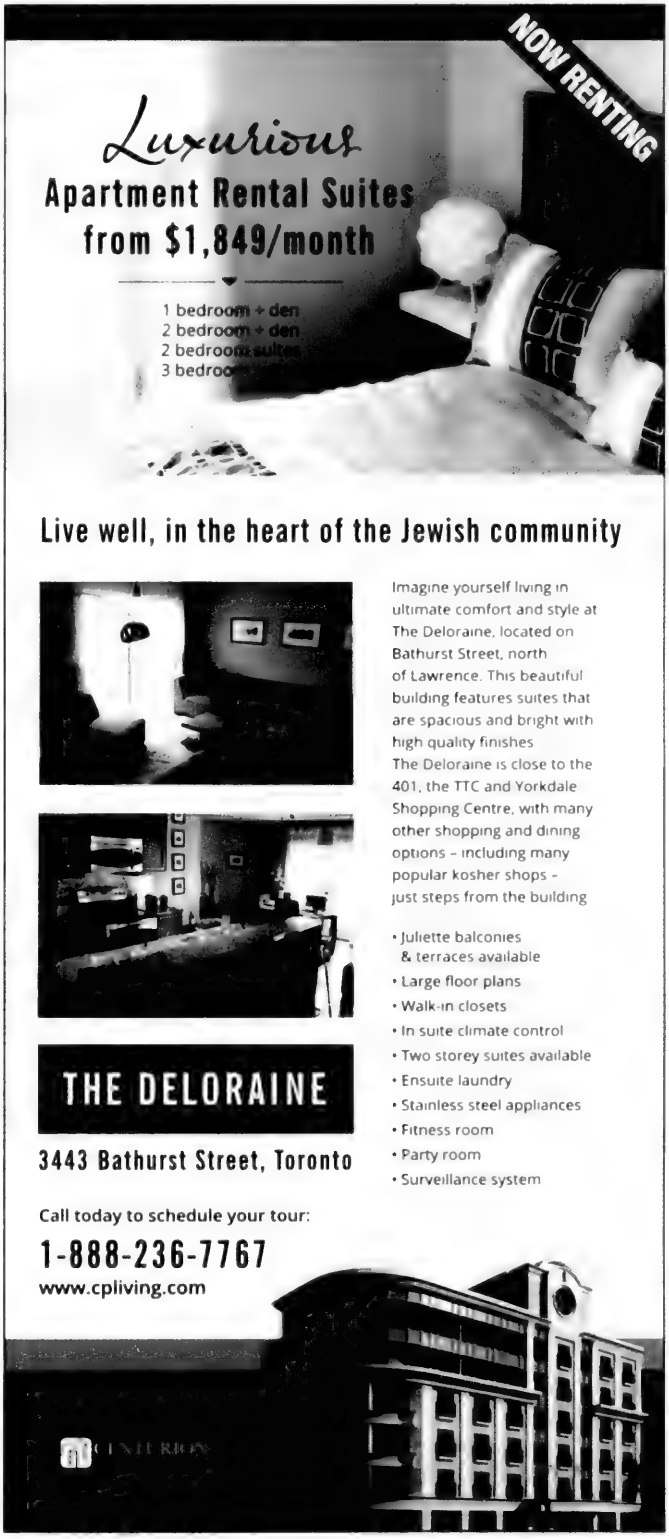
Some popular items are tray boxes with dividers so nothing falls when you pull it out, and the hidden corner pull-out shelves which maximize space in the back corner of your cabinets.

The product starts at $135 per drawer including installation and the price varies based on the width and size of your cabinets. The shelves can carry 150 pounds when fully extended and come with a lifetime warranty.

Gliding Shelf Solutions also provides a free in-home thorough consultation. "It's a really good consultation. I don't just come to see how many glides you want. I go through the kitchen, I see how the space works for you, I make suggestions, I measure the cabinets," said Keselman. "From the time you place an order to installation, it's roughly three to four weeks."

Their products also qualify for the Healthy Homes Renovation tax credit, which gives seniors up to $1,500 rebate with their income tax.

The products are made in Canada, manufactured in Ontario, custom made to your unique measurements. "They increase space, force you to stay organized, and increase safety too," said Keselman. "They're suitable for every home." ■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Patio is well worth the effort

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B22

BUYING: Countless trips to building supply stores for all the tools, materials and fasteners I thought I'd require and many I never dreamed I'd need.

STAKING AND GRIDDING: A network of some 20 layout lines was required to establish the proper north-south and east-west slopes. Ensuring consistency across the entire network covering one continuous surface – the patio and the connecting walkway — proved particularly tricky. Throughout the process, I repeatedly moved, restaked, adjusted and tweaked the layout lines to ensure this consistency.

DIGGING: Excavating 150 square feet of walkway to a depth of eight inches and digging out the patio's perimeter in order to rebuild its foundation.

SHLEPPING: Four cubic yards of moisture-laden clay soil and six cubic yards of sand are a lot to shovel and wheelbarrow around a property. Prying up, lifting and carrying the 72 original 65-pound concrete slabs was child's play by comparison. All in all, I moved some 15 tons of material – portions of it multiple times as dictated by space constraints, learning on the job, and simple lack of foresight.

CUTTING AND NOTCHING: Good cedar four by fours for the perimeter base; scrap two by fours and one by fours for spacers to keep the two-by-eight composite walkway borders exactly two feet apart both top and bottom before laying the sand base between them; and good one by fours to finish the patio perimeter base.

LAYING: 450 square feet of landscape fabric, tacked in place with six-inch plastic spikes and stapled to the walkway borders and patio perimeter base.

LEVELLING, PLUMBING AND SUPPORTING: By means both conventional (box and line levels) and unorthodox (the iron bars used to keep the walkway borders plumb until I could buttress them on the outside with hard-packed clay soil).

PAINTING: Three coats – high-gloss paint for the white portion of the new perimeter base, sealant for the natural red portion.

GRADING: Once the layout lines were in place, the sand had to be raked and compacted to match their level and slope.

All of the foregoing took me to the end of October, at which point I decided to hire a stonemason to ensure that the job would be completed before winter. That gentleman was most helpful in selecting the stone, which he agreed to lay and set at a good price based on the entire base being graded and ready for laying, so that no additional work would be required on his part.

Throughout the process, our magnificent spruce loomed over the proceedings like a giant mastodon prepared to scuttle, with a flick of its big toe, my efforts at the slightest sign of further encroachment. But it was also benevolent, allowing me to use its farthest-reaching broad root as a natural border for the walkway and lead-in to the patio. For its part, the variety of random flagstone my wife chose has lived up to its name ("Rainbow") by showing its full colour when wet, ensuring sunny spirits come fair weather or foul. ■

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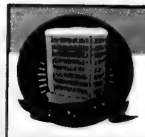
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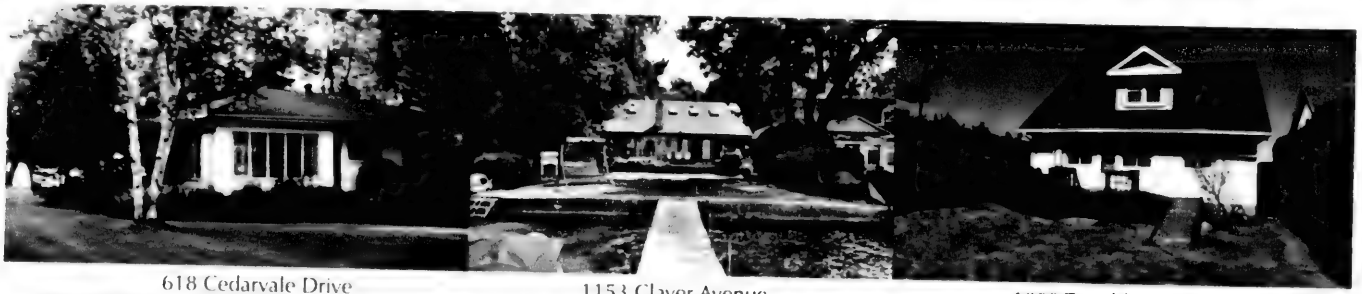

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Inside

Kosher Food:

Could it be cheaper? Behind the Label, Part 2 **PAGES 24-25**

Chicken supply can't meet demand. **PAGE 12**

Jewish Life

Jewish Music Week is back for its second year, bigger and better than ever. **PAGE 34**

Sabbath

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:18 p.m.	9:30 p.m.
Montreal	8:01 p.m.	8:14 p.m.
Toronto	8:19 p.m.	9:29 p.m.
Winnipeg	8:51 p.m.	10:12 p.m.
Calgary	9:03 p.m.	10:27 p.m.
Vancouver	8:32 p.m.	9:52 p.m.

One great city for Jewish immigration?

An article that ran in major Israeli news outlets suggested that Winnipeg's effort to grow its Jewish population has caused more problems than it solved. BERNIE BELLAN PHOTO

MYRON LOVE
PRAIRIES CORRESPONDENT

WINNIPEG — "I believe that there is no such thing as bad publicity," says Winnipeg Jewish Federation executive director Bob Freedman, responding to an article by *JTA* reporter Uriel Heilman that appeared in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* and on the *Times of Israel* website, among other places.

The article suggests that the vaunted GrowWinnipeg 15-year-old initiative to increase the size of the city's formerly dwindling Jewish population by attracting South American immigrants fleeing economic instability in their homelands has caused more problems than it's solved.

Over the last 15 years, the majority of immigrants to Winnipeg have come initially from South America, and then from Israel. The story says that while the South American Jewish families were a good fit for the Winnipeg Jewish community, this was not as true for the Israelis.

But has that in fact been the case? Opinion in the city is mixed.

Nevertheless, as a result of the widespread attention the story has received internationally, Freedman said the federation office and website are being "bombarded" with calls and emails from Jews throughout North America and Europe who are suddenly considering Winnipeg as a potential new home.

On the other hand, he noted, some of the more than 4,400 Jewish newcomers to Winnipeg in recent years were "upset and offended" by Heilman's article.

"I'm not sure where Heilman got the impression that our immigration recruitment program has backfired on us," Freedman said, referring to the headline on the piece when it ran on *Haaretz.com*. "I thought that the tone of the article was too negative," said Faye Rosenberg Cohen, the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg's planning director. "The Jewish immigrants who have come here in the last 15 years have been of great benefit to our community."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

David Mirvish PRESENTS THE 2014 / 2015 Mirvish Subscription Theatre Series
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Grey's Anatomy features Israeli know-how, and Shoah essay rankles

Heart tech breakthrough

Viewers of ABC's *Grey's Anatomy* – yes, it's still on the air – may have thought they were watching some sci-fi fantasy earlier this month when Dr. Preston Burke, old flame and former mentor of Dr. Cristina Yang, played by Canadian Sandra Oh, showed her a 3-D hologram of a heart and began flipping it around without special glasses or equipment. It turns out they were seeing an actual tech breakthrough from RealView Imaging, an Israeli company based in the small northern town of Yokneam. The technology makes it possible for surgeons to virtually plan delicate procedures.

Hologram technology lets surgeons manipulate your virtual heart.

Yom Ha'atzmaut, Hamas-style

In honour of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Hamas released a YouTube video with a cover of the Israeli national anthem *Hatikvah* (*The Hope*). Titled *Sof Hatikvah* (*The End Of Hope*) and sung entirely in rhyming Hebrew, the video promises Israelis they will soon be driven out of the land of Israel. "The army of the Zionists was built of wax and now it is melted and has no hope," the singer croons as a computer generated character smashes Israel's state symbols into rubble. The song says smart Israelis will be allowed to leave the country and return "to their homelands" while those who are stubborn and remain will have their fates "sealed beneath the dirt." And who said Hamas is only about terror?

Apology for Holocaust assignment

Whether the Holocaust happened is no longer up for debate at California's Rialto Unified School District. Some 2,000 eighth-graders in the Los Angeles-area district were told to write an essay explaining whether they believed the Holocaust was a real historical event or a political scheme to influence public emotion and gain. Board officials apologized last week after protests by several groups, including the Anti-Defamation League. "It was an error," board spokeswoman Syeda Jafri said May 5. Students finished the work in February. ■

Gematria

1,400

The estimated tally of Nazi-looted artworks left by German art hoarder Cornelius Gurlitt, 81, to Switzerland's Bern Art Museum after his death last week.

2

The number of men executed by Hamas in Gaza last week for collaborating with Israel.

Quotable

When the last witnesses of that unspeakable tragedy have disappeared, at least one thing will remain – my films.

— Claude Lanzmann, producer of the documentary *Shoah*. See Q & A on page 46.

Next Week in *The CJN*

The first instalment of our four-part series on inclusion in the Jewish community.

Inside today's edition

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Letters to the Editor

Hello from Halifax

I would like to thank Ralph and Shirlee Medjuck and the Atlantic Jewish Council for arranging subscriptions for Atlantic Canada. It's so great to feel plugged into the rest of Jewish Canada and to see some content from our neck of the woods. The content is fresh and interesting and there is always something great to read. Thanks!

Peggy Wait
Halifax

Breaking the silence

It felt very gratifying to light the sixth candle in honour of the gay and disabled victims of the Holocaust at the Yom Hashoah Community Commemoration in Toronto.

For many years, the gay experience in the Holocaust was characterized in German as *Totgeschlagen, totgeschwiegen* (beaten to death, silenced). Today, that silence is being broken, and Kulanu Toronto is proud that Toronto is helping to break that silence. It is our community's duty to remember all those who perished in the Holocaust, including those who were branded by the pink triangle.

Justine Apple
Toronto

In defence of Yiddish

The word *vinkl* in Yiddish means corner. It breaks my heart to think that the new *CJN* doesn't have a corner for Yiddish speakers and readers, most of whom are *CJN* subscribers. And you've canned Hebrew, too.

So, in exiling Yiddish and Hebrew from your pages, you are exiling the base of modern Jewish identity in order to gain what? Will it strengthen the belonging of the young and slow down their assimilation?

Some may say that as a former writer for *The CJN* who has been left in the *vinkl*, my comments may be sour grapes. I hope that is not so. *The CJN* has the marvellous opportunity of reaching out to the many cultural and religious voices that exist in Canadian Jewry – and grabbing the younger audience in all its variety. Showing that different Jewish voices can peacefully play in the same sandbox is one way of helping our young people stay with us.

I think we all have to remember that as a community we are part of a *goldene keyt*, a golden chain of culture that links past to present religiously, and secularly. The strength in the chain is in the tension of both parts of our Jewish expression.

Gerry Kane
Toronto

Rethinking BDS protest

Thank you for publishing my letter ("BDS: A prof's response," *The CJN*, April 24).

I think some clarification is needed though. The more I thought about the issue the more I realized that "working to rule" could also punish those who do not support the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel.

I have come up with a more targeted approach, and one that is currently being considered by an international professional academic body. I have decided to place a sign on my door, and am urging like-minded academics to do the same, where the sign clarifies my affiliation with Tel Aviv University and for supporters of the BDS campaign to take note of my affiliation. I go on to state that they can take whatever action they deem appropriate, meaning that they can turn around and not work with me (i.e. boycott me) or perhaps rethink their support of the BDS campaign and continue to work with me.

This will target BDS supporters while not affecting those who are against the BDS campaign or otherwise just do not support BDS campaigns on campus.

I hope that this idea catches on. Even those who might not be affiliated directly with an Israeli university or organization can indicate that they might collaborate with such groups or individual professors, or that their offices are "BDS-Free Zones."

Howard Tenenbaum
Thornhill, Ont.

Looking for S. Pasternak

A friend from Poland asked me to find Szymon Pasternak, who was saved during World War II by his neighbour.

The last letter that was received from Mr. Pasternak came in 1989 from 556 Coldstream Ave., Toronto.

The previous family name of Pasternak was Czarnaczapka, and he lived in Kosemino and then moved to Siemitkowo.

Please help me to find the person, if he is still alive, or his relatives.

Leon Osman
25 Ankor St.
4486200, Israel

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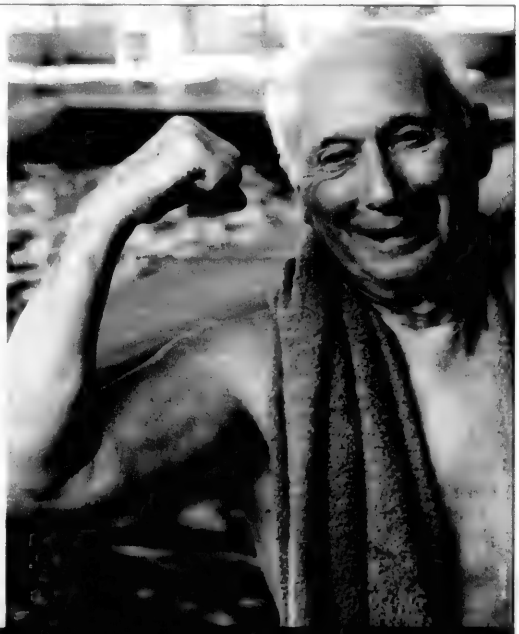

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RABBI-2-RABBI

Shul kiddush is about more than food

Some synagogues see it as a key way to fulfil their mission of providing outlets for holy encounters

RABBI ADAM SCHEIER
CONGREGATION SHAAR HASHOMAYIM, MONTREAL

RABBI ADAM CUTLER
BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION, TORONTO

Rabbi Cutler: At any given time, I am blessed with mentoring about 10 individuals in the process of converting to Judaism. When reviewing our Shabbat services, I tell them when shul begins and ends. Like most of our congregants, I don't expect them to leave the building once *Adon Olam* is concluded. In fact, I stress that if they want to be Jewish, they have to stay for kiddush.

There is, of course, no Jewish legal reason for a person to eat babka and pasta salad (we have a pretty decent kiddush at Beth Tzedec) in order to convert to Judaism. Rather, in the socializing that occurs, I see an important transformation take place: the move from outsider to insider. At kiddush, I see the establishment of Jewish peoplehood.

Rabbi Scheier: Our kiddushes at the Shaar are famous. Party sandwiches, egg rolls, the occasional cholent, Israeli salad, eggs, noodles, special kid-friendly fare.

But more than the food, it's the conversations that intrigue me. Groups of congregants sit around for hours at kiddush discussing all kinds of topics (including the sermon). If our synagogue's mission is to provide an outlet for holy encounters, then kiddush is one of those times when our mission is realized. I believe that in terms of community-building, Shabbat kiddush is one of our synagogue's most important programs.

Also of interest to me are those individuals we call JFKs – those who arrive "just for kiddush." If we can see kiddush as a program of its own merit, then we shouldn't mind that people show up for that program and are absent from the Shabbat service that precedes it.

Rabbi Cutler: Thank you for adding another Jewish acronym to my vocabulary. Based on your menu alone, I'm not surprised about how many JFKs your shul attracts.

If kiddush has value in and of itself (and I think we both agree that it does), then just as we invite people to come to shul for monthly meditation, we should equally tell people that they are welcome to attend our weekly kiddush – even if that's the only "program" they are attending at shul.

Of course, all of this comes with a cost. Two synagogues – one in the Hamptons, the other in Bal Harbor, Fla., – made the news last year for extravagant kiddushes, with each shul reportedly spending $10,000 per week. Where's the line? How do we measure impact?

Rabbi Scheier: I believe that the investment a congregation makes in its kiddush should correspond to the degree to which it sees kiddush as part of its core mission. Is it a kiddush that takes nutritional value into account, accommodating those who, out of financial need, look to our kiddush as a primary source of sustenance? Is it a kiddush that provides youth-friendly fare to encourage children and young families to attend and thereby deepen their connection to community? Is it a kiddush that offers study opportunities and programming to enrich the spiritual value of the time spent at kiddush? If a congregation can truly view kiddush as part of its core mission, then a significant investment in kiddush is justified (and even encouraged).

Rabbi Cutler: Your kiddush descriptions and what I've experienced first hand at other Montreal shuls are beginning to make me reconsider my hockey allegiances and perhaps get on the Canadiens bandwagon.

Kiddush can be very good at catching up with friends. I worry, though, about those who are new to our communities. While as the rabbi I am happy to float from table to table, saying hello to the regulars and introducing myself to new faces, for those who are unfamiliar with the synagogue, kiddush can be a very intimidating event.

What mechanisms can we add to kiddush, without being awkward or overly contrived, that will enable newcomers to feel more welcomed?

Rabbi Scheier: The answer hinges on our ability to treat kiddush as a program of engagement. We – clergy and lay leadership – must take our responsibility as "hosts" of the kiddush very seriously. Of course, this responsibility extends to the quality of the food, kiddush programming content, and any other efforts that will affect the overall mood in the room. What a lofty purpose for tables of *kichel*, herring, and cholent. ■

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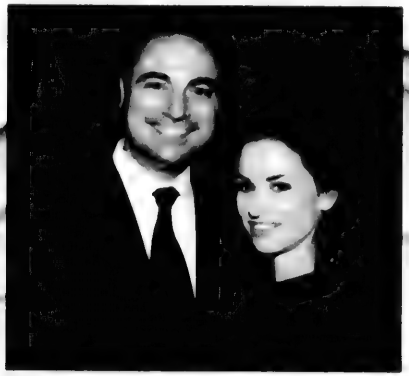

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From the archives

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES

The Cohen family in front of their homestead in Kitchener, Ont.,circa 1906.

SeeJN | Bible contest winner

A Canadian high school student was the winner of the annual International Bible Contest in Jerusalem. Eitan Amos, 18, a student at Yeshivat Or Chaim in Toronto, pictured with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, centre, and Education Minister Shai Piron, won first place in the contest, held every year in Israel on Yom Ha'atzmaut. Amos reportedly is the first Canadian to win first place in the contest since Leiby Warner did so in 1974 at age 14.

From Yoni's Desk

Our aim in a word: balance

The Rob Ford allegations that emerged Friday night affirmed the Toronto mayor's shocking narrative of descent in many of the usual ways: reports of heavy drinking, drug use, driving while intoxicated, ranting and raving are, sadly, nothing new for Ford. What *was* new this time was that Ford allegedly aimed his venom at Jews.

According to the *Toronto Star*, Ford told someone on the other end of a cellphone "Nobody sticks up for people like I do, every f---ing ki-e, ni--er, f---ing w-p, d-go, whatever the race. Nobody does." Then, in case the listener didn't glean the mayor's message from his first, discombobulated attempt: "I'm the most racist guy around." And finally, an affirmation many wish wasn't true: "I'm the mayor of Toronto."

Ford's statement speaks for itself and, if it's true, then no excuse or explanation can make it go away. It's hard to see how he might re-ingratiate himself to the Jewish, black, Italian and Spanish communities in Toronto he so viciously disparaged with the derogatory remarks reportedly caught on tape.

The mayor's supporters – some of whom would more accurately be described as enablers – will reply, again, that booze and drugs, and the media, are to blame, not Ford himself. Some – even in the communities he attacked – will repeat the mayor's popular "standing up for the little guy" talking point, even though this particular rant brazenly contradicts it.

Unlikely as it may seem, Rob Ford's latest stumble offers an opportunity for us to discuss a *Canadian Jewish News*-related issue – namely, how we cover politics and elections.

Over the last few months as this newspaper has reinvented itself, one of the primary objectives has been, in a word, balance. It's not an exact science – there's no mathematical formula – but we try our best to frame the news and community issues we cover from all points of view equally – right, left, Conservative, Liberal, NDP, Green and everywhere in between. (How *The CJN* approaches Israeli politics is a topic for another day.)

The point is to share ideas and opinions, not tell you how to think or which way to vote. As the independent voice of Canada's Jewish community, we believe our job is to broadcast the wide variety of opinions and perspectives Canadian Jews hold. It's one of the reasons why, for example, we ended the practice of publishing unsigned editorials. The notion that there is one particular Canadian Jewish stance on just about any matter is, frankly, ridiculous.

Most newspapers, now as ever, have defined political positions, and that can engender a type of tunnel vision. Add to that the political conversation online, and if you only ever wanted to read things you would agree with, you'd have more than enough to choose from.

But the breadth of Canadian Jewry affords *The CJN* a unique opportunity to do quite the opposite – to act as a communal space for the exchange of ideas, opinions, beliefs. That's our aim, and the fact we've received complaints so far that we're too right-wing *and* too left-wing suggests we might just be on the way to achieving the impartial equilibrium we're after. — YONI

OPINION

The challenge of *My Promised Land*

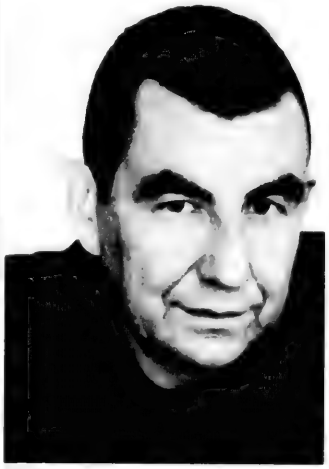
Martin Goldfarb

The book *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*, by Ari Shavit, left me feeling pessimistic and discombobulated about the future of Israel as a home for the Jewish People and as the key source for the evolution of Jewish thinking. I know that my reaction differs from many who praise this book. However, I believe in the importance of optimism. Optimism is planned behaviour, and true optimism is a result of confidence and preparation. The challenge for me is that Shavit's thesis seems to preclude optimism.

This book is premised on Jewish self-guilt regarding the Palestinians and Israeli Arabs. In this context, it encourages Israel to take risks, regardless of the consequences. But the fact is that the Palestinians have never accepted the reality that the Jewish People have a long heritage in the Land of Israel, and by accepting this Palestinian perspective on history, the book prescribes an outcome that will likely have negative consequences for Jewish survival in Israel.

Shavit asserts that Israel is a western country. I'm not so sure that it is. It tries to think western, but geographically it's not western, and geography often dictates national character. It is a Middle Eastern state geographically, with some western cultural attributes. Israel cannot function as if it doesn't exist in the Middle East. I believe that if peace happens, Israel will accommodate its way of doing things to the geography it inhabits. It is unlikely that Israel can change the Middle East. Over time, the character of Israel's thinking will inevitably become more like its neighbours.

Palestinians need to come to grips with this reality: they can no longer expect Israel to act like a western nation, and yet act themselves in accordance with Middle Eastern attitudes and behaviours toward Israel. Choices have consequences.



Ari Shavit

> *The book inaccurately singles out Israel as an occcupier nation when its behaviour is really no different than that of other nations all over the world*

The book inaccurately singles out Israel as an occupier nation when its behaviour is really no different than that of other nations all over the world. All nations, including western nations, have done what is necessary for survival and development. Francis Fukuyama, in his book *The Origins of Political Order*, documents this brilliantly – he shows that subjugation and conquest have been part of nation-building in the United Kingdom, Europe, China, India and the Islamic world. Somehow Shavit wants to believe that Israel can maintain a strong nation-state following a different paradigm.

Democracy in Israel is the same as democracy in other countries. Sometimes it protects itself through tough decisions. Democracy, at its best, understands and prioritizes survival. For example, the 1948 expulsion of Palestinians from Lydda was a calculated military decision to help ensure the survival of Israel as a country. Yes, people suffered, and I have sympathy for them as individuals, but I don't hold the leaders who made that decision at fault. They were at war. They did what they thought needed to be done.

Collective wisdom in a democracy must be trusted. Shavit denigrates the decisions that Israeli leaders have taken to create and ensure the survival of the Jewish state. Seven decades of Israeli leaders have risen to the challenges they faced, not without difficulty or frustration, but with perseverance. They, like leaders of other nations, have done what is necessary for survival and development, and Israeli citizens have shown support for this approach through the democratic process.

There is a right to a Jewish state – that is why Zionism survives. The formation of the State of Israel changed Jewish thinking of self-doubt, self-denial and subjugation to others. The genius of Zionism was to understand that change can be a self-fulfilling prophesy and that implementation was and is necessary for survival. Zionism enabled optimism. It prepared Jews for survival in the Middle East and gave them confidence in themselves. It still does today.

My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel suggests that Zionism, in fact, could collapse and that the land could become an Arab land where Jews may or may not be welcome. The trouble for me is that if they are not welcomed by Arab leaders, what then? Leave it to chance?

The survival of Israel as a Jewish state cannot be negotiable. It is a given. The reality of a Jewish nation-state must be understood in any future negotiations with the Palestinians. For a successful negotiated peace, Palestinians must accept the right of Israel to exist. Without this, conversation is difficult. Israel and the Jewish People have too much at risk.

I admire Ari Shavit's ability to tell an engaging story. The problem is that this story is not without consequences. His thesis would sap the confidence and optimism of the Israeli people. It would deny them the ability and right to defend their heritage, territory, culture, religion and language. ■

Martin Goldfarb is chairman of Goldfarb Intelligence Marketing, a Toronto-based public opinion research and marketing firm.

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Article stirs debate about GrowWinnipeg

NOAH ERENBERG PHOTO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Winnipeg's Jewish community goes back to 1882, when the first sizeable group of Russian Jews arrived. As in other North American cities, the community grew a lot in the years leading up to and after World War I. And while it has often been difficult to keep people, the steady outflow of people was more than compensated for by an influx of Holocaust survivors after the war and a steady stream of Jewish families from rural communities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and northwestern Ontario throughout the 1940s and into the 1960s.

The community's population peaked at 21,000 in 1961, then began an inexorable decline. By the mid-1960s, there were few Jewish families left in rural areas to replenish Winnipeg's Jewish population. By 1990, it had fallen to less than 16,000 and was aging. In the mid-1990s, Freedman and other community leaders began taking action to reverse the trend.

The first step was the construction of the Asper Jewish Community Campus in south Winnipeg, originally built to replace the old YMHA downtown. One of the first such community campuses in North America, the Asper Campus includes a JCC, the kindergarten-to-Grade-12 Gray Academy of Jewish Education, a Jewish library and Jewish communal offices.

The Asper Campus opened in 1997, and the GrowWinnipeg initiative followed shortly thereafter in an effort to retain younger people who grew up here, as well as persuade former Winnipeggers to come back and recruit new Jewish immigrants.

Key to the recruitment program was outreach to Jewish communities of Latin America – and especially Argentina – which happened largely due to a coincidence. In 1998, Janice Filmon, wife of then-Manitoba premier Gary Filmon, happened to be sitting next to a Jewish Argentine on a flight. At the time, Argentina was undergoing an economic meltdown, and Manitoba had an immigration agreement with Ottawa that allowed the province to recruit skilled immigrants.

As a result of Filmon's initiative, the Jewish federation organized a program to recruit South American Jews. It included visits to the region by federation representatives, a website and a welcoming committee for Jews coming for exploratory visits and later taking up residence.

Over the next few years, some 500 South American Jewish families moved to Winnipeg and were wholeheartedly welcomed. Then, around 2005, South American immigration largely stopped (a small number still arrive each year) as the Argentine economy improved. Unexpectedly, though, a large influx of Israelis, mostly originating from the former Soviet Union, began arriving – some 1,000 families over the past nine years.

Freedman is adamant the federation has never actively promoted Israeli immigration to Winnipeg. "The details about our programs and eligibility rules are online," he said. "Anybody can access them."

The Jewish community's support agencies help all Jewish immigrants, no matter where they come from, he added.

So were the South Americans a better fit than the Israelis, as the article suggests?

Arie Lavy is an Israeli who has been living in Winnipeg for about 30 years. He believes the South Americans were a better fit, because they came from established Jewish communities, much like Winnipeg's, and understand that you have to pay to support your community.

For the Israelis, it's different, he said. "In Israel, no one pays to belong to a shul or go to school. It's a different mentality. They don't feel the need to belong to a Jewish community because that was not an issue in Israel."

The city's Lubavitch Centre does attract Israeli families for yom tov programs, Lavy noted, because they're free and no membership is required, but he believes the Israelis also see Lubavitch as authentic Judaism, because there are very few Conservative and Reform shuls in Israel.

Lavy suggested the language barrier is also more of an issue for the Israelis. He urges the federation and other Jewish groups to put out material in Hebrew and/or Russian if they want to attract more immigrants to their programs.

Bernie Bellan, owner, publisher and editor of Winnipeg's *Jewish Post and News*, argues Russians and Israelis have come mainly to improve their economic situation and don't really care much about being part of the Jewish community.

On the other hand, Rory Paul, Gray Academy's CEO and head of school, said the influx of newcomers has stabilized the school's student population and increased it. He said 80 of its 550 students have been in Winnipeg for three years or less.

"All the new children here have added immeasurably to the culture and life of our school," he said. "It has been a wonderful opportunity for our children to be exposed to so many different cultures."

Bellan is trying to find out how many immigrants who have come here in the last 15 years have stayed. Federation's Rosenberg Cohen said her staff are still working on those numbers, but said immigrants have made their presence strongly felt.

Paul, however, said that last year, 30 Gray students and their families left the school and the city. "After four or five years here, some of the immigrants have moved into middle management in their workplaces," he said. "If they want to better their careers, some of them have to look elsewhere. You can't fault them for that."

The cost to the community of absorbing the immigrants has also raised questions. One estimate puts the yearly cost of immigrant services at $500,000. Rosenberg Cohen agreed that the amount is substantial, but while she doesn't have a total dollar figure, she said $500,000 sounds too high.

"We are not sure where that figure came from," she said. "And relative to the long-term benefits, the cost is actually quite modest."

Because Gray Academy charges tuition on a sliding scale based on family income, Paul noted, more immigrants – who initially have little or no income – do have a negative effect on its bottom line.

Bellan praised Heilman's article for "fomenting discussion about immigration."

And Bob Freedman noted that after a 30-year decline, the Jewish community is growing again. "We have had people come here who are actively participating in our community and whose kids are attending our school, our camps and our youth groups," he said. "That doesn't sound to me like a failing program." ■

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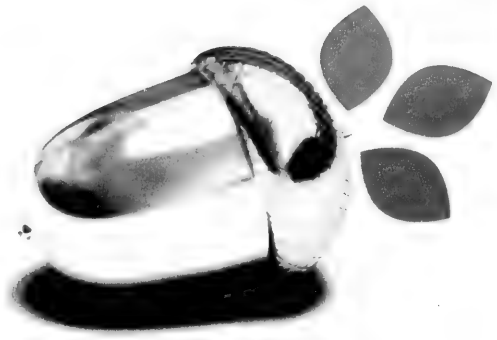

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Get lost when you are in Israel

Gil Troy

Nearly 600 Montrealers are visiting Israel on a mega-mission this May. The delegation's size and quality reflect the central role Montreal's Federation CJA plays in the community's life.

Just as the eastern European *kehillah* kept the Jewish People together for centuries with independent, enveloping, communal institutions, the federation serves as the central address for Montreal Jewry (and most Canadian communities), helping the needy, educating the young and protecting the community, while standing with and for Israel. The organizers have done an extraordinary job of planning an impressive itinerary. The people of Israel are ready to host them. Still, the best advice I can give to my friends on the delegation is: "Get lost!"

I say, "Get lost" in two meanings of the phrase, but not a third. No, I am not being ungracious and saying, New York-style, "Get outta here." But I am suggesting that each visitor – on this mission and all others – carve out some private time, break away from the group, turn off the Waze or Google Maps, and wander.

"Get lost" in the Old City of Jerusalem's alleyways, and see how ancient and modern harmonize together in the Jewish People's eternal capital. "Get lost" around Machane Yehuda and absorb the sights, sounds and smells of the pluralistic modern Jewish market. "Get lost" on Tel Aviv's beaches and boulevards, noting that Israel is not just an historic tourist site, but a living, breathing, experiment in creating a modern Jewish democracy. "Get lost" in the desert outside Be'er Sheva or the forests by the Golan, seeing what our forefathers and foremothers saw.

"Getting lost" in this way helps people own their experiences. As much as we honour and cherish our tour guides, once we become our own tour guides we internalize the experience better.

In that spirit, skipping one of the hotel breakfasts or fancy dinners and buying food in a supermarket or a *makolet*, a corner store, navigating the unfamiliar, interacting with non-English speakers, can prove very rewarding. And, of course, every good, happy "getting lost" story ends with salvation, finding your destination, often with waves of self-satisfaction and empowerment.

There is another dimension to "getting lost." Every visitor to Israel is a pilgrim who should be ready to get lost in some aspect of the Israeli or Jewish experience. It could be the history or the nature or the politics or the spirituality or the demographics. There is so much to learn.

Unfortunately, so many of us have been fed such a boring, thin, pathetic diet of Jewish and Zionist ideas and attitudes that a trip to Israel should serve as a shock to the system, like overdosing on sweets after Yom Kippur. We must go beyond the juvenile Judaism of cutesy stories and shticky rituals that slights the Torah's profundity, the Talmud's depth, Maimonides' genius, Theodor Herzl's vision.

We also need to go beyond the Israel-can-do-no-wrong advocacy models that overlook the complexity of history, the multi-dimensionality of democracy and the ongoing challenges of making this modern country the fulfilment of the Zionist dream in a messy world

Of course, this kind of "getting lost" truly helps us find ourselves, find our way – partially by charting new paths. So one last piece of advice – the same advice I give to March of the Living groups When you return and people ask, "How was the trip?" don't answer with the usual "great," "awesome," "fantastic." Challenge yourself – and others – by saying, "I don't know yet, we'll see."

Don't judge this trip by how much fun you had. Judge it – six months, 12 months, two years from now – by how much it changes you, what ideas and values you internalize, how you use it to move forward. Let this trip be a "reset" in your life – an opportunity to stretch and grow, becoming a more giving, more committed – and thus more connected and satisfied Jew, Zionist, and human being. ■

Women and Judaism

Sara Horowitz

Like many others involved in Jewish life and practice, I have been thinking about two recent articles about modern Orthodox Judaism, one by Jay Lefkowitz, the other by Michah Gottleib.

Both articles are deeply personal, drawing on the writers' sense of their attachment to Judaism and sense of themselves as religiously committed Jews. The articles drew impassioned responses in the press and on the web, from sympathizers and critics.

I know both authors (Jay's father is my first cousin, and Michah is my nephew) and respect their intelligence, sincerity and commitment to Judaism. Reading their articles has made me think about my own (somewhat different) Jewish trajectory, and how gender factors into finding one's place.

In an essay in *Commentary* magazine earlier this year, Jay Lefkowitz coined the term "social Orthodoxy" to connote living a life consistent with Jewish practice but not necessarily its theological sureties. With or without faith, religious observance links Jews across time and space. Lifestyle, you might say, keeps us a people.

In a column in the *Forward*, Michah Gottlieb reflected on why the Conservative movement loses committed Jews like him to modern Orthodoxy, pointing to what he saw as a halachic inconsistency in the Conservative movement, and little commitment to halachic observance by many Conservative Jews.

Jay's critics say that "social Judaism" – "behaving" as a Jew without necessarily believing – amounts to a shallow, hollow, unanchored or unsustainable religious life. Michah's critics took issue with his assertion that Conservative Judaism's focus on gender egalitarianism was a religiously inauthentic "distraction" from the attrition of learning and religious observance.

The two articles come out of very different approaches to Judaism. Yet, both convey a sense of modern Orthodoxy as a home for these authors – vital and meaningful. I sympathize. I grew up in the world of modern Orthodoxy, and it shaped my sense of Jewish life and Jewish ethics. It was, in childhood, a nurturing home. But I would no longer call myself Orthodox, even though I live a life as attuned to religious observance as many of the "social Orthodox," and arguably with more sense of spirituality and theology.

When I was a university student, many of the young women in my community looked for more involvement in Jewish ritual life. We did not anticipate anything as radical as women rabbis. We looked to small things, and we wanted to remain within the bounds of Halachah. We turned to the rabbis of our shuls with smaller questions: could a woman recite *Kiddush* on Shabbat on behalf of men? Could she be part of a *mezuman* – a quorum – for blessing after meals?

One fall, rabbis of several New York synagogues were approached by women in their congregations and asked whether a Torah scroll might be passed into the women's section, so that women might dance with it on Simchat Torah. The answers given to these questions – by particular rabbis of particular synagogues – were: yes, yes and yes.

Some congregants were offended by these changes, and took matters into their own hands. For example, in my synagogue, a group of high school yeshiva boys surged into the women's section and grabbed the Torah from the woman dancing with it. The next year, no Torah for the women.

Two things became clear to me: that the limitations placed on women in Judaism do not necessarily stem from genuine halachic restrictions, and that change would happen very slowly, if at all.

Today, Orthodox Judaism has begun to shift – from partnership minyan services where women can chant from the Torah, receive aliyot and lead parts of the service, to the designation of women as halachic decisors or advisors – although these options exist only at the fringes of the Orthodox community.

When I came of age, however, women who wanted more had two choices. Live with the limitations of our communities and the diminished possibilities they offered us, or venture out – to new egalitarian minyanim, to what was then counter-culture Judaism. I chose to venture, and the rest is commentary. ■

Why Jews should oppose a Christian law school

Adam Goldenberg

There I stood, 13 and terrified. At Beth Torah Congregation in Toronto, on a bimah that my grandfather had literally helped to build, I was chanting from a Torah scroll that his father had saved from their synagogue in eastern Poland and smuggled through the war – the same parchment from which my father, uncles and cousins had all read in turn.

The congregation's eyes seemed to bore tiny holes into my skull as I read the most infamous words of my Torah portion, Acharei Mot: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination."

Bathed in family history and tradition, I thought I was about to drown. I may not have been the first gay shlemazel to have to swallow the words of Leviticus 18:22 during his bar mitzvah, but as the text passed my lips, I still felt completely alone.

The following year, as I was beginning to come out to my family and friends, the Supreme Court of Canada told an evangelical Christian university that it was free to exclude gays from its teacher education program. More than a decade later, the same university, Trinity Western, is invoking that ruling – and my bar mitzvah portion – as it claims the right to open an anti-gay law school.

They're wrong, and anyone who truly cares about religious freedom should say so.

It's far from clear that the Supreme Court's 2001 decision – written, as it was, at a different time and on different facts – still empowers Trinity Western to discriminate against gays and lesbians. Yet even if it does, the university's anti-gay policy makes a mockery of freedom of religion. It's one thing for people of faith to believe that gays are doomed to eternal hellfire, but it's quite another to exclude them from a law school on that basis.

Read a Christian Bible cover to cover. It doesn't end well for the Jews, either. Still, those of us who don't accept Jesus Christ as lord and saviour are welcome at Trinity Western University – provided that we don't sleep with anyone of the same sex while we're there.

If allowing Jewish students to practise Judaism isn't a threat to Trinity Western's religious freedom, what's so different about allowing gay students to be gay? After all, according to evangelical Christians, we're all going to end up shvitzing in the same place.

Imagine if the university required Jewish students to promise to abstain from Judaism. If that isn't discrimination, neither was the Spanish Inquisition.

Can Christian scripture provide a basis for homophobia? Of course it can. Look no further than Leviticus 18:22. But the same set of texts might just as readily forgive racism, slavery or anti-Semitism. Why doesn't Trinity Western discriminate against Jews or blacks the way it discriminates against gays? Because only fanatics would ever accept religious excuses for the former, and nothing does more to discredit religious freedom than using it to justify bigotry.

Anti-gay discrimination should be no exception. Those of us who depend on freedom of religion to protect our own beliefs should be the first to condemn its misuse. That doesn't mean asking Christians (or Jews, or Muslims) to ignore scripture that prohibits homosexuality – though many do, and more should – but it does require us never to condone its use as a basis for odious discrimination. After centuries of blood libel, Jews are only too familiar with intolerance preached from the pulpit.

Those words that darkened my bar mitzvah portion – "*v'et zachar lo tishkav mishk'vei ishah to'evah hu*" – are chanted in synagogues around the world each year. After more than a decade, they still sting.

We can't rewrite Leviticus, nor can we force the faithful to overlook passages that give us pause. But that doesn't mean we can't distinguish religious belief from religious pretext. If freedom of religion can justify almost anything, then it will be good for almost nothing. It's up to those of us who need it to defend it from itself. ■

Follow Adam Goldenberg on Twitter at @adamgoldenberg.

Why Herb Gray didn't have a state funeral

Michael Taube

The Right Honourable Herb Gray had a long career in Canadian politics. He held his seat in Windsor West for nearly 40 years. He never lost in 13 federal election campaigns. He faithfully served the Liberal party in different capacities, including as deputy prime minister.

That's great, but did it mean he should have had a state funeral after he died April 21? No, it didn't.

We'll get back to this point shortly.

Today's criteria for a state funeral in Canada are rather evergreen. Some people believe it should be determined by certain criteria, including years of service, impact on public life and historical significance. Others believe it's little more than a popularity contest to award friends and like-minded political ideologues.

Some Canadians perceive that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has based his decisions for state funerals on the latter principles. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Yes, former federal minister Jim Flaherty was a small "c" conservative who served in Harper's cabinet. But he received a state funeral for his impressive 20-year role in public life and managing the Canadian economy through the difficult global economic crisis. Flaherty was widely praised by the international community for his steady financial hand and business acumen. Hence he certainly deserved this honour.

Meanwhile, Harper also gave a state funeral to federal NDP leader Jack Layton. Some have argued the prime minister only did this to give the appearance of being even-handed. Nice try, but incorrect. Rather, he did it because Layton played a huge role in changing Canada's political narrative and brought the NDP from perennial third-party status to the Official Opposition. It's hard to say whether Layton would have ever reached 24 Sussex Drive. The fact he put his party in the position he did means he deserved this honour, too.

What about Gray? His 40 years in public service were solid, but hardly earth-shattering. He didn't introduce significant political and economic policies. He had little to do with important legislation. He had a dull personality and didn't stand head and shoulders above his political colleagues, Liberal or otherwise.

Gray was certainly present during many important political moments in his lifetime. Unfortunately, that's just it: he was present and little else.

So, what was unique about him? As Andrew Cohen's April 22 *Ottawa Citizen* column pointed out, "Gray was proud to be Canada's first Jewish cabinet minister. He grew up in a Canada that was not always kind to people of his ilk, but he succeeded nonetheless, studying commerce at McGill and law at Osgoode Hall."

Indeed, this was a great accomplishment and an important breakthrough for Canadian Jews with political aspirations. Yet this fact, no matter how noteworthy, has absolutely no bearing in deciding whether Gray deserved a state funeral.

By setting the bar at Gray's status as the first cabinet minister of a particular race, religion, gender or orientation, we would have to do the same for others. This would include the first Protestant, Catholic, black, Asian, Native Canadian and female cabinet ministers. Besides the fact this would create an enormous Pandora's box we could never close, what if these individuals didn't deserve a state funeral for other reasons? It would, therefore, set a bad precedent.

Meanwhile, if we're going to honour a Jewish Canadian politician with a state funeral, perhaps it should be the first one. That would be Henry Nathan, Jr., who was elected as a Liberal in Victoria, B.C., in 1871 (although he supported Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister and a Conservative). Alas, I'm not sure Nathan deserves this honour, and it would open up an even bigger can of worms for the selection process.

There are Liberals who should ultimately get state funerals, including former prime ministers Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin. There's no doubt a Jew will eventually get one, too. It just won't be Herb Gray. ■

News GTA

In search of kosher chickens

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Finding a kosher chicken in Toronto hasn't been easy since a Montreal processor became the sole supplier in Canada.

The closure of Chai Kosher Poultry's Toronto operation in May 2013 created a shortage, and it's affected all of Ontario and other parts of Canada, said Richard Rabkin, managing director of the Kashruth Council of Canada, which is known by the name of its hechsher, COR.

He said Montreal's Marvid Poultry has "worked diligently to meet increased demand, but from all feedback, it's not sufficient."

Rabkin said his family has been eating chicken patties from Israel because of the kosher chicken shortage.

"In my family, my kids are not eating regular chicken. They're eating what's known in our house as 'dinosaur' chicken, processed chicken patties in the shape of dinosaurs.

"Other people are eating more fish. Some people prefer to eat kosher chicken, but given no choice, will buy non-kosher chicken, which is really unfortunate."

Rabkin said COR has been working to address the problem with the Chicken Farmers of Ontario (CFO), which represents more than 1,000 independent Ontario chicken farmers, as well as other stakeholders in the chicken-manufacturing community, including the Association of Ontario Chicken Producers, which represents the processors.

Marvid Poultry is the sole supplier of kosher chickens in Toronto. JEFF ROSEN PHOTO

"Both of those groups have been quite supportive and have been working to find a solution for the shortage of kosher chicken in Canada. We're very thankful for their efforts."

Some "entities" have already stepped forward and expressed an interest in processing the chicken, Rabkin said. "It's an expensive endeavour, and there are a lot of logistical challenges an entrepreneur will have to navigate."

The CFO recently put a request for proposal on its website (www.ontariochicken.ca), seeking business plans from interested parties that articulate their interest, intent, experience and ability to process Ontario chicken, in Ontario, for kosher markets. The deadline is May 30.

The request for proposal gives parties who haven't already expressed interest in processing kosher chicken the chance to do so, said CFO spokesperson Michael Edmonds.

"As a responsible supply management board, we will make the chicken available to an entity that comes up with a successful business plan that meets the needs of Ontario's kosher community."

He said the board will review the submissions, but a structure to evaluate the business plans has yet to be determined.

"We may work with other consultants," he added.

Edmonds said the CFO is anxious to work with partners who can serve the kosher market and is looking forward to reviewing the proposals as they come in.

Rabkin said COR is very concerned about the shortage of kosher chicken.

"We share the concern of kosher consumers at the lack of availability of kosher chicken and we're working with all our stakeholders and are hopeful that a solution is forthcoming." ■

> *We share the concern of kosher consumers at the lack of availability of kosher chicken and we're working with all our stakeholders and are hopeful that a solution is forthcoming.*
>
> **Richard Rabkin**
> MANAGING DIRECTOR
> KASHRUTH COUNCIL OF CANADA

One mother has noticed that the price of kosher food in Toronto is higher than in Florida. Her friends have noticed, too. Why is that? Be sure to read part two of Behind the Label *on pages 24-25.*

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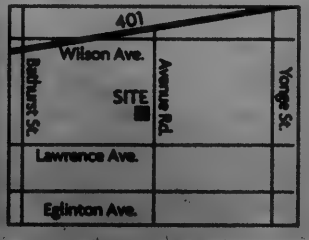

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Make Israel truly Jewish, right-wing MK urges

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

One of Israel's most controversial political figures presented a bold and incendiary plan for the future of Israel to an enthusiastic Toronto crowd May 6, saying that he wants to bring full Jewish sovereignty to the nation.

Moshe Feiglin, deputy speaker of the Israeli Knesset, said his "alternative peace process" would include annexing disputed territories to ensure that Jews had complete control over Israel. Further, he argued that Israelis should encourage Arab citizens to leave and find a home elsewhere.

Feiglin, the head of the Likud party's Manhigut Yehudi (Jewish Leadership) faction whose ambitions to be prime minister are no secret, argued that Israel will only see more bloodshed if its leaders continue to abide by the Oslo accords. He believes his alternative plan for peace will revive Jewish identity in the region.

"We always thought that the Oslo process was about peace," Feiglin told a rapt audience of more than 100 at the Chabad Lubavitch synagogue in Thornhill. "It was not about peace. It was about getting rid of these territories in [the West Bank] that

Moshe Feiglin
JORDAN ADLER PHOTO

carry out our Jewish identity."

Feiglin said there are two dreams, a Jewish one and an Israeli one. The Jewish dream, he says, is "to fix in the world in the kingdom of God in our own land."

The Israeli dream, which he says Israeli leaders have adopted over the last 20 years, is to have Israel be like all other nations, with room for everybody.

"We need a solution that gives us the opportunity to make Israel a real Jewish state, and not a state of all citizens," he said. "If that's what God expects of us and we fulfil that goal, we have peace."

The Jewish Defense League of Canada and the Toronto Zionist Council sponsored Feiglin's appearance in Toronto. While the politician's ideas ignited the audience, many of whom gave him a standing ovation, some were suspicious about whether his plan would work.

Audience members challenged him on whether Israeli Arabs and Palestinians would react to this plan with extreme violence, as well as whether it would incite even more hatred and hostility toward Israel around the world.

Feiglin sidestepped these concerned and said that surveys from Israel indicate that around 60 per cent of Arabs are looking to leave Israel.

"This is not their land. It's ours," Feiglin said. "We should aid those who wish to leave… helping them find work, helping them find places to go and buy homes. We have that money, but today we invest it in continuing the Oslo process."

He added that an undeniably Jewish state would encourage Jews to immigrate to Israel and spawn a new wave of building and economic growth there. Israel has spent 1 trillion shekels on security, defence and Palestinian aid because of the current peace process, Feiglin estimates.

Feiglin's campaign has much support in Israel, especially among right-wing nationalists. The current deputy speaker was elected to the Knesset in December 2012 as a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud, although Netanyahu has repeatedly tried to oust him from the party.

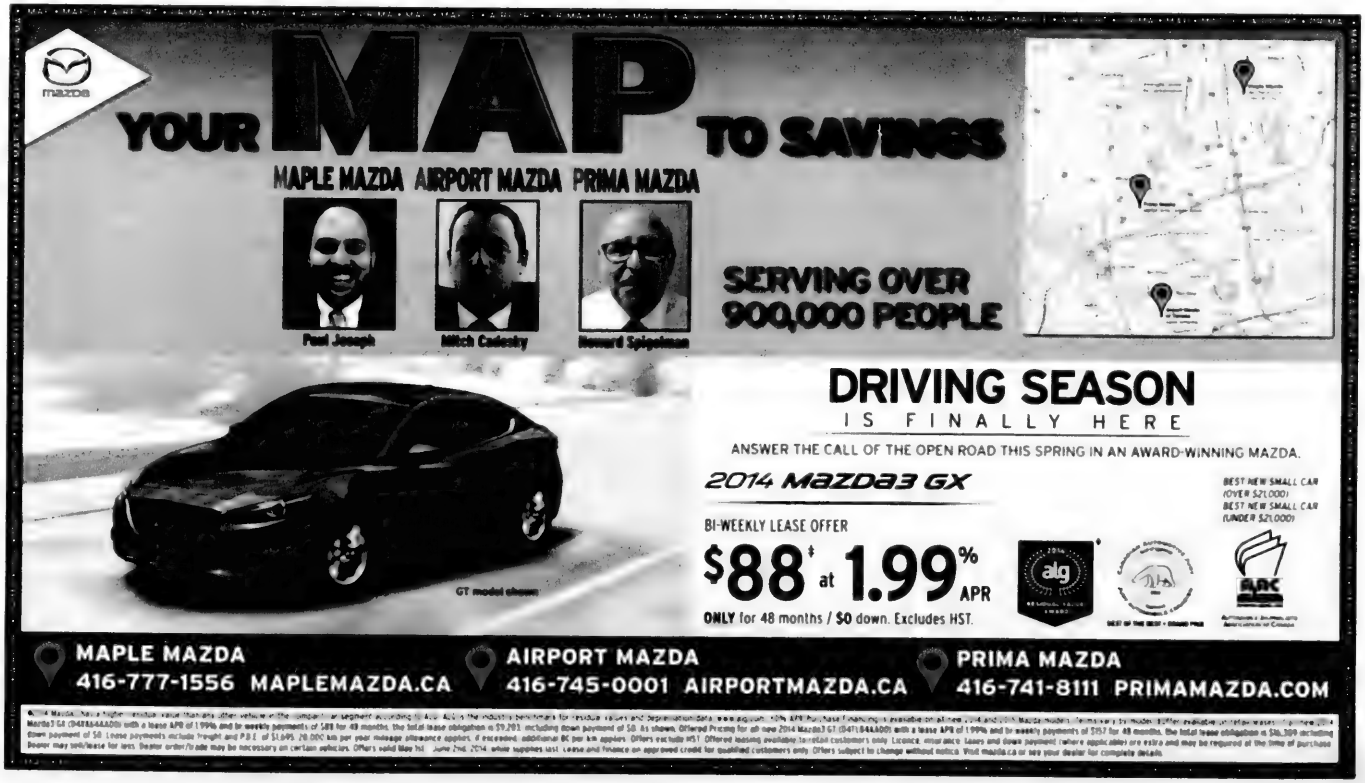
Feiglin first turned to political activism after then-Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin signed the Oslo accords in 1993. He co-established Zo Artzeinu (This Is Our Land), a right-wing political movement that protested land concessions to Arabs, in the early 1990s.

Recently, the deputy speaker called on Netanyahu to investigate riots on the Temple Mount over the Pesach holiday. In April, Muslim extremists intimidated and pushed around Jewish visitors to the holy site.

Feiglin argues that having an Arab presence on the Temple Mount is not just destroying Jewish history, but severing a connection to the land.

"If we have no history, you're not really a nation," Feiglin told the crowd. "If you're not longing for the third Temple by going out there to the Temple Mount, not longing and praying, you're losing the first and the second."

Currently, Jewish visits to the Temple Mount are restricted, and Jews aren't allowed to pray on the site. A bill in the Knesset is in the works to establish equal prayer rights for Jews and Muslims on the Temple Mount. ■



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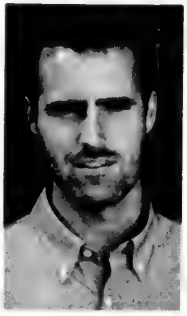
SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2014 | 4:30 PM | FREE
TJLF @ Yidishtog, Annual Simcha Simchovitch Lecture: Goldie Morgentaler on Chava Rosenfarb
Miles Nadal JCC, Room 318, 750 Spadina Ave.
'I Am Still There': The Recreation of Jewish Poland in the Canadian Novels of Chava Rosenfarb, a lecture on one of the most important Yiddish writers of the 20th Century. Readings by Eileen Thalenberg in Yiddish and English. Presented together with UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish and as part of Ontario Jewish Heritage Month.

MONDAY, MAY 26, 2014 7:30 PM | PWYC
Matti Friedman: The Aleppo Codex
Temple Emanu-El, 120 Old Colony Rd.



Direct from Israel! *Jerusalem Report* and *Times of Israel* reporter Matti Friedman – hailed by the *Canadian Jewish News* as a "modern-day Indiana Jones" – speaks about the thousand-year-old mystery surrounding this precious copy of the Hebrew Bible. *The Aleppo Codex* won the 2014 Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature, one of the largest literary prizes in the world.

HELEN AND STAN VINE CANADIAN JEWISH BOOK AWARDS

TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2014 | 8 PM | FREE
The Bram and Bluma Appel Salon at the Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.

The Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards have been presented annually since 1988, celebrating excellence in Canadian writing on Jewish themes and subjects. The Awards aim to bring awareness of the Jewish Canadian canon as well as to promote and support Canadian writers. Ceremony hosted by Cynthia Good, former president and publisher of Penguin Books. All are welcome! The 2014 winning authors are posted on **koffflerarts.org**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2014 | 7:30 PM | PWYC
Ira Robinson
Canada's Jews: In Time, Space and Spirit
Temple Emanu-El, 120 Old Colony Rd.
Ira Robinson speaks on his latest book, a collection of essays about the history, geography, and spirit of one of the world's largest Jewish communities.

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2014 | 7:30 PM | FREE
Nora Gold: Fields of Exile
Artscape Youngplace, Flex Studio, 180 Shaw St.
Writer, scholar and editor of Jewish Fiction.net, Nora Gold launches her new book, *Fields of Exile*, the first novel about anti-Israelism in the academe. Selected by *The Forward* as one of the "5 Jewish Books to Read in 2014."

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014 | 1 PM | FREE
Chantal Ringuet: Voix Yiddish de Montréal
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.
Scholar, poet and translator Chantal Ringuet presents her recent French-language anthology of Canadian Jewish writers with an introduction by Lazer Lederhendler. Lecture in English. Readings in English, Yiddish and French. Presented together with UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish, Friends of Yiddish, and the Toronto Workmen's Circle.

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014 | 3:30 PM | PWYC
A Basket of Apples: Stories by Shirley Faessler
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.
Toronto-based journalist, author, publisher, public speaker and noted genealogist, Bill Gladstone launches a new edition of Shirley Faessler's beloved *A Basket of Apples*, a group of short stories about Jewish characters in Kensington Market in the 1920s and 1930s. Karen Hines, the author's granddaughter, reads from the stories.

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WJC head issues warning about Europe

STEPHEN SWEET
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Things may be good for Jews in Canada, but that isn't the case in much of the rest of the world, as 69 years after the end of World War II, anti-Semitism is on the rise in Europe, World Jewish Congress CEO Robert Singer said during his first official visit to Canada.

Singer spoke May 8 at an early-morning briefing for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) at the Lipa Green Centre.

"Israel, and the Jewish communities worldwide, need friends," Singer said. "They need allies and they need partnerships with different communities."

Finance Minister Joe Oliver was also in attendance, along with WJC Canadian vice-president Moshe Ronen, and Singer spoke glowingly of CIJA's work in conjunction with the international body, as well as Canada's strong stands in support of Israel and against anti-Semitism.

"Every time we have a problem, we come to Canadians first, because we know the ties are a lot deeper than just political," Singer said.

"I can say on behalf of the World Jewish Congress, the Israeli government and worldwide Jewry, we say thanks, and we hope it will continue this way."

Singer said there is cause for concern about the resurgence of anti-Semitism in Europe.

"Hungary is probably the best example of the changes Europe is going through. They had an election April 6 and the Jobbik party, which has a very clear neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic agenda, won 20.4 per cent of the votes," said Singer, a former IDF lieutenant colonel and official in the Israeli prime minister's office.

"In 2006, [Jobbik's result] was 2.2 per cent, [so] it increased 10 times," he added. "When you just think about it, a country in the centre of Europe that 70 years ago, lost about 440,000 Jews, and [now], over 1 million people [in Hungary] voted for a party with a clear anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi agenda."

This is a trend in Europe, where the WJC estimates that about 20 per cent of the new European Parliament will consist of right wing or neo-Nazi parties, including Germany's National Democratic Party and Golden Dome in Greece.

"There are many reasons why situations like this are happening in the world today," Singer said. "Seventy years after the Holocaust, after what Europe went through, Europe is once again not a nice place for Jews to live in."

In another recent example, in Donetsk, Ukraine, Jews were reportedly asked to register their property or face deportation.

WJC CEO Robert Singer, left, and Moshe Ronen, WJC Canadian vice-president
STEPHEN SWEET PHOTO

But while things in Ukraine have become more dangerous, Singer said there's no reason to believe the current situation poses a greater security risk for Jews.

"At this stage, no specific harm was caused to Jews in Ukraine," said Singer, who was born in Ukraine and immigrated to Israel with his family when he was 15.

"The police are investigating things and no one's sure right now where the letters came from. We are monitoring the situations there, including the upcoming referendum."

Singer touched on some other pertinent topics, such as the persecution of Christians in the Middle East, where a group formerly totalling 30 per cent of the population has dwindled to less than 10 per cent amid unrest in Syria and Egypt.

"This is a major issue for the World Jewish Congress, and we, as the Jewish people who went through the Holocaust, won't remain silent as other groups are being prosecuted the way Christians are in the Middle East," Singer said.

"In Israel, there are over 180,000 [Christians], and it's the only place in the Middle East where the Christian population is growing."

Singer said the WJC will continue to look to Canada and CIJA for support.

"The World Jewish Congress is monitoring things and we're sharing our information with different governments," Singer said. "From what I saw [during my time in Canada], I'm not sure that anything like CIJA exists anywhere else in the world.

"There is the level of professionalism, involvement, the level of integration into the communities and the level of outreach to government."

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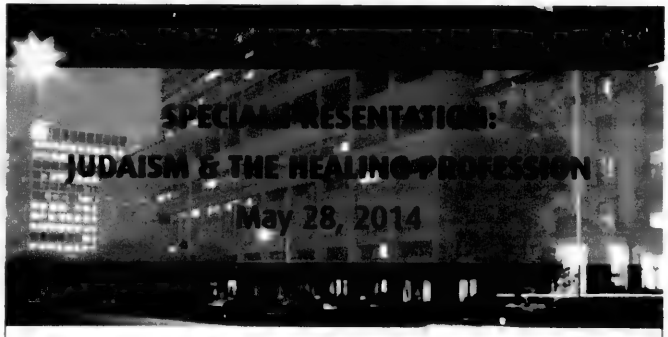

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New senior rabbi seeks to stabilize Holy Blossom

FRANCES KRAFT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Last month's appointment of Rabbi Yael Splansky as the next senior rabbi of Holy Blossom Temple is "significant but not unique," she believes.

More significant in the context of Holy Blossom per se is the direction in which the historic synagogue will move under her leadership.

The largest Reform congregation in Canada and one of the largest in North America, with 2,000 member units, Holy Blossom has faced recent challenges, including the 2012 departure of the temple's longtime tenant, Leo Baeck Day School's south branch, which is now in its own building.

As well, there was controversy over both the proposed re-orientation of the sanctuary, which currently doesn't face Jerusalem (as do those in many other shuls), and the upcoming retirement of Rabbi Splansky's predecessor, Rabbi John Moscowitz, who began a three-year, pre-retirement sabbatical in 2012.

The past two years have been a time of stabilization, Rabbi Splansky said in a recent interview, citing congregational surveys that included "grassroots conversations and thousands of cups of coffee."

Among her priorities is Holy Blossom's "Renewal Project," a long-awaited renovation launched in a 2000 "vision statement" by Rabbi Moscowitz. Phase 1 is slated to begin this fall, after the High Holidays. The sanctuary will be restored in Phase 2, but it won't be reoriented so that congregants pray facing Jerusalem. (Details on the project are available at http://www.holyblossom.org/renewal/.)

The board's announcement about Rabbi Splansky's new role praised her intellectual rigour, personal warmth, and deep understanding of the synagogue's place in the community.

In a broader context, she is one of several women to be appointed senior rabbi of a large congregation in the past year. Also, two years ago, Rabbi Lisa Grushcow became the first woman in Canada to lead a synagogue of more than 1,000 families when she was named senior rabbi of Montreal's Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom.

In 1980, Holy Blossom itself became the first Canadian congregation to hire a female rabbi. An Orthodox shul that became Reform in the 1920s, Holy Blossom was founded 11 years before Canada itself, Rabbi Splansky noted.

By the time she started in 1998 as an assistant rabbi straight out of Hebrew Union College, "no one blinked" about hiring a woman.

Rabbi Yael Splansky

A 43-year-old married mother of three boys, Rabbi Splansky is also a fourth-generation Reform rabbi whose great-grandfather was a classmate and friend of Rabbi Leo Baeck's.

But there was never an expectation that she would follow in the footsteps of her father, Rabbi Donald Splansky, now a rabbi emeritus in the Boston area, even though women began to be ordained by the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College in 1972.

In retrospect – given her former youth group presidency, experience at Jewish summer camp and major in Jewish studies as an undergraduate – her career path was obvious.

"I thought it was this great revelation, but once I started coming out to friends about it, they said, 'Yeah, of course.'"

In addition to her usual duties at Holy Blossom, Rabbi Splansky edited the synagogue's new prayerbook, *Siddur Pirchei Kodesh*, and she is immediate past chair of the Reform Rabbis of Greater Toronto.

Most recently, for the past year, she has served as Holy Blossom's acting senior rabbi, overseeing the transition following the beginning of Rabbi Moscowitz's sabbatical. Her installation date has not yet been set, but Rabbi Splansky said her work as senior rabbi starts immediately.

She's particularly excited about the atrium that will be created as part of the renewal project's first phase, which is expected to take about 18 months to complete.

Rabbi Splansky likes to refer to the atrium as "the living room for the congregation."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

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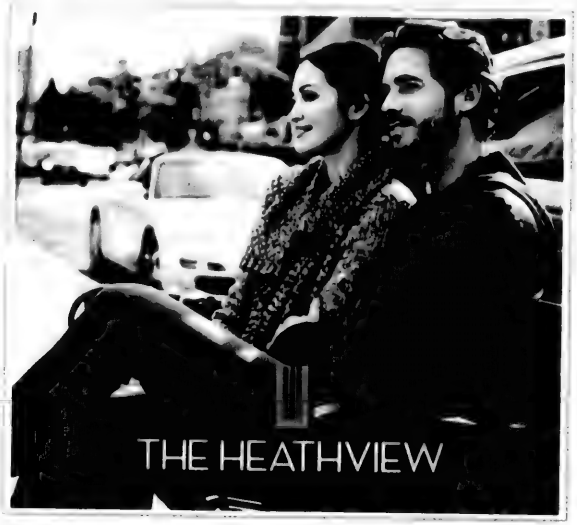

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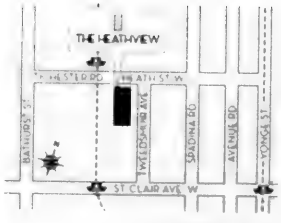

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SeeJN | Celebrating Israel's birthday

Gan Netivot students from Netivot HaTorah Day School took part in a Yom Ha'atzmaut parade on Atkinson Avenue in Thornhill.

Bialik Hebrew Day School and Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp joined together to participate in a full day of Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations at Bialik's Himel Branch in Vaughan. Pictured are Bialik kindergartners with staff Hailey Cherry, left, and Shoshana Chaim, right.

Splansky excited about new atrium

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

It's intended as "the meeting space, the gathering place, the place where people hang out and linger," she said. "The way the building is configured, there are all these narrow hallways. It's hard to bump into people, and it isn't particularly inviting."

As well, she noted, "What we're doing in space and mortar and brick is all about what we're doing in matters of the spirit – finding meaningful, joyful Judaism. No one should make the mistake of thinking we're just sprucing up the place."

Rabbi Splansky said she misses the "pitter patter" of Leo Baeck's presence in the building, even though the temple has its own religious school and early childhood centre, which expanded to include two-year-olds after the day school left.

The upside of the school's departure is a new ability "to breathe back into our own space."

Rental income from the school had been factored into the renovation budget, but "strong commitment" by lead donors to the project's campaign – which is currently being "ramped up" – is compensating, she said.

Another consideration is that the building, which dates back to 1938, is older than many GTA synagogues that have their own aging-building issues. "We've had a really tough winter," the rabbi said. "We need this [renovation] for basic infrastructure, and to meet the needs of coming generations."

Reflecting on challenges in her rabbinic career, she said, "To go into this work, you have to be a bit of a dreamer, and so we set our aspirations high, and by definition, you'll always fall short of that... But that's what spurs us on." ■

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KATAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Independence Greeters

More than 1,500 people attended Mizrachi Canada's annual Yom Hazikaron – Yom Ha'atzmaut evening of remembrance and celebration at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation on May 5. Pictured are members of the Mizrachi religious Zionist youth movement, Bnei Akiva, who greeted guests at the outset of the event.

Montreal

Dollard March

Some 1,500 people celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut with a march through Dollard des Ormeaux, organized by Federation CJA's West Island office.

Vancouver

PAM WOLFMAN PHOTO

Celebration

A few of the musicians taking part in the celebration at the Jewish Community Centre in Vancouver.

Halifax

Community Celebration

A community Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration took place on Sunday, May 4 at the Beth Israel Synagogue in Halifax, N.S. About 200 community members gathered to enjoy some great Israeli-style food, Israeli live music performed by two talented community members and some Israeli-themed crafts for the kids. The event started with remembering the fallen soldiers in Israel during Yom Hazikaron and transitioned into a Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration.

Markham

Marking The Day

The city of Markham, Ont. hosted a flag-raising ceremony on Yom Ha'atzmaut. Pictured, from left, are Cantor Ben Silverberg of Shaar Shalom Synagogue, Mayor Jack Heath, Israeli Consul General DJ Schneeweiss, Markham Councillor Howard Shore, and Yael Karol, chair of community relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Greater Toronto region.

NATIONAL

Baird open to sanctions on Russia: Cotler

DAVID LAZARUS
dlazarus@cjnews.ca

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird seemed open to the idea of Canada introducing sanctions against "[Vladimir] Putin's Russia" for the level of domestic repression going on there, according to Liberal MP Irwin Cotler.

Cotler crossed paths with Baird at Flughafen Airport in Frankfurt, Germany, recently while both were in transit and the two discussed various issues, Cotler related at a May 2 meeting with local reporters.

One of the concerns was repression and human rights violations within "Putin's Russia."

While Canada promptly imposed sanctions in response to Russian aggression in Ukraine, Cotler said, it has been reluctant in the context of Russia's domestic human rights abuses.

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird

"The two issues…are inextricably linked," Cotler said in a statement he issued one day earlier. "The same authoritarianism, revanchism, and criminality that have characterized the Putin regime's approach to human rights…have gone unpunished."

Cotler's view was also in the context of the case of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian-Jewish lawyer who was jailed and then allegedly tortured to death in a Russian jail in 2009 for exposing widespread corruption.

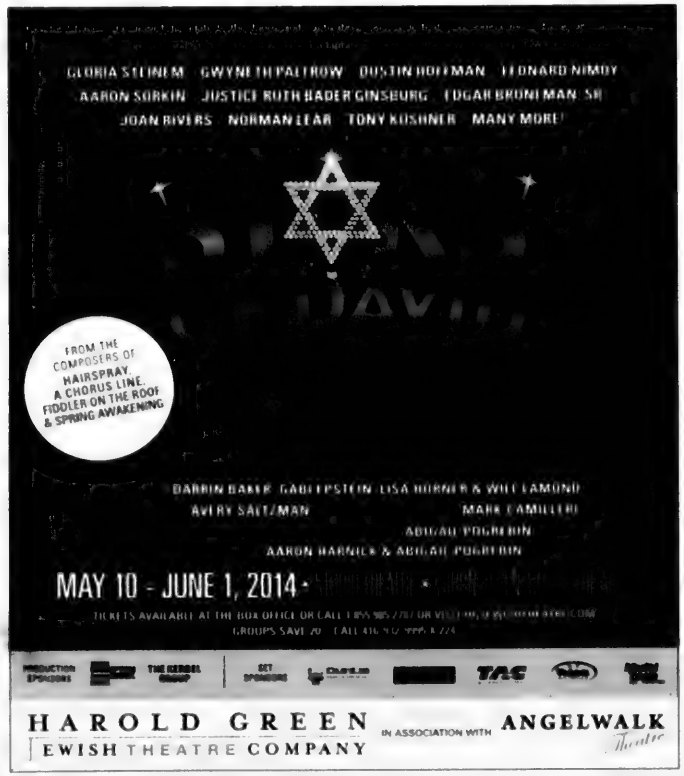
Cotler has supported the efforts of American human rights activist Bill Browder, the CEO of Heritage Capital Management, who led the effort to have the U.S. Congress pass the Magnitsky Act requiring targetted sanctions against Russians implicated in the Magnitsky affair.

The European Parliament passed a resolution calling on European governments to do likewise, "but progress in Canada appears to have stalled," Cotler said in his statement and repeated to reporters.

This, even though in 2012 when Browder visited Ottawa, the all-party House Subcommittee for International Human Rights, which Cotler is involved in, unanimously called on the federal government to "explore options" in regards to imposing visa sanctions and freezing assets of those implicated in the Magnitsky affair.

"It is the time for Canada to sanction people involved in domestic repression in Russia," Cotler said at the press conference.

Cotler spoke after returning from an event-laden nine-day overseas trip commemorating the 70th anniversary of the genocide of Hungarian Jewry and participation at the climactic moments of this year's March of the Living trip. He said he experienced a "kaleidoscope of emotions" during the extremely poignant and moving trip, which included lighting a yahrzeit candle with Cecilia Wallenberg, great-niece of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, who is credited with saving 100,000 Jews, and addressing a pro-Israel rally of mostly non-Jewish participants in Budapest.■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Could kosher food be cheaper?

Higher prices blamed on lack of competition in local supervision

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Thornhill housewife Alison Finkelstein has seen the comments on her Facebook pages questioning the cost of kosher food in Toronto – particularly meat – and whether the fees charged by the Kashruth Council of Canada – which administers the COR hechsher and is also known by that name – contribute to that expense.

Finkelstein, a Thornhill mother of five, has noticed that the price of kosher food in Toronto is higher than in Florida, where she often visits. Her friends have noticed, too.

Finkelstein says that following the demise of locally based Chai Poultry in 2013, the price of kosher chickens rose. She pays about $14 for a package of cut-up chicken that used to cost $9 or $10, she said.

"And the quality seems to have gone down from the Chai days," she claimed.

"It's become very expensive for roast too," she said. "A good cut of London broil for a family of seven usually costs between $35 and $40," she said.

Lawrence Lax has concerns over the high cost of kosher meat, too.

"There seems to be no voice to speak on behalf of the Jewish community regarding food pricing," he said. "It would seem appropriate that the largest organization representing the Jewish community, COR, should be a voice of the people."

Lax said he's seen people at the meat counter checking the prices, doing a double take, and making the purchase anyways. "People just lay down and roll over on this stuff," he said. "They don't feel they can have a voice."

For years, until the appearance in 2008 of Badatz Toronto on the scene, COR dominated the market on the certification of kosher products, though a few kashrut agencies from other cities supervised some production. With virtually no competition in the Toronto market, economic theory suggests prices will rise, and quality may suffer.

The kosher chicken and meat situation signals that consumers may be paying the price – but others say it's just a symptom of the larger problem, which is that COR wields a dominant position when it comes to kosher certification in Toronto.

Timothy Lytton, author of *Kosher: Private Regulation in the Age of Industrial Food*, believes "competition can be very good for kosher consumers." However, generally speaking, compared to packaged goods, there is much less competition in the food-service industry, which affects caterers, restaurants and supermarkets, resulting in "much more anti-competitive behaviour."

In the United States, Lytton explained, large certification agencies such as OU, Kof-K and Star-K work with national food manufacturers that produce kosher foods on supermarket shelves everywhere. "They will generally shy away from food services" and leave that to local agencies. There is a history of "local nasty politics" and "rivalry" among local agencies, he said.

The dispute between COR and the fledgling Badatz certification agency prompted intervention last December by AKO, the U.S.-based Association of Kashrus Organizations.

Rabbi Moshe Elefant, chief operating officer of OU, the world's largest kashrut certification agency, based in New York, was part of the delegation that came to the city to broker peace. He compared it to diplomats trying to bring Arabs and Israelis together. "We did shuttle diplomacy, but we never sat together," he said.

On paper, the dispute between COR and Badatz seems like a mismatch. While Badatz is a relative newcomer and supervises about 25 businesses – it recently scored something of a coup, certifying a Passover getaway at the White Oaks resorts attended by more than 600 people – COR is a major player in Canadian kosher supervision.

For decades, COR was part of Canadian Jewish Congress, but in 2000 it was incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization. Its financial information is available to the public on the Canada Revenue Agency website, and the data raises several questions.

COR's first filing with the CRA came in 2004, when it listed as its only revenue almost $1.4 million in "total gifts received

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from other registered charities." Explaining the large sum, a COR ad that ran recently in *The CJN* as an "Open Letter to the Jewish Community" noted that a $20,000 annual surplus over 30 years, invested with reasonable returns, gave it more than $1 million for start-up purposes when it left Congress.

The same year COR struck out on its own, it reported making a $1 million gift to the Matan Foundation, a charitable organization about which little is known other than that it was housed in the same building on Bathurst Street as COR at the time. Over the years, the two organizations have had some of the same directors on their boards.

COR has not explained the reason for the transfer of funds.

Beginning in 2006, Matan made charitable "gifts to qualified donees" of $464,035 (2006); $255,600 (2007); $49,800 (2008); $2,400 (2010); and $285,000 (2011).

JEFF ROSEN PHOTOS

Matan's CRA documents indicate the "qualified donees" in each case was the Kashruth Council of Canada, except in 2006, when Matan also gave $3,000 to Choson Kallah Fund of Toronto, $3,036 to Toronto Lakewood Minyan and $10,000 to the Mizrachi Organization of Canada, in addition to $448,000 given to COR.

COR's business has been growing significantly in recent years, according to its CRA filings. In 2005 it reported revenues of nearly $3.7 million and it paid compensation of about $3 million, of which $322,838 was for "administration." By 2012, COR reported total revenue of just over $5 million and total expenditures on all compensation of almost $4 million. It had 126 full-time employees.

Although it's a registered charity, it handed out $13,200 in charitable gifts that year.

In 2013, COR reported total revenue of $5.4 million and salary compensation of $4.1 million, including more than $1 million in administration costs, despite reporting a drop in the number of its full-time employees, from 126 to 37.

The filings indicate that nine of the 37 earned between $80,000 and $119,000 and one earned between $120,000 and $159,999. That left around $3 million in compensation for other employees.

COR also reported it held more than $1 million in cash, bank accounts and short-term investments. Total liabilities amounted to around $246,000.

COR allocated $2,500 in charitable gifts in 2013.

The CRA filings raise a number of questions. Among them: what is the relationship between COR and the Matan Foundation? Why did COR's total expenditures rise in a year it shed so many full-time employees? And why isn't the non-profit organization giving back more to the community in the form of charitable donations or lower fees?

COR refused to answer questions posed to it by *The CJN*. In an emailed statement, the kashrut agency wrote, "There is nothing COR wants more than to see our certified establishments prosper and for consumers to have access to kosher food at competitive prices."

But Rabbi Moshe Bensalmon, one of the founders of Badatz, isn't buying it. He estimates that kosher food produced in Toronto "costs consumers 10 to 15 per cent higher [than it otherwise would] because of COR."

Rabbi Bensalmon's son, Moti, a spokesperson for Badatz, said Badatz charges its clients fees that are 10 to 15 per cent less than COR's, sometimes 30 per cent less.

"If we didn't exist, they [COR] could charge $40 to $50 an hour [for supervision]. Who's going to keep them in check?" he asked, adding that COR's fees to caterers for its mashgichim has ranged from $35 to $38 an hour – and $42 to $45 for larger institutional clients – compared to Badatz's consistent $30 hourly rate.

Though COR's fees amount to only a fraction of a kosher food producer's costs, Moti Bensalmon believes they have an impact on the extent of competition in the marketplace.

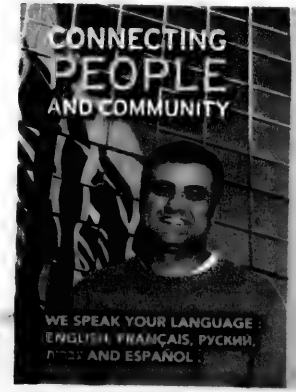
"There are small companies out there who would like to get certified but can't afford it, which leads to less competition on certain items, whereby the kosher consumer is stuck buying products with the higher cost," he said.

And as for COR and its multi-million dollar revenue stream, "I think if COR would act as a non-profit organization they would be able to lower their fees to restaurants and caterers and more places would be able to stay in business."

But with only about 25 clients, Badatz's influence on prices is limited.

And that might be one of the reasons Alison Finkelstein, Lawrence Lax and others like them find the cost of kosher food so high these days.

Next week, our "Behind the Label" series concludes with a look at potential conflicts of interest in the kosher supervision industry and some solutions that might solve the problem.



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Israeli Consul General Joel Lion, left, Harry Bloomfield, Evelyn Bloomfield-Schachter and ICAO representative Fang Liu stand in front of the brass menorah. JANICE ARNOLD PHOTO

Historic menorah donated to ICAO in Montreal

JANICE ARNOLD
jarnold@cjnews.ca

A six-foot brass menorah that one of Romania's most prominent Jewish leaders shipped out of the country before World War II, and which survived the Blitz in London will find a permanent home at a United Nations building in Montreal.

Israeli Consul General Joel Lion announced at a Yom Ha'atzmaut reception held at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) that the menorah has been donated to that UN agency and will be displayed there as a gift of the State of Israel.

The huge edifice on University Street is decorated throughout with objects from many of its 191 member countries, but this will be the first from Israel, Lion said.

The menorah belonged to Lazar Margulies, a wealthy and influential textile industrialist in Bucharest, who settled in Montreal during the war with his wife Selma and the orphaned niece and two nephews they raised as their own children.

The children of their niece, Neri Bloomfield, Evelyn Bloomfield-Schachter and Harry Bloomfield, were on hand for the official presentation to ICAO director of administration Fang Liu.

Margulies, who was born in 1876, was a leading Zionist in prewar Europe and a delegate at the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. He was a personal friend of Chaim Weizmann, who would become Israel's first president, and of Theodor Herzl.

Margulies was a respected figure in Romania, and was appointed in 1932 to the government's new Economic Council, the only Jew among its 25 members.

However, when official anti-Semitism started to intensify, he sold the business and went to England in 1938. The family's house was bombed by the Luftwaffe, but the solid seven-branched candelabra was undamaged.

Soon after, the family immigrated to Montreal – bringing the menorah with them.

Margulies and his wife continued their Zionist activism here, and when the Israeli consulate opened on Pine Avenue in Montreal in 1949 – the first in Canada – they gave the menorah to the first consul general, their friend Avraham Harman, later president of the Hebrew University. Margulies died in 1962.

The menorah remained on display in the consulate in its many locations over the past 65 years right up to the current one in Westmount Square.

Bloomfield and his sisters readily agreed to Lion's suggestion that the menorah – the symbol of Israel over the millennia – should be seen in ICAO and would be a fitting gift before his departure from Montreal this summer. In addition to his duties as consul general to Quebec and the Maritimes, Lion has been Israel's permanent representative to ICAO for the past three years.

Lion said the menorah will be displayed with a plaque about the Margulies story on one side and the Israeli flag on the other.

While economic and cultural ties between the province and Israel continue to grow, Lion said his wish is to see Quebec open an office in Israel as Ontario has done in Tel Aviv. ■

It was a Saturday night to remember!

More than 40 hosts across Toronto and New York City opened their homes to friends and family on April 5 for an evening of fun and games! Baycrest Health Sciences, a world leader in brain health, care, research, education and innovation, received more than $115,000 in donations from Game Night partygoers.

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Stay tuned for Game Night 2015. Please contact Rebecca Kornblum at rkornblum@baycrest.org if you would like to host a party.

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IN THE SILENCE BETWEEN THE WORDS: THE ADULT CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
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Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 33 years

One of the tasks of true friendship is to listen compassionately and creatively to the hidden silences.
Often secrets are not revealed in words, they lie concealed in the silence between the words or in the depth of what is unsayable between two people.
– John O'Donohue (1956-2008) Irish poet, author, priest, and philosopher
From Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom

Common sense informs most of you that Divorce hurts children of younger years for obvious reasons. Formerly, it was thought that breaking up a bad marriage was much better for children than waiting until they grew up, at least until they moved out. Long term studies, such as Judith Wallerstein's "Legacy of Divorce" have proven that in the absence of violent/abusive situations, this myth may be very problematic. Quite the opposite is true. Children of divorced parents have been shown to be at far greater risk of divorce themselves, criminal behaviour, substance abuse and other problems than those kids whose parents with troubled relationships who either stayed together or deferred separation until the children had move out permanently.

However, far fewer studies have been published on the effect of divorce on adult children. Children who have moved out or have "grown up" often suffer in silence when their parents separate. Although no longer living at home, many parents of such adult children forget the boundaries they taught their children by putting them "in the middle" of disputes arising from the separation or by using their children as shoulders on which to cry. Such behaviour often shatters an adult child's own sense of stability and identity with which he or she has identified all his/her life. That stability is based on the marriage that nurtured their very being and much of who they have become. By attempting to force such an adult child to take sides, offspring can develop an enormous degree of stress, leading to emotional problems and occasionally, stress in their own marriages. Sometimes such stress can be a factor leading to divorce with their own spouses. Moreover, in cases where an adult child has already been alienated when young by one parent against the other, such conduct by parents can further intensify such feelings of alienation.

So what to do? Is there such a thing as a healthy divorce?

In the quote above, Irish poet John O'Donohue describes what two friends mean to each other, how the secrets of friendship blossom "between the words." It means to "listen compassionately and creatively to the hidden silences." In a remarkable Shabbat morning speech, Rabbi Daniel Korobkin of Thornhill's BAYT schul recently remarked that it is between the words where one finds God. As applied to the adult children of divorce, I interpret such wisdom to mean that in order to protect your adult child's stability and sense of self-worth keep your mouth shut. No matter how close you may be to your kids and no matter how badly you want them as your "allies": don't. As difficult as this is to read, a child does not owe you any greater allegiance when you separate.

Your only comment? "Mom/Dad and I will work things out. That's all you need to know." And you say it even if your spouse fails to play by the same rules. Why? Because the silence between each of those words will be quietly understood as your gift of love as a parent, no different than the tuition or hockey fees or braces you paid so long ago, or maybe it was just those bedtime hugs and nighttime stories. It is "unsayable" because your silence is your expression of parental love and selflessness. The adult child will listen very intently to that silence. He or she will appreciate it more than you can imagine. Meanwhile go hire a professional therapist and lawyer to whom you should complain, not your adult child. Don't "parentify", be a parent.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit ***www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.***

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Israeli caught in human trafficking nightmare

LAUREN KRAMER
PACIFIC CORRESPONDENT

Anton Soloviov

For 25-year-old Israeli Anton Soloviov, the dream of working in Canada turned into a nightmare of human trafficking with threats of deportation, random fines for so-called infractions and ultimately death threats.

Brought into the country as a temporary foreign worker seven months ago, he and others in the same situation worked without pay for their expatriate-Israeli employers, who used the threat of deportation to keep their employees in line.

Last fall, while still in Israel, Soloviov saw an online advertisement for work abroad that promised earnings of up to $5,000 a month. Though his best friend warned him it looked too good to be true, it was an opportunity Soloviov couldn't pass up. He applied online, interviewed with Canadian business owner Dor Mordechai over the phone and flew to Vancouver in October 2013.

Mordechai and his wife, Anna Lepski, hired him as a foreign worker for their company, 0860005 B.C. Ltd., which operates kiosks in British Columbia malls. At first things seemed OK. "The first few weeks were wonderful. They showed us around and took us to Service Canada to get our SIN numbers," he recalls. ■

What happened next? Go to cjnews.com

More Lev Tahor members flee to Guatemala

JTA

More members of the controversial ultra-Orthodox sect Lev Tahor appear to have left Canada.

Eight sect members – two adults and six children – fled Ontario to Guatemala in March ahead of a court hearing to determine whether the children should be placed in foster care. They appear to have been joined in the Central American country by at least 25 other Lev Tahor adherents, according to the Montreal *Gazette*.

A relative of the children told the newspaper that he recently travelled from Israel to see the family in the village of San Juan de Laguna, about two hours east of Guatemala City. He said he counted about 30 adults living in a two- or three-room shack.

The man – referred to as "K" because a youth court has ordered the identities of the children to be protected – spent the month of April in Guatemala tracking down his sister. He made several visits to the shack where the adults were living before he was finally permitted to speak with her.

"Armed with a metal bar for protection, I told her that if she did not come out, I would break in. So she finally agreed to come outside and talk with me," the man told the *Gazette* through a Hebrew interpreter.

Through members of the local Jewish community in the village, K found out that the children were sleeping on the dirt floor of the shack and that there is no plumbing. He said they receive barrels of fresh water once a week.

The sect's Toronto-based lawyer, Guidy Mamann, said Lev Tahor members are feeling unwelcome in Canada and are considering living elsewhere.

"They have an opportunity to find somewhere where they can go," he said. "I'm sure the group is discussing a number of possibilities. Guatemala is one of them."

About 200 sect members fled Quebec to Ontario last year ahead of a Quebec youth court hearing to seize some of the children. Earlier this year, some sect members fled to Trinidad and Tobago just as an Ontario court was to hear an appeal of the Quebec order. They were apprehended and returned to Canada. Those who went to Guatemala were granted temporary refugee status for up to 90 days. ■

Montreal's Jewish library celebrates 100 years

ELAINE COHEN
SUPPLEMENTS CO-ORDINATOR

The cover photograph on the 2014 Jewish Public Library (JPL) calendar conveys a subliminal message. A nun wearing a habit is immersed in a book. A gentleman seated opposite her reads a Yiddish newspaper. Their comfort level illustrates how this cultural centre has served as an inclusive community landmark.

The Yiddishe-folks-Bibliotek officially opened its doors on May 1, 1914, at 669 St-Urbain St. Over the years, the library made several moves to accommodate the westward migration of Montreal's Jewish community. Since 1975, JPL has been located at 1 Cummings Square, 5151 Cote-Sainte-Catherine Rd.

The JPL will present its 100th anniversary exhibit, *Stories Told: 100 years of the Jewish Public Library in Montreal*, at Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec from June 10 to July 27, showcasing JPL's contributions to city life over the century. The exhibition will also be on display at Montreal City Hall and at the Montreal Jewish Community Campus.

The exhibit marks the start of a major fundraising campaign, with original photos and artifacts highlighting the library's role as a cultural hub. The slate of events is underway and is scheduled to continue all year. The library has digitalized more than 4,400 photographs and documents, making them available to online users worldwide through the Canadian Jewish Heritage Network.

The work being done at JPL benefits everyone, says Michael Crelinsten, executive director of the library since 2010. Citing studies conducted at York University, the University of Chicago and Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs at Princeton University, Crelinsten explains how exposure to fictional and nonfictional characters and scenarios through visits to libraries, museums and theatres increases an individual's empathy for others.

"We can draw a direct parallel between the function of literature in generating support for the community," he contends. "Therefore, [culture] is a strategic investment, not something that should be put aside just because it's harder to measure the short-term effect.

"We need to come together as a community to move forward. As Jews, we have always been recognized as people of the book and associated with leadership and philanthropy. A 100th anniversary is the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to support an iconic institution. JPL archives hold the history and patrimony of the Montreal Jewish community, which is one of the most unique in the world."

JPL needs to purchase equipment, expand and update eBook and computer room facilities among other expenses. Financial support is essential to ensure the future of JPL as a world-class cultural centre, Crelinsten says. Approximately 21 per cent of Canadian households lack Internet access, and that includes 50 per cent of low-income households. Since 19 per cent of Montreal's Jewish community live below the poverty line, JPL needs to support this segment of the community.

The Jewish Public Library features four main divisions and numerous subdivisions. The main library houses the Computer Space and Technology Centre, a specialized Judaica collection and a prized rare book collection. The library's archives are treasured by scholars, government, and social and educational organizations throughout the country. The Norman Berman Children's Library serves children and young families by building early literacy, conducting outreach programs and partnering with schools and daycares.

A constituent agency of Federation CJA, JPL, a nonprofit organization, welcomes more than 100,000 visitors each year. During Jewish Book Month, initiated in 1944, JPL brings internationally renowned authors to speak to more than 1,600 students. Other events, such as the J. I. Segal awards, draw world famous authors.

For a list of upcoming events and programs, visit www.jewishpubliclibrary.org. To support the 100th anniversary campaign, contact Susan Schiffman at 514-345-2627, extension 3159, or susan.schiffman@jplmontreal.org. ■

The Jewish Public Library opened at 4499 avenue l'Esplanade, corner of Mont Royal, in 1953, one of the library's many venues in its 100 years. FEDERAL PHOTOS

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Israeli bill barring prisoner release panned

SPENCER HO
TIMES OF ISRAEL

An Israeli bill that would bar the release of Palestinian prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment was approved Sunday by a committee of government ministers.

The bill will go next to the Knesset for a first reading, and if it's signed into law, the president will no longer be able to pardon convicted criminals who have been sentenced by a judge to a life sentence without parole.

If passed, the measure would hamstring leaders from being able to offer prisoner releases in exchange for political concessions in peace talks with Palestinians, although it would only apply to a minority of jailed terrorists.

It's not yet clear whether the law applies only to murderers sentenced after the law passes or also to those convicted in the past.

The release of convicted murderers became one of the most divisive issues within Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ruling coalition over the past year, after he agreed to release more than 100 prisoners at the outset of the most recent round of talks.

Economy Minister Naftali Bennett, who heads the Jewish Home party and has threatened to quit the government over recent prisoner releases, hailed the bill's passage.

"The State of Israel has opened a new chapter in the war against terror and in its moral obligation to bereaved families," he said. "Years of extortion and wholesale releases of terrorists will stop with the passage of this bill in the Knesset. I congratulate the ministers on their support of the law. The Jewish Home will work in the coming session to pass the bill [quickly]."

Left-wing Meretz MK Michal Rozin called the bill hypocritical.

"The prime minister who released dozens of terrorists in various deals, who was the head of the government that chose to release terrorists rather than [freeze settlement construction] now supports a law to prevent the release of terrorists," she said. "More proof, one of many, of the inconsistencies and political fickleness of our prime minister."

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Prisoner Affairs Minister Issa Qaraqe said the bill, dealt a blow to any possible peace deal. He called Israeli leaders shortsighted and said such a law would not aid Israel, as there would be no deal without the release of prisoners from Israeli jails.

Qaraqe's deputy, Fatah party official Mohammed al-Madani, said the bill is the final nail in the coffin of peace talks that ended last month. He said Netanyahu pulled the mask of peace from his face.

Nearly 80 prisoners were released over the nine months of talks with the Palestinians, including many who had murdered Israelis in attacks over 20 years ago. Numerous right-wing ministers and MKs threatened to quit their posts and withdraw their parties from the government ahead of slated fourth and final prisoner release, which Palestinians were demanding include Israeli-Arab terrorists.

Netanyahu delayed the final round indefinitely, demanding that the Palestinians first agree to extend the peace talks past the end of April deadline.

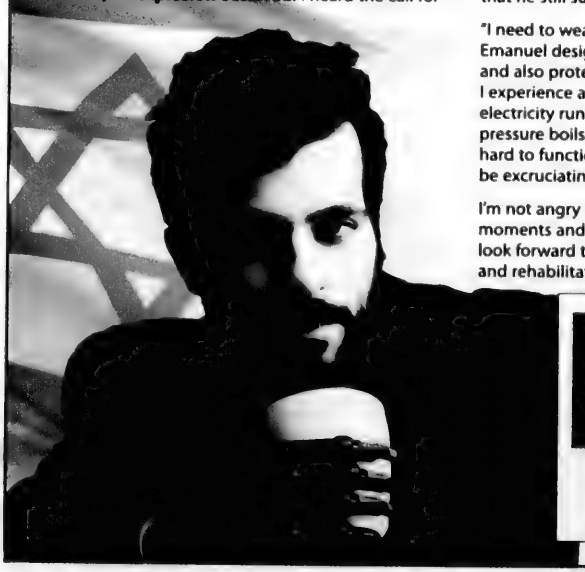
The talks eventually broke down completely after a series of unilateral moves by both sides that culminated in a unity deal between the PA and Hamas, which Israel considers a terrorist group and refuses to negotiate with. ■

TimesofIsrael.com

"THERE'S NOT A SINGLE THING A TWO-HANDED PERSON CAN DO THAT I CAN'T"

Emanuel Aminof, 23, lost his right hand in a military exercise that went terribly wrong on January 13, 2010. He was in the Platoon Commander's tank when an anti-aircraft missile got stuck in one of the cannons.

"While I was extracting the mortar from the cannon, an explosion occurred. I heard the call for my urgent evacuation. **I realized how badly injured I was. I had lost my right hand."** Unfortunately, Emanuel needed several surgeries requiring the amputation of his arm.



Emanuel maintains a positive attitude, despite the fact that he still suffers daily.

"I need to wear either a hook or a bionic hand (that Emanuel designed) at all times, because it is practical and also protects me. Without this protection I experience a lot more pain, the constant feeling of electricity running through my arm and terrible pressure boils. Due to these after-effects, it is really hard to function and doing even the simplest task can be excruciatingly painful.

I'm not angry at anyone. I recall those dreadful moments and know that I could have died. Now I look forward to each day and continuing my recovery and rehabilitation at Beit Halochem in Tel Aviv."

Emanuel's message of courage and hope is real for the **over 50,000 disabled veterans in Israel.** He knows that Beit Halochem is there to help each step of the way in making life better.

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Since establishing DRI as one of the first international human rights organizations for people with disabilities in 1993, Eric Rosenthal has investigated and exposed abuses in 26 countries - bringing world attention to the concerns of children and adults with disabilities segregated from society in orphanages, psychiatric facilities, and other institutions. Rosenthal received the 2013 Charles Bronfman Prize for his global humanitarian impact. He was selected as one of the 2013 Forward 50 most influential Jews in the United States.

For RSVP and more information:
Miriam Daniels mdaniels@ujafed.org
416 635 2883 ext. 5116

OPINION

What does being 'pro-Israel' mean?

Gerald Steinberg

The members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations recently rejected the application of J Street to join their ranks. The founder and main force behind J Street claims to be entirely "pro-peace and pro-Israel," but many longtime and deeply committed supporters of Israel aren't convinced. J Street's case was not helped when it allied with a lobbying group for the Iranian regime or defended U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's foolish use of the term "apartheid" (for which he quickly apologized).

At the same time, in New York, a debate is raging over participation in the annual Celebrate Israel parade. In recent years, protests have increased over the participation of groups such as the New Israel Fund that have, in different ways, provided support to anti-Israel boycotters, lawfare and other hostile actions deemed to go beyond legitimate criticism within the "Zionist big tent." And in Britain, there's a similar controversy over an organization known as Yachad.

In these debates, the need for consistent definitions is increasingly important. Clearly, saying that one is "pro-Israel" is not enough – it's very easy to say one thing and do something quite different, or to present different faces to different audiences. To qualify as pro-Israel, there must be some minimal standards and definitions that are not only accepted in theory, but also implemented in practice. And as Mitchell G. Bard, head of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, recently wrote, "Defining 'pro-Israel' is not rocket science."

Bard articulates 13 principles, in parallel to Maimonides' 13 Attributes, but the basics can be covered in three or four core points. The most basic is the acceptance of the legitimacy of Israel as the independent sovereign state of the Jewish People, with status equal to the almost 200 members of the United Nations. Jewish sovereign equality in the Land of Israel is the fundamental underpinning of Zionism, and if an individual or organization rejects any part of this foundation, the label "pro-Israel" does not apply. Groups that are allied with or promote the boycott, divestment and sanction campaign that seeks the destruction of Israel and promotes a "one-state" formula, meaning the end of Jewish national sovereignty, cannot be considered "pro-Israel." They might be naively utopian or anti-Semitic, but they're not Zionists.

In his list, Bard emphasizes respecting Israeli democracy and not substituting distant and private opinions for the decisions made by Israeli voters and their elected representatives. After 2,000 years of exile and many sacrifices, the Jewish People fought hard for independence, which includes the right to make mistakes. Whether well-meaning or not, those who are convinced that Israelis are unable to run their own lives, that outsiders know what's best and that they are acting "to save Israel from itself" are paternalistic, responsible for major damage and not "pro-Israel".

Many supposedly "pro-Israel" voices bombard the Jewish community, the non-Jewish media and other audiences with messaging that constantly criticizes Israel, far out of proportion and without context. Instead of celebrating Israeli achievements, they harp on the imperfections – and no society is perfect. Singling out Israel with double standards is hardly helpful in the context of immoral political warfare, including boycotts and demonization at universities and from Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker and other Christian denominations.

Furthermore, the term pro-Israel indicates pro-active support – groups that are merely neutral on Israel and display a "take it or leave it" attitude towards Zionism also don't qualify. Self-proclaimed pro-Israel progressive organizations such as J Street and the New Israel Fund need to be much more visible in the media and in other battlefields where Israel is under vicious attack on a daily basis. Recognition of pro-Israel status is not simply a matter of prestige, but is very much an issue of substance. The designation must be earned and then displayed with pride. ■

GUEST VOICE

We have to protect our kids, not criminals

RAHEL BAYAR AND
MEIRA BAYAR ELLIAS

We are sisters. One of us is a former child abuse and sex crimes prosecutor. One of us is a licensed social worker who has worked clinically with victims of sexual abuse and is also a victim of sexual assault. One of us is a member of the Orthodox community. One of us was a member of the Orthodox community. We are writing about the case of Evan Zauder.

Evan Zauder was a teacher at Yeshivat Noam in New Jersey. He worked for over a decade with children. In January 2013, he pled guilty to transportation, receipt and distribution of child pornography, possession of child pornography and enticement of a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity. He admitted committing sex crimes against children.

More than 50 letters were sent on Zauder's behalf to the judge determining his sentence. Pillars of the Orthodox community: rabbis, teachers, friends and family members asked the judge for leniency. On this list are many names we know – intelligent, kind and valued members of their communities. They are not evil. Yet the words they used were not intelligent, kind or of value. Many referred to Zauder's "mistake" or "struggle." They called him a "good and decent person who lost control." They laud the time he spent alone with students and campers, stating he was always "honourable, respectful and caring."

These letters have provoked much comment regarding the many "big names" who wrote them. They asked the judge to consider all that made Zauder an integral part of their community not only as an admitted child molester. They ignored the fact he violated parole by accessing child pornography on a monitored computer. In making their case, they forget that the victims are more than just victims.

They are children.

Pedophilia, child molestation or child pornography are not "activities." They are crimes. It is unconscionable to refer to Zauder's "poor decision," to state he knows "the error of his ways" and made a "grievous mistake." It is horrific someone could state Zauder was "honourable, respectful, caring and gentlemanly." These words minimize his acts.

Reading these letters we saw little consideration for the victims. We question those who praised Zauder's restraint for the times he was alone with children and did not succumb. How does the writer know these children were safe? How could a child be comfortable coming forward when their role model and protector is on a list of people requesting leniency for Zauder? The question should not be how best to come to the aid of the predator but rather how we as a community can reach out, protect defenceless children and create a safe space where children are supported and not re-victimized by their community.

One of us was assaulted on a yeshiva class trip. While the teacher informed responded appropriately, other educators blamed me for the assault. I left the program, and a prominent educator in the school called me a quitter, telling my parents I was a failure. That moment was the start of a journey away from a toxic environment, away from Orthodoxy.

One of us remains Orthodox – but in trepidation. When community members neutralize a perpetrator's crimes by praising his "leadership qualities" they negate the seriousness of his crimes. They allow misperceptions about child abuse to permeate our collective understanding. How can we trust our educators, schools, camps and leaders?

The question must be asked: Who is of greater value to the community – our children or those who prey upon them?

These letters raise the likelihood that the next victim may not speak out. We have a moral obligation to give our children a safe place to share. We do not have a co-equal obligation to speak on behalf of our criminals. ■

This article first appeared in The Jewish Standard

Jewish Life

Jewish music has something for everyone

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Jewish Music Week, as a festival, may still be a toddler – it was founded only in 2011 – but it's been growing over the years, along with its audiences. Last year, every seat in some venues was filled a half-hour before the concerts started.

Judy Jacobs, the festival's managing director, said that "people who attended were pleased with the variety of musical styles and with the quality of the performances and friends bring friends."

Jewish Music Week (JMW), running this year from May 18 to 25, includes related films and lectures in its celebration of Jewish music. Morning and afternoon events are free and most evening presentations are ticketed.

The Kids from Brooklyn: The songs of Carole King, Neil Diamond, Neil Sedaka and Barry Manilow, at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, is one of the week's highlights. To be held at 7:30 p.m. on May 21, it features Cantor Simon Spiro, the Manhat-tones, the Brill Building Orchestra and the a cappella group Cadence.

Spiro, who is Beth Tzedec Congregation's senior cantor, has been called the "British Jazz Singer" for balancing dual careers in both cantorial and popular music. He's had hit singles on the Israeli and British pop charts. For tickets, visit www.tocentre.com.

Another JMW highlight is the Canadian debut of a contemporary Israeli group, The Vanunu Ethno Jazz Ensemble, at 8 p.m. on May 20 at the Lula Lounge. The ensemble fuses classic Jewish nigunim with ethnic Middle Eastern and jazz styles. Their sound is modern yet rooted in tradition. Led by Eli Vanunu on saxophone, the band features three other hot Israeli jazz players: Dor Heled (piano), Igor Kogan (double bass) and Uri Seelig (drums).

A tribute to the late Arieh (Arik) Einstein, at 7:30 p.m. on May 22 at the Monarch Tavern, features Israeli-born jazz singer Ori Dagan. The tribute should attract some Israeli audience members. Einstein was a pioneer of Israeli rock music and is widely regarded as the greatest and most influential Israeli singer and musician of all time.

David Buchbinder, a musician who works in the worlds of jazz, klezmer, world music and Arabic fusion, has put together Toronto's Real Klezmer Supergroup – the top klezmer players in Canada – for JMW. The group performs at 7 p.m. on May 18 at the Rex Jazz and Blues Bar. Accessibility is a keyword for JMW.

"Not everyone has the financial means to buy tickets and not everyone can get around town," said Aliza Spiro, the week's artistic director. She and her husband, Cantor Simon Spiro, founded JMW.

The festival comes to the audience, offering free daytime presentations, including a morning film and lecture series, live performances at lunchtime and a 2 to 3 p.m "afternoon tunes" series. Venues are located almost from the foot of downtown Toronto to Thornhill. Events are being held at Toronto City Hall's Nathan Phillips Square, the Prosserman and Miles Nadal Jewish community centres, seniors centres, a library, a hospital and at several synagogues.

A highlight of unticketed JMW events is Vocals for Victoria. A Victoria Day music marathon from noon to 4 p.m. on May 19 at Nathan Phillips Square, it features some "phenomenal local ensembles," Spiro said. They include a Jewish barbershop quartet, a Jewish all-female jazz quartet and a vocal chamber choir.

Another unticketed event, a community Melavah Malka with the Toronto Council of Hazzanim, to be held at 10:15 p.m on May 24 at Holy Blossom Temple, features eight cantors. Aliza Spiro, a singer-songwriter, hosts a free event, the Jewish Music Comedy Hour, at 2 p.m. on May 23 at the Jazz Bistro. She will be joined by local cabaret performers singing funny Jewish songs.

JMW encourages children to take an interest in Jewish music through its annual art contest. The contest "helps kids get connected with Jewish music and the arts in general," Spiro said. Winners are picked by prominent members of the art community.

Jacobs added that "we're not just encouraging creativity. We're developing Jewish personalities." Jacobs, whose background is in education, recalled that one young artist at last year's Meet the Artists reception was "very introverted" going in.

"The confidence this girl gained at the event was remarkable" she said. In previous years, the contest, which has been renamed the Bogoroch Art Contest in honour of a JMW donor, had been restricted to students from grades 1 to 12. But this year, seniors were eligible to participate, too.

You can meet this year's winners and view their works at a reception from 3 to 4:30 p.m. on May 25 at Gallery MNJCC at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. For more information about JMW, visit www.jewishmusicweek.com. ■

The Kids from Brooklyn performs the music of Neil Diamond, pictured.

Opposite page: Clockwise, top left: Shani Edel's top Grade 4 painting, The Clinton St. Klezmer Band, David Buchbinder, Ori Dagan.

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Nir Bareket celebrates 50 years with gallery exhibit

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Whether it is the intensity of a look, the sparseness of a stage, or the drama of a gesture, Nir Bareket's photographs don't just capture the facts of the moment, but they also capture its wonder.

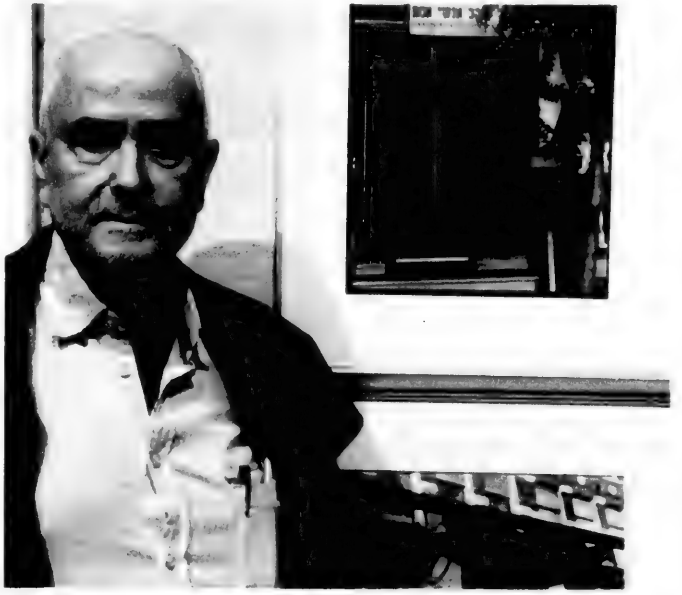
The Market Gallery presents an exhibition entitled *Nir Bareket: My Eyes Have Seen. Celebrating 50 years of photography.* The exhibit features photographs from the Bareket collection, the City of Toronto Archives, and the Ontario Jewish Archives Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre (OJA).

The wide-ranging photographs feature images from various series: *Theatre in Toronto (1976-2003); The Don Jail (1978-1987); The Amsterdam Calendar (1978); The Toronto Calendar (1981); The Homeless in Toronto (1982-2004);* and *The March of the Living (1994).*

"What I find amazing is not just the individual photos, but the breadth of the portfolio. For five decades, Bareket has been photographing theatre in New York City, in Jerusalem and in Toronto, capturing moment after moment. The photographs provide evidence that these plays existed, that they happened at all, keeping for posterity the magic of theatre," said Michael Wallace, executive director, Theatre Museum Canada.

Bareket was commissioned in 1994 by March of the Living to document the trip. These photographs, now part of the collection of the OJA, include images of participants visiting Jewish cemeteries, the Jewish ghetto in Krakow, and the concentration camps in Poland.

"In Bareket's photographs, one feels the bleak coldness of the landscape. The horror and despair that occurred there is visceral, and is evident in these haunting photographs," says Dara Solomon, director of the OJA.



Nir Bareket standing beside his photograph of a synagogue on Brunswick Avenue in the exhibit *The Toronto Calendar.* SUSAN MINUK PHOTO

"And yet, the faces of the students, though filled with anguish, provide a light – a youthful warmth – hope. The brilliance in Bareket's approach is his ability to maintain both the invisibility of a journalist and the eye of the artist – capturing the beauty of these grief-filled moments."

The Amsterdam Calendar series comes from Bareket's 1976-78 stay in the Dutch city representing Toronto in the Toronto Amsterdam Artist Exchange Program. Bareket created a portfolio of photographs based on the concept of the calendar. He photographed individual numbers from one to 31 to represent the days of the month. These numbers appeared on walls, doorways, signs, essentially anywhere that people lived and worked in Amsterdam.

"Almost 35 years later, the archives acquired another calendar portfolio created by Nir Bareket, but in this case, the subject is Toronto, Bareket's home," said Michele Dale, City of Toronto Archives.

Bareket shot *The Toronto Calendar* series in 1981.

"Toronto is my city, and I like to think I know parts of it very well," said Bareket.

The photographs of *The Don Jail* series became the first acquisition by the archives of the City of Toronto of work by a contemporary, living photographer.

"Nir Bareket's photos catch the essence of the mood of the jail: sombre, severe, inhuman, without a soft edge. I was astounded when Nir first showed me his photos. They glowed with the jail's powerful truth. Bareket's photo of the jail's main entrance hangs in my home. I contemplate it daily," said John Sewell, former mayor of Toronto.

Following studies at the New York Institute of Photography and the School of Visual Arts in New York City, Bareket worked as a commercial photographer in New York City, in Geneva, Switzerland, and spent three years as chief photographer for the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Bareket settled in Toronto in 1975.

Bareket has had numerous solo exhibitions dating from 1966 to the present day, including public galleries in New York City, Israel, Stanford University and Toronto. Major public collections in the United States, Holland, Israel, and Canada include Bareket's photographs.

More recently, Bareket has been focusing on social commentary – an attempt to capture elements of society most people tend to ignore. Bareket dares us to look.

"During the last couple of decades, searching for meaning became my main focus. Now, after my first 50 years as a photographer, the search continues. Photography is not a sprint, it is a marathon," said Bareket. ■

Nir Bareket: My Eyes Have Seen will be on display until July 19 at the St. Lawrence Market, 95 Front St. E. There is no admission fee.

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Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

TORONTO JEWISH LITERARY FESTIVAL AND JEWISH BOOK AWARDS

Once upon a time, Toronto's two major Jewish book events, the Jewish Book Festival and the Canadian Jewish Book Awards, were held at opposite ends of the calendar. But all that changed a few years ago when the two events were wisely merged into the Toronto Jewish Literary Festival.

This season's Festival, which occurs May 25 to June 1 at several venues around the city, offers a particularly rich roster of events; all programs are free or pay-what-you can:

Toronto-born reporter and author **Matti Friedman**, who has been called a "modern-day Indiana Jones," speaks on his award-winning book *The Aleppo Codex* at Temple Emanu-El, 120 Old Colony Rd., May 26, 7:30 p.m.

More literary gold comes in the form of **Nora Gold**, author of the newly-published novel *Fields of Exile*, which has been described as "the first novel about anti-Israelism in the academe." (Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St., Thursday May 29, 7:30 p.m.)

Lethbridge professor of English **Goldie Morgentaler** speaks on the prominent late Canadian Yiddish writer **Chava Rosenfarb**, with readings by **Eileen Thalenberg** in Yiddish and English. (Miles Nadal JCC, May 25, 4:30 p.m.) Poet-translator **Chantal Ringuet** presents her recent French-language anthology of Canadian Jewish writers with readings in English, Yiddish and French. (Beth David Synagogue, June 1, 1 p.m.)

Other presenters include Montreal Judaic Studies professor and editor **Ira Robinson** discussing the recent essay collection *Canada's Jews: In Time, Space and Spirit* (Temple Emanu-El, Wednesday May 28, 7:30 p.m.). Toronto author, publisher and genealogist **Bill Gladstone** (who writes this column) launches a new edition of *A Basket of Apples*, a collection of short stories by the late **Shirley Faessler** focusing on Jewish characters in Kensington Market in the 1920s and 1930s; the author's granddaughter, playwright-actor **Karen Hines**, will read selections from the stories. (Beth David, June 1, 3:30 p.m.)

• • •

Unlike the Academy Awards, the Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards announces its winners weeks in advance, thereby relieving we staid Canadians of too much excitement and suspense. Still, it's always a great thrill to see literary excellence rewarded, which is why the community comes out in droves to support this event.

This year's fiction prize goes to **Kenneth Bonert** for his novel *The Lion Seeker*, which brings alive the world of South African Jewry in all its raw energy and ribald vernacular.

Other winners are: **Ken Setterington** for *Branded by the Pink Triangle* (Holocaust category); **Frieda Forman** for *The Exile Book of Yiddish Women Writers* (Yiddish); **Josh Lambert** for *Unclean Lips* (Jewish Thought and Culture); **Anne Michaels** and **Bernice Eisenstein** for *Correspondences* (Poetry); **Albert Kaganovitch** for *The Long Life and Swift Death of the Jewish Rechitsa* (Scholarship); **Renee Levine Melammed** for *An Ode to Salonika: The Ladino Verses*

of Bouena Safatty (Bio/Memoir); **Carol Matas** for *Dear Canada, Pieces of the Past* (Youth); and **Jeffrey Veidlinger** for *In the Shadow of the Shtetl* (History).

The 26th annual Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards, celebrating excellence in Canadian writing on Jewish themes and subjects, will be handed out to the winning authors at a free public ceremony. Toronto Reference Library, Bram and Bluma Appel Salon, 789 Yonge St., May 27, 8 p.m.

• • •

Historic Plaques: Heritage Toronto and the Toronto Legacy Project are unveiling a historic plaque to commemorate three women of distinction – **Amelia Earhart**, **Emma Goldman** and **Joyce Wieland.** University College, Room 179, 15 King's College Circle, May 22, 11 a.m. Heritage Toronto is also unveiling a plaque in commemoration of the Jewish Old Folks Home (later Baycrest) as part of Jewish Heritage Month. Baycrest, 3560 Bathurst St., May 28, 11 a.m.

Arts in Brief

• The Lodzer Synagogue presents a screening of *Nicky's Family*, about **Nicholas Winton**, the British man who organized the rescue of 669 Czech and Slovak children just before the outbreak of World War II. 12 Heaton St., North York, May 15, 7 p.m. The Lodzer screens *The Rape of Europa*, about the Nazi looting of Europe, May 22, 7 p.m.

• The Canadian-produced film *Shekinah – The Intimate Life of Hasidic Women*, by director **Abbey Jack Neidik**, with **Chanie Carlebach**, opens this week in Toronto. It is at the Carlton Cinema and Elgin Mills Cinema, May 16 to 22.

• **Shlomo Schwartzberg** continues his series on Jewish-American filmstars with a look at the works of **Barbra Streisand** and **Richard Benjamin**. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday May 20, 1 p.m. $12 drop-in. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Jewish Music Week in Toronto presents Afternoon Tunes – *Abi Gezunt*, a lively performance with Yiddish entertainer **Stella Walker** and **Cantor David Rosen**, featuring musical gems from Borscht Belt humour to cantorial works. Free admission. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday May 22, 2 to 3 p.m.

• • •

At the Galleries: *Prismatic*, an exhibition of works by **Leah Landau** and **Sandra Duba-Shubs**, opens May 15, 6 p.m., with a reception at Atelier RZLBD, Bayview Village, lower level. Free admission, everyone welcome. The show continues thru May 29.

• • •

Out of Town: The Winnipeg International Jewish Film Festival presents screenings of about a dozen films including *Aftermath*, *Hunting Elephants*, *The Jewish Cardinal* and *Run Boy Run*. Rady JCC, 123 Doncaster St., Winnipeg, May 20 to June 1. www.radyjcc.com ■

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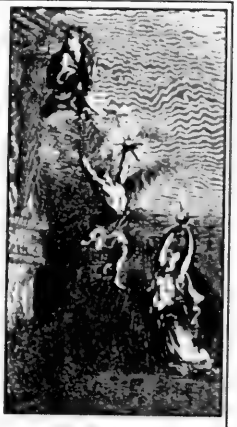

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 15, 2014

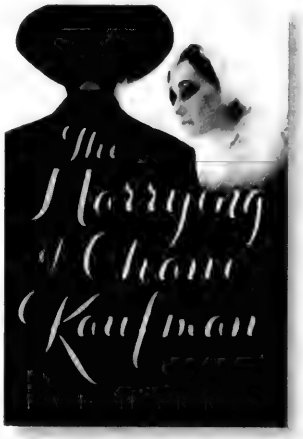
The lives of Jewish girls and women

NORMAN RAVVIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The recent election campaign in Quebec and its lead-up discussion of the Parti Québécois' "Secular Charter" placed an unusual amount of attention on popular opinion regarding the religious habits and dress of women. These discussions have plagued western European countries such as France and Germany, where they are often a cover for deeper discontent surrounding substantial immigration from North Africa.

In Montreal, no such recent immigration history exists, but there is a long history of confrontation in the city's Outremont neighbourhood, where myths associated with the area's essential Frenchness collide with a burgeoning chassidic population.

The finer points of Jewish religious life – the character of chassidic culture in contrast with other forms of modern Orthodoxy – are likely beyond the realm of public discussion. But publishers have spotted a niche subject with provocative potential, and in recent years have brought out a number of novels and memoirs by women, which aim to depict observant Jewish communities while addressing their relationship to mainstream culture.



The Marrying of Chani Kaufman
Eve Harris.

(House of Anansi)

Eve Harris' *The Marrying of Chani Kaufman* is the most recent among these. It garnered a large readership and substantial reviewer response in England, where it was first published. In Canada, House of Anansi, one of the country's prestigious independent publishers, will bring it out this spring.

The Marrying of Chani Kaufman operates on two levels, foremost as a kind of pop ethnography of the lives of Orthodox girls and women, providing a specifically English portrait by delineating the impact of class and education in varied London Jewish neighbourhoods. British reviewers, with their own particular attention to the English literary tradition, pointed to Harris' ability to transpose famous scenes from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* to a contemporary Jewish context. *Romeo and Juliet* comes to mind as well, as another likely influence, as Harris' young would-be marrieds, Chani and Baruch, are set upon by the self-serving elders who would keep them apart.

The novel's second and arguably more serious subject is the potential for female independence and self-respect in rigorously religious communities. To address this subject, Harris introduces the Rebbetzin Zilberman, who is entangled with the novel's other characters but has a unique story of her own. The rebbetzin's family background is secular and detached from questions of Jewish identity, but a youthful year in Israel leads her to marry an equally adventurous partner, who, as the guiding figure in their marriage, turns her toward religious observance when the couple returns to London.

If the novel's attention to young Chani Kaufman's engagement and marriage is its comic side, the tale of the Rebbetzin Zilberman courts tragic outcomes. But it points, as well, toward what Harris views as the hopeful possibility of a woman who chooses to leave the commitments of family and community in favour of an undefined and new sense of freedom. Having abandoned her modest clothes and wig, the rebbetzin walks on the High Street of her familiar neighbourhood:

"The woman had stared straight through her. There had been no dawning of recognition, no greeting uttered. The Rebbetzin felt invisible, a ghost of her former self. She drifted on, perturbed yet relieved. Perhaps since she was no longer dressed in frum attire, she no longer existed for her community; they only saw what they wanted to see. In her jeans and loose hair, she was not of their ilk and therefore unimportant, merely another obstacle to negotiate as they progressed along the street. She may as well have been a lamppost. What a strange, blinkered world they inhabited."

Harris, unlike other writers who have approached these themes, has not left the fold, abandoned family, or chosen a secular life over religious responsibilities. As a child, she recalls her Holocaust survivor father rejecting faith. As an adult, she taught for a time at a private religious girls' school, and it is this experience that placed her near to the kinds of lives she portrays in her fiction.

One of the novel's flaws is its unwillingness to clarify whether it means to explore contemporary chassidic culture or the broader range of Orthodox communities. In one family scene we encounter a portrait of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and on a couple occasions Harris favours the adjective "Hassidisher" to describe a character's behaviour. But the novel makes no effort to explain the meaning of such things (its glossary offers a definition of "Hasid" without relating the term to the novel's characters). In this way, Harris contributes to the vague unreliability of popular ideas associated with Jewish religious life.

Harris' British reviewers were not troubled by this. A glance at the web sites of London papers that reviewed the book reveals an indiscriminate use of photographs of both chassidic and non-chassidic Jews on London streets. It may be that the novel's publisher was aware of the book's open-ended approach, allowing reviewers and readers alike to feel, as did some writing for major London papers, that *The Marrying of Chani Kaufman* provided a generic portrait of "Orthodox Jewry."

Although Harris' novel offers a colourful and detailed fictional portrait, it risks contributing to the failed discussion of religious life among non-religious people, in which the latter group, reflexively, tells women in the former group they must change.

Political feminist groups expressed such views in the press as well as in political forums in Quebec during the past year. Although the PQ and its "Charter" were rejected, it was not clear that any greater understanding arose from an often dispiriting discussion regarding women's roles and religion. With its *Romeo and Juliet*-style standoff, *The Marrying of Chani Kaufman* can be read simply for fun. But its examination of women's rights and religious expression fails to address the particularities of Jewish communal life and the place of women in it. ■

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Intimate portrayal of chassidic women in Quebec

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The world of Orthodox Judaism is not one we often see on the big screen. In *Shekinah: The Intimate Life of Hasidic Women*, a new documentary from Quebec, the lives of young women at a seminary come to the fore.

Taking its name from a word meaning "the female essence of God," *Shekinah* is a sensitive and insightful film. It explores the interactions between young chassidic women and the surrounding population who do not know what to make of their differences.

"There's wisdom in tradition," filmmaker Abbey Jack Neidik says, narrating, "but most of that old world is gone now." Neidik is fascinated by the Chassidim in his Montreal neighbourhood and wants to understand their way of life better.

Neidik follows young women who are Chabad Lubavitch as they attend the BMC Teachers' Seminary in Montréal. Their director, Chana "Chanie" Carlebach, lays out the ground rules on the first days. Be modest and cover your body – you are supposed to notice the person, not their shape. Seek profound truth in Torah and God, not the Internet. Dedicate your life to create a home based on the model prescribed in the Torah.

Shekinah examines the relationships Chassidim try to form with a non-Jewish community. When one of the students finds a swastika drawn on the seminary door, the women try to erase the negative feeling by spreading kindness, delivering food to nearby homes.

Despite the temptations around them, these women follow the teachings with honour and dedication. Neidik looks at how these spiritually intuitive young women react to concepts of love, marriage and relationships.

The students are pure and have profound thoughts about the world and their place within it, even if there is curiosity about the outside world. "When I was younger, I thought maybe [being Orthodox] was being repressed," student Rivkie Feldman tells Neidik. "It is so much easier to not be religious."

Near the film's end, the subjects of the film engage in a dialogue with local female high schoolers. "You have rules to follow and you respect them," one of them says, stunned. "We have too much freedom." These intersections between the chassidic women and the outside community comprise the best scenes in the film, bridging connections between cultures that do not normally intertwine.

If *Shekinah* falters on a narrative level, it is the lack of time we spend with many of the young adults at the seminary. The film follows the structure of their year there, from the first day of study until graduation. However, when Neidik explains how after spending a year covering these women, "they feel like family," his reflection does not ring true with the viewer, who only gets a limited glimpse at many of these girls.

The looks we do get are fascinating, especially the profound worldview of Chaya Mushka Stern, an 18-year-old woman from England trying to adapt to a rewarding lifestyle some may see as too rigid. However, *Shekinah* would be a more engaging film if it focused on more of these young women and their spiritual journeys.

Chaya Mushka Stern is an 18-year-old from England portrayed in *Shekinah*

> *Shekinah is a fascinating exploration of a group not often explored in modern culture.*

Nevertheless, *Shekinah* is a fascinating exploration of a group not often explored in modern culture. It is an especially significant film for Quebec audiences, since the misperceptions of some people around chassidic Jews may have spurred the recent controversy regarding the Quebec charter of values. ■

Shekinah: The Intimate Life of Hasidic Women *opens in Toronto at the Carlton and Elgin Mills Cinemas on Friday, May 16, 2014. Additional play dates around Canada will follow in 2014.*

NOTICE

To all members of the Independent Friendly Workers Circle (IFW) and the Labour Zionist Alliance (LZA)

Given the pending winding up of IFW and LZA, Toronto Hebrew Memorial Parks has been requested to reacquire the IFW and LZA sections at Pardes Shalom Cemetery.

If you are claiming a burial right in either of the IFW or the LZA sections, please immediately contact our office at 416.635.5595 or info@thmp.ca

We must hear back from you by no later than May 31, 2014
as only those individuals giving notice of a claim by May 31, 2014 will have their claims considered.

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What's New

MAY 15 - MAY 22

by Lila Sarick

Thursday 15	Friday 16	Saturday 17	Sunday 18	Monday 19	Tuesday 20	Wednesday 21
Journalist Patrick Martin discusses the two-state solution.			Enjoy a teddy bear picnic or chassidic music today.	Victoria Day		Be artistically inspired by the Omer with the Pomegranate Guild.

Thursday, May 15

HUGGING & WRESTLING ISRAEL
Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs presents a workshop entitled "Hugging and Wrestling with Israel," to the Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 7:30 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr. 416-385-3910.

THE TWO-STATE SOLUTION
Journalist **Patrick Martin** discusses "What's Next for the Two-State Solution," 7:30 p.m., First Narayever Congregation. Sponsored by Canadian Friends of Peace Now. 416-322-5559.

UNDERSTANDING KADDISH
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Understanding the Kaddish," 8:30 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. May 22, the topic is "Living a passionate Judaism."

RELIGIOUS IDENTITY IN ISRAEL
Rabbi David Stav discusses "The Struggle for Religious Identity in Israel," 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

FILM SERIES
The film *Nicky's Family* will be shown at the Lodzer Centre Congregation, 7 p.m. May 22, the film *The Rape of Europe* will be shown. $5.

JEWISH HISTORY
Gerald Ziedenberg discusses "The Trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg," 7 p.m. at Beth Torah Congregation. May 22, the topic is "The Trial and Capture of Adolf Eichmann."

Deadline Reminder:

The deadline for the issue of May 29 is May 19. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Jewish Music Week Art Contest

Students and seniors were invited to participate in an art contest celebrating Jewish Music Week. The results can be seen at the Miles Nadal JCC from May 22 to June 5.

PAINTING BY FIRST PLACE WINNER (GRADES 6-8) JILLIAN CLASKY

Saturday, May 17

TORAH STUDY
Bracha Feder discusses the Torah parshah at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Sunday, May 18

TEDDY BEAR PICNIC
Children ages 3 to 7 are invited to bring a stuffed animal to Shaar Shalom Synagogue's teddy bear picnic, 11:30 a.m. To register, email agol@shaarshalom.ca.

YA-BA-BYE
Cantor **Tibor Kovari** gives a musical lecture on "The Joys of Chassidic Music," Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $10. Breakfast at 10 a.m., lecture at 10:30 a.m.

Monday, May 19

YIDDISH SONGS
Singer **Faye Kellerstein** and pianist **Paul Mathew** perform Yiddish and Hebrew songs at Pine Villa Retirement Residence, 1035 Eglinton Ave. W. , 6:45 p.m. No charge, but RSVP because space is limited, 416-787-5626.

Tuesday, May 20

LUNCH AND LEARN
Dr. Terry Delovitch discusses "Genetic Diseases in Ashkenazi Jews," 12:15 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $20. Call 416-221-3433.

AND THE MOUNTAINS ECHOED
Heather Kassel reviews *And the Mountains Echoed*, 8 p.m., Adath Israel Congregation. For more information, call **Eveline**, 416-493-3626. $10/$15.

Wednesday, May 21

JEWISH HISTORY
Hana Werner discusses "Jeremiah: A Prophet of Doom and Gloom," Beth Tzedec Congregation. Refreshments 1:30 p.m.; lecture 2 p.m. $10.

HESCHEL GALA
The Toronto Heschel School celebrates its 18th anniversary and honours outgoing head of school **Gail Baker.** For tickets, visit www.torontoheschel.org.

TRIALS OF THE FIRST-BORN
Noam Zion of the Hartman Institute for Learning, discusses "First-born Plague or Privilege: Birth Order and Parental Expectations," 7:30 p.m. at Holy Blossom Temple.

INSPIRATION AND THE OMER
Laya Crust discusses "Inspiration and Projects for Counting the Omer," with the Pomegranate Guild of Jewish Textiles, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Sinai. For information, visit pomegranateguild.wordpress.com.

JEWISH GENEALOGY
A speaker from the Jewish Genealogical Society discusses "Tracing our Roots: Telling our Stories," 7:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation.

JAZZ IT UP!
Beth David Synagogue presents an evening of casino games and entertainment by **Jordana Talsky.** For tickets, call 416-633-5500.

COUNTER-MISSIONARY SEMINAR
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Deconstructing Missionary Prooftexts," First Narayever Congregation, 8 p.m. Course continues until June 11. To register, call 416-789-0020 or email toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, May 15

THE POWER OF MUSIC
Yehoshua Lavner discusses "The Power of Simcha and Music," 8 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

SEXUAL ABUSE: A JEWISH SECRET
Stephen Marcus discusses "Sexual

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Abuse: Jewish Toronto's Dirty Little Secret," 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

COMING EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Reena is looking for volunteers to work as "Rec Buddies" at Camp Reena this summer. No experience needed. Call **Mille Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112.

FAMILY PHOTOS NEEDED

Beth Jacob V'Anshe Dridlz Congregation is looking for family photos and memories for a commemorative book being written about the synagogue. Email janinesherr@aol.com.

GIRLS GONE GLAM

Yasmin Chapter of Canadian Hadassah holds its Girls Gone Glam event May 29 featuring speakers, shopping, music and more. For tickets, email yasminchapter@rogers.com.

LACHAN CONCERT

The Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir celebrates 20 years of singing Jewish music with a gala concert, June 2, Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m. With special guests **Ben Steinberg, Cantors Charles Osborne and David Rosen.** Suggested donation at the door, $20. www.lachan.org.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **Living with Teens: Raising adolescents without losing your cool:** A 5-session group for parents. Starts May 20, at 7:30 p.m.
- **Demystifying Alzheimers and Dementia:** A 1-session workshop for anyone wanting to know more about cognitive impairment. May 20 at 7 p.m.
- **Adolescent Anxiety and Depression: When to Worry, What to do:** A 1-session workshop for parents and/or professionals. May 21 at 7 p.m.
- **Effective Parenting:** A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2 to 10. Starts May 21 at 7 p.m. at Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 9600 Bathurst St.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents.

- Grief counsellor **Andrea Warnick** discusses "Supporting Families When Death Touches Our Lives," May 26 at 7:30 p.m., Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave. Call **Beth Feffer**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses "Jewish film stars who influenced American cinema," May 20, 1 p.m. **Stella Walker** and **Cantor David Rosen** perform Yiddish songs, May 22, 2 p.m. **Katherine Barber** discusses "Yiddish and Hebrew are alive and living in English," May 27, 1 p.m. To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. May 20, **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses "Joseph Kennedy: Part 2," 10 a.m.; May 21, North York Concert Orchestra performs at 7:30 p.m. $5; May 22, **Dr. Lilian Schwartz** discusses "Keeping your skin healthy," 1:30 p.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine May 28 (register in advance); Dance with live music, May 25, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise 10 a.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

- **Jordan Klapman** discusses the Jewish history of popular songs, May 15 and May 22, 1 p.m. Pre-registration required, call ext. 4235.
- **Kevin Courrier** discusses Marlon Brando, Wednesdays June 11-July 2, 1 p.m. Pre-registration required, call ext. 4235.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of David Hockmey, Francis Bacon and Henry Moore, May 20, May 27 and June 3, 1 p.m.
- The book club discusses *Americanah* by **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** June 2, 1 p.m. Pre-registration required. Call ext. 4235.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

- Photos by **Rafael Goldchain** are at the gallery until May 19. Work submitted to the Jewish Music Art Week Contest on display from May 22-June 5.
- Yiddishtog: A day of lectures and music celebrating Yiddish, featuring **Yael Chaver, Elly Gotz, Goldie Morgentaler** and a concert by **Vira Lozinsky,** May 25. For tickets, call 416-907-0468 www.ticketwise.ca
- Tickets on sale now for the MNJCC community choir spring concert, May 28 and May 29, 8 p.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition (male voices needed) July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. Call ext. 250.
- The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.
- Harmonia, a choir for youth aged 8-18, meets Sundays 4 p.m. until June 1. Email: harmonia@mnjcc.org.
- Tikkun Leil Shavuot, June 3. All-night Jewish learning festival. Call ext. 154.
- Toronto Jewish Film Society presents the silent film *Breaking Home Ties,* with live accompaniment by **Jordan Klapman** and **Rebekah Wolkstein,** June 1, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Box office opens one hour before screening time.
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

- A workshop for men and women over 50 about dating will be offered June 1, 7 p.m. Register by May 18, ext. 3025.
- Learn about money management in an 8-session class Thursdays, until June 26, 7:30 p.m.
- Supervised bridge meets Thursdays July 10-Aug. 28, 10 a.m.
- Red Cross babysitting course for children 11 and up, will be offered June 6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

To register for programs, call **Jennifer Appleby** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275. ■

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Walk for Toronto

David Levine

When tragedy strikes, communities band together, demonstrating support or rallying for change. The latest cause surging through Israel has been no different. It seems as though the whole country has united in pursuit of a larger goal.

Anat, 27, hitchhiked from Be'er Sheva to lend her voice: "Tragedies like these can bring out the best in ourselves. The values that unite us help us appreciate the things we have. I live in poverty, with no employment opportunities, but my sorrows pale next to the hardships of life under Rob Ford."

From humble beginnings protesting Toronto police's kettling policies, Toronto Mayor Rob Ford's steady regimen of misogyny, racism, homophobia and self-inflicted liver damage fuelled concerns for Toronto's citizens, and the protests grew. Following Ford's most recent* violent, hate-filled, crack-smoking rampage, the numbers surged to over 75,000 – and Walk For Toronto was born.(*"recent" at time of writing, statistically likely to have recurred before publication)

Organizers say they've managed to raise over $1 billion in support of the city of Toronto – though others call that figure "misleading," placing the number closer to $13,000.

"We stand with the people of Toronto," says Ehud, 21, who would only give his first name out of fear of Dixon City Blood reprisal. "In the 21st century, all citizens deserve the freedoms we take for granted."

Toronto's political landscape has been fraught with tension since the city's 1998 annexation of its surrounding neighbourhoods, pitting urbanites against suburbanites in a struggle for the soul of Canada's real capital – prompting accusations of institutionalized discrimination and mismanagement so fierce they have led many politicians to call for a return to pre-98 borders the so-called "Two City Solution."

"Was the original intention to create a second class of Toronto citizen? I don't think anyone would say so," says Nurit Bar-On, chair of Toronto studies at Bar Ilan University: "Still, the political decisions the city has faced raise questions, especially within the younger generation. Everyone's asking: 'Is this the Toronto my parents wanted me to live in?'"

Walk For Toronto organizers have no official stance on the Two City Solution. Some adhere to a vision of a unified Toronto, while others have begun boycotting all goods manufactured in Etobicoke. Nevertheless, they have come together to advocate democratic reform in Toronto, recently expressing their concerns in an open letter:

"Toronto continues to suffer under the reign of Mayor Rob Ford. Those with friends and family in Toronto have been following the story for months – originally to poke fun at our friends and family – but as the jokes have grown stale (looking at you, Kimmel), our tears of laughter have grown bitter. Now we hold our breath each day as we turn on the news, and dare to learn if Toronto has survived to see another cruel dawn.

"We cannot be complacent in the knowledge that Israel is a safe and civilized society – we must act in the name of human rights, and the right of Jews and gentiles around the world to live in a stable democracy where the rule of law is paramount.

"The need is urgent, the time is now. Walk For Toronto and raise awareness of Rob Ford's crimes!"

Most surprising, say organizers, has been the participation of several haredi groups – whose closed communities are normally unwilling to engage in political dissent. "Toronto deserves our attention and support," claims Nussun, a haredi demonstrator. "Toronto is a legitimate city with a legitimate government, and Bathurst Street is full of legitimate donors to our yeshiva. I'd enlist my son in the Canadian army in a heartbeat."

Programming Note: Bring the kids for an afternoon of anger, tension and child-friendly activities – from face painting and cotton candy to a whole midway of Rob Ford-themed games: Pin the Blame on The Media, Hide and Go Smoke, Whack-An-Aide and more! Have your picture taken with an actual Rob Ford supporter! (Constructive dialogue only, please refrain from open mockery). ■

FOOD

Shake it up on Shavuot

RANDY FINGRUT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Traditionally, the Jewish holidays revolve around food. Shavuot is considered by many to be the dairy holiday. There doesn't seem to be any definitive explanation for this specific tradition, but numerous theories have been offered. Perhaps it's because the Torah was given on the Sabbath, and no animals could be slaughtered for the meat to celebrate the event. Or could it be that during Shavuot in Israel, which is considered the land of milk and honey, grain is plentiful and cows are content, offering great quantities of milk.

Why not shake it up this Shavuot? Milkshakes make scrumptious snacks and desserts anytime, so it goes without saying that they make exceptional treats for Shavuot. This dairy indulgence can be a good source of nutrition, as it contains proteins, vitamins, minerals and carbohydrates. Milkshakes are also a very refreshing alternative to the traditional dairy desserts, such as cheesecakes, usually served on Shavuot.

Holiday Cake Shake

- ❑ 1 cup skim or low fat milk
- ❑ 1 cup yellow cake mix
- ❑ 4 cups French Vanilla ice cream, regular or low fat (See note)
- ❑ 2 tsp. pure vanilla
- ❑ sprinkles, for garnish
- ❑ 1 tbsp. light corn syrup, for garnish
- ❑ whipped cream – optional, but extra delicious

To prepare the milkshake glasses, first pour the corn syrup into one saucer and the sprinkles into another saucer. Then dip the rims of the glasses first into the corn syrup and then into the sprinkles, coating the rim of the glass. Combine the milk, cake mix and vanilla in the blender. Add the ice cream and pulse until smooth. Pour mixture into prepared glasses and top with whipped cream and additional sprinkles. Makes four servings.

Banana Split Sundae Shake

- ❑ 1 cup skim or low fat milk
- ❑ 1 ripe banana
- ❑ 1 cup pineapple chunks, well drained
- ❑ 1/2 cup maraschino cherries, well drained
- ❑ 4 cups Neapolitan ice cream (See note)
- ❑ 4 ripe banana slices, for garnish
- ❑ 4 maraschino cherries, for garnish
- ❑ 4 pineapple slices, for garnish
- ❑ chocolate syrup, for garnish

Prepare tall glasses by making a notch in a banana slice and pushing the slice of banana onto the rim of the glass, repeat with the cherry and the pineapple slices, placing them beside the banana.

In a blender, combine milk, banana, pineapple and cherries until smooth.

Add ice cream and pulse until smooth. Pour mixture into the prepared glasses and then drizzle the chocolate syrup over the milkshake.

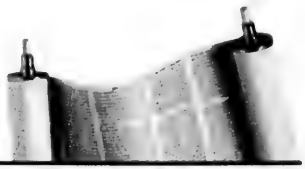
Milkshakes don't always have to be made with rich ice cream and topped with whipped cream to be yummy. When made with healthy ingredients like fresh fruit, including berries, bananas, peaches and pineapple, along with low fat milk and low fat ice cream or yogurt, milkshakes can become nutritious meal replacements.

So go ahead and bring out your blender, find some tall glasses and some wide milkshake straws, then follow these recipes for some rich, creamy, tantalizing dairy delightfulness this Shavuot.

Note: In all of these recipes, you can add either more or less ice cream/yogurt to the mixture depending how thick or thin you like milkshakes. ■

Parshah

Bechukotai | Leviticus 26:3 - 27:34



Rabbi Aaron Katchen argues God's promises in the Torah are national in nature
Rabbi Michal Shekel says we are shown a path forward, but not forced to take it
Rabbi Howard Morrison on the two categories of peace: external and internal

Aaron Katchen

"I will grant peace in the land, and you shall lie down untroubled by anyone; I will give the land respite from vicious beasts, and no sword shall cross your land."

This verse is from a list of blessings ending the Revelation-at-Sinai narrative. The promises therein depend on the Jewish People following God, and they're followed by a list of terrible outcomes if they abandon God's commands.

What's meant by sword? If you say a sword of war, God has already said, "I will grant peace in the land." Rather, it includes even a peaceful sword. The rabbis of the Talmud note the tension between the start of the verse, granting peace, and the end, which promises, "no sword shall cross your land." If there were peace, why would there be swords? They conclude the sword here isn't arising to bring war, but rather peace.

It refers to the demise of King Josiah in the time of Jeremiah the prophet. Josiah sought to return the Kingdom of Judah to the worship of God after the idolatry of his predecessors. He did much to remove idolatry from the Temple – so much so, he thought God's favour had returned and the prophecy would hold true – that even a peaceful sword shouldn't enter the land.

When the Pharaoh Necho sought to pass through the land to wage war on Assyrian idol worshippers, he tried to prevent Necho's "swords of peace" from passing through. Josiah died in battle, for God's favour had not yet returned.

God's promises in the Torah are national in nature. When there's a response to behaviour, it's due to the actions of the collective. With Josiah, he turned his own life around, but never completely inspired the rest of the nation to abandon idolatry. This stands as a reminder: how much of my energy is focused on bettering myself, versus how much do I focus on helping to better the community? ■

Rabbi Aaron Katchen is associate executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Michal Shekel

A recently downloaded Scrabble app provides a feature appreciated by this weak player: a list of two-letter words that have proven quite useful in raising my meagre score. Who knew there were so many two-letter words – so obscure and yet so helpful?

A common two-letter word drew my attention in parshat Bechukotai, which begins with the Hebrew word *im* (if): "If you follow My laws and faithfully observe My commandments, I will grant your rains in their season" (Leviticus 26:3–4). If we do what God instructs us, much good will follow. If not, well, the bad things that will happen are also introduced with the word *im* (Leviticus 26:14). Superficially, Bechukotai is a list of rewards and punishments, a carrot-and-stick approach to our relationship with God.

Or maybe not: Rabbi Yitzchak of Berditchev suggests the reward for the mitzvah performed is the opportunity for additional mitzvot. Hence, the mitzvot leading to "rains in their seasons" allow for further mitzvot with the abundant harvest produced by the rain.

Pardon the pun but that little word *im* is "im"bued with so much meaning. *Im* is our human potential. There is no coercion. We are shown a clearly laid path, but are not forced to take it.

Bechukotai is not so much about reward and punishment as it is about a God who wants us to choose and choose well. As we count the Omer on our journey from Pesach's freedom to Shavuot's responsibility, we need to keep in mind the significance of that small Hebrew word *im*. Freedom is God's gift to us. Responsibility is our gift to God.

More than points on a Scrabble board, or a wealth of possibilities placed before us, the simple word *im* is an indication of God's faith in us. ■

Rabbi Michal Shekel is executive director of the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

Howard Morrison

In a conventional non-leap year. Parshat Bechukotai is read in conjunction with the portion titled Behar. The fact this is a leap year and the two final portions of Vayikra are read separately brings back fond memories.

I celebrated my bar mitzvah in May 1973 at the Western Wall and read Parshat Behar on Shabbat morning. That being a leap year, the beginning of Bechukotai was read later in the day at the Shabbat Minchah service.

I will never forget that time in my life. It was my family's first visit to Israel. My parents, now of blessed memories, had never been to Israel before and used my bar mitzvah as the vehicle for having a family of six enjoy a two-week private tour of the country, culminating with my bar mitzvah at the Wall.

Both Behar and Bechukotai have much to say about commandments that pertain specifically to the Land of Israel.

At the beginning of Bechukotai, we read what appears to be a redundancy: "You shall dwell securely in your land. I will grant peace in the land." At face value, the two phrases seem to convey the same message.

Some classical commentators distinguish the two phrases in the following way: the first means Israel will have external peace with its non-Jewish neighbours. The second means there will be internal peace between diverse segments of the Jewish People.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel, we have witnessed the challenges regarding external peace as well as the challenges of sustaining a meaningful Jewish unity within the various ethnic and ideological groupings of our people.

Recently, we celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut. May the recent festivities inspire us to aspire for the day when Israel will see a lasting peace within the Jewish community and within the entire world around us. ■

Rabbi Howard Morrison is senior clergy at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue in Toronto.

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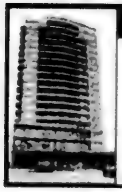

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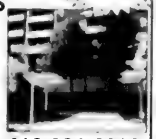

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 15, 2014

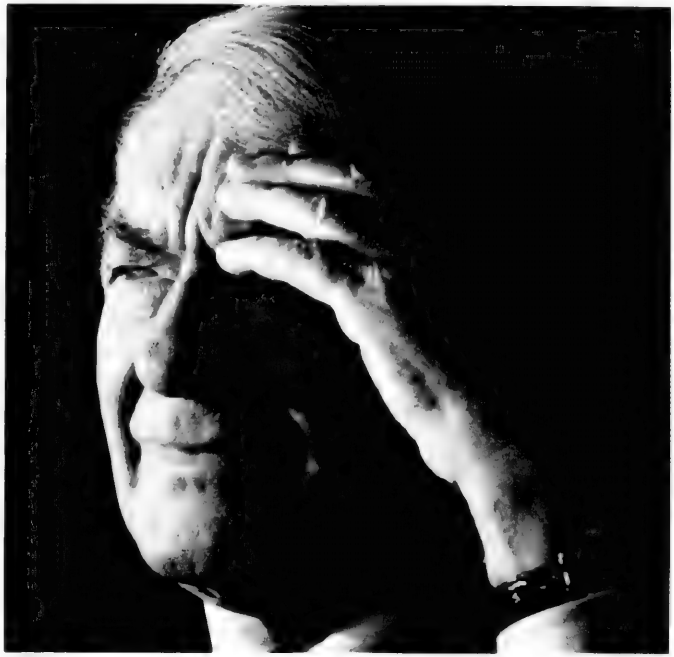
Claude Lanzmann: Returning to familiar territory

ELIAS LEVY
elevy@cjnews.ca

At 88, noted French intellectual, filmmaker, author and journalist Claude Lanzmann, who produced the classic documentary *Shoah*, has a new film that's a tour de force. His latest documentary, *The Last of the Unjust*, rehabilitates the tarnished image of a very controversial witness to the Holocaust, Viennese Rabbi Benjamin Murmelstein, the last head of the Jewish council (Judenrat) in the Theresienstadt concentration camp.

The masterful, poignant film, which runs three hours and 40 minutes, recently opened in Canada.

In an exclusive interview from Paris, Lanzmann talked about the film and the man at its centre.



Claude Lanzmann

Why did you decide to devote a long documentary to such a controversial figure of European Jewry during World War II as Austrian Rabbi Benjamin Murmelstein?

Benjamin Murmelstein was one of the first witnesses of the extermination of European Jews that I interviewed when I began my research for the film *Shoah*. He was the only head of the Jewish Council in the Theresienstadt concentration camp who was not assassinated by the Germans during the war. He was the last chair of the Jewish council created by the Nazis in that ghetto [as the Germans liked to call it] located some 50 kilometres from Prague. His two predecessors in that unrewarding job came to a tragic end: Jacob Edelstein of Prague, arrested in 1943 and then deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau and killed there, and Paul Epstein of Berlin, shot in the back of the neck in Theresienstadt in 1944.

At the end of the war, the Czech authorities and the leaders of the Jewish community – from which he was totally banned – accused Murmelstein of having been a "zealous collaborator in the pay of the Nazis." In 1945, he was finally acquitted of the charges brought against him, after he had served an 18-month jail term. He could never go to Israel, where he was also a persona non grata. He died in 1989.

What did you find most intriguing about Rabbi Murmelstein's very complicated character?

I really wanted to interview him, because I kept on asking myself what exactly a Jewish collaborator was. For me, there was a profound inherent contradiction in the very idea. I knew non-Jewish collaborators in France, in Belgium, in Holland... They totally embraced the Nazis' ideology and anti-Semitism. Everything negative and hostile I had read about Murmelstein, including in the works of a major Holocaust specialist, the late American historian Raul Hilberg, left me very skeptical.

> *One thing is certain: it was not the obligation to remember that led me to make the film Shoah and other documentaries about that black period for humanity. We have been hounded a lot about the disappearance of the last witnesses of the Shoah. They are not all dead yet! And, when the last witnesses of that unspeakable tragedy have disappeared, at least one thing will remain – my films!*

In Vienna, Rabbi Murmelstein was the only Jewish contact with the principal promoter of the Final Solution, Adolf Eichmann.

Yes, as chief rabbi of Vienna, Murmelstein found himself propelled, responsible for the Jewish community, charged with negotiating directly with Adolf Eichmann the emigration of the Jews of Vienna – a task he executed brilliantly because, thanks to his negotiating skills and his unwavering perseverance, 120,000 Jews were able to leave the Reich.

In your opinion, Rabbi Murmelstein was not a traitor, but a hero who used cunning rather than force to fight the Nazis.

Murmelstein's predecessors at the head of the Jewish council in Theresienstadt, Jacob Edelstein and Paul Epstein, agreed to themselves draw up the lists of Jews who were going to be deported. That led to horrible negotiations, haggling and privileges. Those being deported put great pressure on the Jewish council head to have him remove their names from the list he had just established. Murmelstein categorically refused to play the macabre game. He told the Germans, with an unheard of courage, "You want to deport us, go make your lists yourself."

The last witnesses of the Holocaust are disappearing. Was it the obligation to remember that motivated you to dedicate so many years of your life to documentaries about this horrible tragedy?

One thing is certain: it was not the obligation to remember that led me to make the film *Shoah* and other documentaries about that black period for humanity. We have been hounded a lot about the disappearance of the last witnesses of the Shoah. They are not all dead yet! And, when the last witnesses of that unspeakable tragedy have disappeared, at least one thing will remain – my films!

In France, high school teachers complain about the difficulty they have in teaching Arab students from the Maghreb (northwest Africa) about the Shoah. Are you aware of this problem?

It's not true! It's not difficult to teach the Shoah in French high schools. You just have to know how to do it. We have to train the teachers properly. I have been invited several times into schools reputed to be difficult, where the majority of the students are black or Arab students from the Maghreb. I showed the students my film *Shoah*, and then I spoke to them for about 20 minutes, basically to explain the difference between a concentration camp and an extermination camp. After having watched the scene with the hairdresser in the Treblinka camp, whom the Germans forced to cut the hair of women who were going to be gassed, several of the youngsters had tears in their eyes. They left this screening of scenes from *Shoah* with a mad desire to make films, too. There was not the slightest protest against my presence in those schools. On the contrary, I was welcomed very politely. ■

To read the full interview with Claude Lanzmann in the original French, visit cjnews.com.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY CAROLAN HALPERN

The Montreal interns' strike of 1934

Backstory

IRA ROBINSON

Quebec has just lived through an electoral campaign in which one of the key issues was whether Jews, Muslims and others wearing distinguishing religious clothing could serve in the civil service. To gain perspective on this, it's useful to revisit an incident that happened 80 years ago: a strike of French-Canadian interns against the appointment of a Jew as an intern at Notre Dame Hospital (NDH) in Montreal.

The Jew's name was Samuel Rabinovitch and he was a medical graduate of the Université de Montréal (UdeM). When Rabinovitch applied as an intern at NDH, in the hospital's words: "The council accepted all applications received from French-Canadian medical students. One alone remained on the table, that of a Jewish student. As there were still vacancies to be filled, the council recommended that the Jewish student's application be accepted." Several things are evident: Rabinovitch's application was handled separately because he was Jewish; applications from French-Canadians received preferential treatment; and NDH saw nothing wrong with filling an available position that had no French-Canadian candidates with Rabinovitch.

The French-Canadian interns saw things differently and demanded that NDH fire Rabinovitch, asserting that NDH must attain its manpower goals "without the help of foreign elements." They declared that they sought to "safeguard an institution that is at once Catholic and French-Canadian." Their concern was to defend against Jewish competition in an era when competition between Jews and French-Canadians in the professions was often fierce. NDH, at the strong insistence of Dr. Télesphore Parizeau, dean of UdeM's medical faculty (and, incidentally, the grandfather of former Quebec premier Jacques Parizeau), determined that it must stand by its contract with Rabinovitch. The strike was on.

The strikers asked interns at other Catholic hospitals to join them, and 75 interns at NDH and other hospitals walked out. The strikers were supported by French-Canadian physicians, the Société St-Jean Baptiste, and many members of the public, one of whom sent a letter to NDH stating that "the honour of the French-Canadians demands the exclusion of this stranger [whom] high finance sustains."

Amid harassment and threats of violence against Rabinovitch plus predictions of a boycott against the entire Jewish community, it became clear that Rabinovitch would have to resign if only, in the words of one Montreal Jewish community leader, "to extricate the hospital board from its difficulties in view of the fair treatment he had received from the hospital." His resignation was orchestrated to first be refused and only then accepted "so as to determine definitively that he was not dismissed as asked by the [interns'] ultimatum."

What was the strike's impact? Rabinovitch asserted that he had been "inundated" with letters, telegrams, and telephone calls supporting him and stated: "The majority of these communications came from French-Canadians who wished to dissociate themselves from the spirit of the action taken by doctors of their own race." A French-Canadian journalist said most French-Canadians disapproved of the strikers' actions that endangered patients.

There were no editorial opinions outside the openly anti-Semitic press that actually supported the strike. There were, on the contrary, strong French-Canadian editorial opinions against the principle of the strike.

While the interns gained their short-term goals – Rabinovitch's resignation and their own immunity – they lost their larger strategic goal of eliminating Jews from NDH's staff in principle, and they also failed to eliminate Jewish students at UdeM.

Valerie Stoker, writing on the controversy between French-Canadians and Chassidim over the public character of the neighbourhood of Outremont, captures the strikers' feelings as well. French-Canadians objecting to the Outremont eruv, Stoker asserts: "view Outremont's public image in the same terms as its physical territory... whose 'use'... had to be carefully monitored and apportioned... in the interests of protecting a dominant cultural community that is uniquely entitled to mark Outremont's landscape and shape its public image."

Sensitivities between French-Canadians and Jews constitute a continuing feature of the complex development of Montreal in the past 80 years. Now, as then, people in Quebec are speaking in multiple, oppositional voices as they strive to shape their future. ■

Ira Robinson is professor of Judaic studies and interim director of the Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies at Concordia University.

OBITUARIES AND RELATED NOTICES

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Rubinstein, Freda	April 18/14	2 Neptune Dr
Dickstein, Szolem	April 18/14	Private
Mervin, Philip	April 18/14	535 Sheppard Ave.W
Stemerman, Naomi	April 22/14	3560 Bathurst St
Aron, Renee	April 20/14	333 Clark Ave. W
Malobrodskaia, Stella	April 23/14	Private
Lakrits, Mykhailo	April 24/14	236 Westhampton Dr
Veinberg, Tzipora	April 24/14	Private
Moldofsky, Jack	April 26/14	140 Dalemount Ave
Sabbagh, Haim	April 26/14	
Swartz, Samuel Bernard	April 26/14	794 Kingfisher Cres
Yosef, Zinaida	April 27/14	Private
Lazarovich, Mina	April 25/14	
Kalchman, Sam	April 27/14	546 Steeles Ave. W
Stein, Harry	April 28/14	2 Neptune Dr
Rose, Morton	April 28/14	3560 Bathurst St
Tepperman, Gertrude	April 29/14	Private
Yosef, Zinaida	April 27/14	Private
Offstein, Sheila Estelle	April 30/14	Private
Libman, Shirley Allene	May 1/14	
Cahlon, Shaul	May 2/14	149 Arnold Ave

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Jack Finkelstein	Apr 29/14	133 Torresdale Ave.
Terry Goldstein	May 1/14	541 Finch Ave., West
Sarah Hermine Schaller	Apr 30/14	15 Nortown Lane
Chaim Berrel Garshowitz	May 2/14	429 Walmer Road

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late

Rose Shore ז"ל

will take place

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Lambton Cemetery
1305 Royal York Road
(Chmielniker Section)

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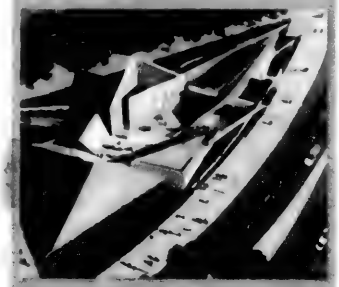
Inside



Design chosen

Daniel Libeskind's blueprint wins contest for National Holocaust Monument in Ottawa. **PAGE 23**

New rabbi in Thornhill

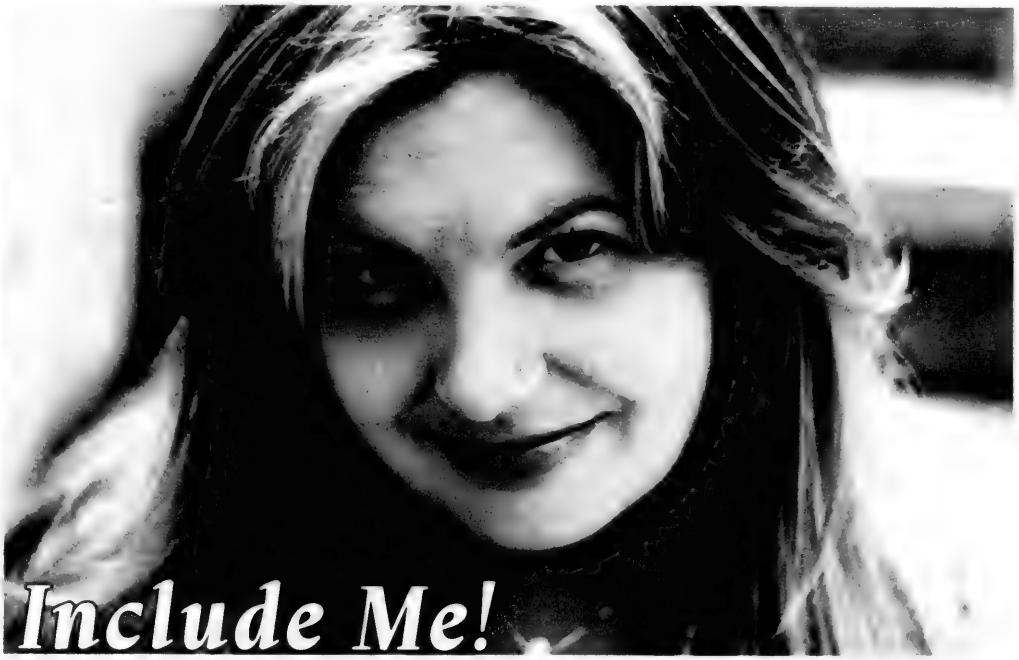
Shaar Shalom also opens the door to egalitarianism.

PAGE 14

Candlelighting

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:26 p.m.	9:39 p.m.
Montreal	8:09 p.m.	9:23 p.m.
Toronto	8:26 p.m.	9:38 p.m.
Winnipeg	9:00 p.m.	10:24 p.m.
Calgary	9:13 p.m.	10:40 p.m.
Vancouver	8:41 p.m.	10:03 p.m.



Include Me!

Talia Soberano, 31, is a preschool teacher at the Zareinu Educational Centre in Toronto. At an early age, she was diagnosed with dyslexia, memory retention issues, reading and writing comprehension challenges, mild OCD and ADHD. She experienced first hand how young people with special needs were treated as outsiders, especially in education. In a four-part series, The Inclusion Project, starting this week, *The CJN* will look at the importance of making everyone feel welcome in the Jewish community. **SEE STORIES ON PAGES 8 & 9 AND COMMENT ON PAGE 6**

Mount Sinai unveils merger

Hospital plans to amalgamate with Riverdale's Bridgepoint Active Healthcare.

PAGE 22

Alleged bomber loses appeal

Supreme Court is last chance after court rules Hassan Diab can be sent to France for trial in 1980 Paris shul blast. **PAGE 26**

David Abitbol gets Jewish and sexy

Q & A: Ex-Montrealer is excited about promoting Jewish sexuality with his Jewrotica blog. **PAGE 46**

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Guatemala dreaming, and Sterling puts foot in mouth again

Lev Tahor stuck in Canada, for now

The lawyer for Lev Tahor wants Quebec to lift a blanket apprehension order issued last year for all of the controversial haredi sect's 127 children. Guidy Mamann said the group only discovered it existed a few weeks ago, when some of the kids applied for passports and were denied the documents because of it. Officials in Chatham, Ont., where the group fled last fall, hadn't executed the edict. Mamann said the group is looking for a new place to live. Some members have already relocated to Guatemala. Meanwhile, Quebec's human rights commission said last week it will study whether child welfare and other officials there have the tools to deal with a case like Lev Tahor's in the future.

Magic takes high road

Earvin "Magic" Johnson said banned Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling's derogatory comments about African-American charity work won't harm black-Jewish relations. "One thing great about the African-American and Jewish communities is that they have worked well together over the years, and we will continue to work with the Jewish community," the basketball legend told the gossip site *TMZ*. In his first interview since the leaking of a taped conversation with a girlfriend in which he slanders blacks, Sterling told *CNN*'s Anderson Cooper that he should get credit for his charitable work. "Jews, when they get successful, they will help their people," Sterling said. "And some of the African Americans – maybe I'll get in trouble again – they don't want to help anybody." The comments came after he apologized for his original remarks.

Magic Johnson stayed classy as Donald Sterling wallowed in the mud

New York Times editor ousted

Executive editor Jill Abramson, the first woman to hold the top editorial position at the *New York Times*, was abruptly fired May 14. The *Times* didn't give reasons for her departure. She was replaced by Dean Baquet, the managing editor, the first African-American to hold the post in the paper's history. Abramson, 60, joined the *Times* in 1997 from the *Wall Street Journal*.

Inside today's edition

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Gematria

6

The number of years former Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert received in his sentence for accepting bribes in the real estate scam known as the "Holyland affair."

18

The new minimum age to be approved for a sex change in Israel. The previous age, 21, was lowered after protests by the transgendered community.

Quotable

[Magic Johnson] made love to every girl in every city in America, and he had AIDS, and when he had those AIDS, I went to my synagogue and I prayed for him. I hope he could live and be well

— Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling speaking to *CNN*'s Anderson Cooper.

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Letters to the Editor

Herb Gray deserved better

Michael Taube's perspective is mean, completely without merit, and suggests to me that he never met Herb Gray: a state funeral is the last thing on Earth that Herb Gray would have wanted, and anyone who knew him would certainly have known that ("Why Herb Gray didn't have a state funeral," *The CJN*, May 15).

I strongly suggest that Taube learns some basics with respect to the tone and tenor of written punditry. One is liable to get the impression that he is a partisan Conservative or a former speech writer for Prime Minister Stephen Harper rather than an informed political commentator who is to be taken seriously for his wit, wisdom, and insight.

Rabbi Arie Chark
Ottawa

Harper deserves support

In her column ("The great switch," *The CJN*, May 1), Danielle Kubes struggles to accept the reasons why Canada's Jewish community has embraced the Harper government in droves. Rather than celebrate Prime Minister Stephen Harper for naming Canada's first-ever Jewish Finance Minister, Joe Oliver, Kubes instead dismisses Canada's Jews as "neurotic."

According to Kubes, Harper has robbed the Liberal party of its God-given right to Jewish votes. Apparently he did this through "loud rhetoric" instead of "real action."

Really? In 2006, Canada was the first country to suspend aid to the Palestinian Authority after the terrorist group Hamas was elected. Was that just rhetoric?

In 2009, Canada was one of only 15 countries that boycotted the second UN Durban anti-racism conference, a cesspool of anti-Semitism. Was that just rhetoric?

Domestically, the Harper government cut off government funding to anti-Semitic organizations such as Palestine House – a move opposed by the Liberals.

The Liberals and the Conservatives are not the same when it comes to Israel. Liberal governments used to lend support to anti-Israel UN resolutions. Harper has not allowed that to happen even once. He has never accused Israel of committing war crimes, though we remember the Liberals who did.

In 2011, Canadian Jews rewarded Harper for his steadfast friendship and his principled leadership by supporting him in record numbers. It isn't neurotic to support your friends. It's neurotic not to.

Frederic Waks
Toronto

Keeping Jews in the fold

I applaud *The CJN* for initiating a discussion on intermarriage ("The challenge of intermarriage," *The CJN*, May 8).

I share Rabbi Daniel Korobkin's concern for the future of the Jewish People. What frightens me is why communities and rabbis around the world don't recognize this as a crisis and passively accept this as "a new reality." Let's get at the root cause and figure out what is so appealing about marrying out of the faith. Why is it important to date Jewish? What strategies can we implement to ensure that the fifth son makes an appearance at the seder table in years to come?

Debbie Bauer
Toronto

Australian hero remembered

I was disappointed to note in the article "Gallipoli a solemn reminder of war," (*The CJN*, May 8) that no mention was made of General Sir John Monash. He was an Australian Jew who was born in Melbourne, Australia in June 1865, and was an engineer by profession and an artillery officer in the Australian army.

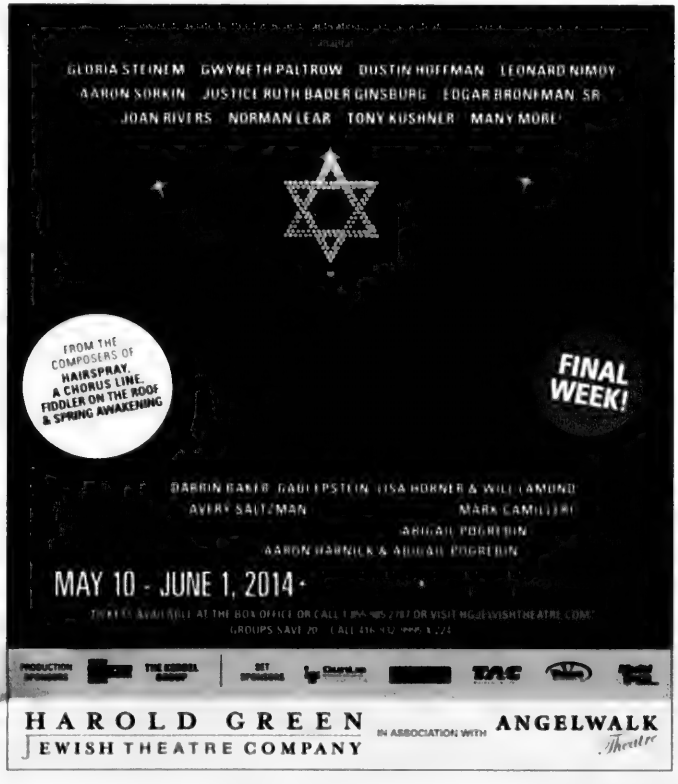
In 1914, he was in command of the Australian 4th Brigade in Egypt and experienced the Gallipoli fiasco.

He was revered by his troops because of the care he took in his tactical planning and the troops' welfare.

He was promoted to major general when Australian forces were moved to the Western Front in 1916, where he took command of the 3rd Division. In May 1918, after outstanding leadership, he was appointed corps commander of Australian forces in Europe. He was instrumental in many civic achievements after the war and was much beloved by Australians. His funeral was attended by 250,000 Australians and Monash University in Melbourne is named after him. ■

Mark Scharf
Oro-Medonte, Ont.

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*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Strive to be a mensch

Pirkei Avot teaches that even when surrounded by cruelty, we should remember we're all children of God and all who encounter us should feel touched by His greatness

RABBI YAEL SPLANSKY
HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE, TORONTO

RABBI MARK FISHMAN
CONGREGATION BETH TIKVAH, MONTREAL

Rabbi Splansky: "*B'Makom she'ain anashim, hishtadeil lih'yot ish.*" "In a place where there are no human beings, strive to be human." (Pirkei Avot 2:5)
This text is a punch in the gut. I love it for what it demands and for what it doesn't demand. It's both realistic and unrelenting. Hillel looks humanity in the eye and does not pretend anything away. Human beings can be beastly. However, Hillel does not become a cynic. He doesn't say, "be human," he says "strive to be human." He recognizes that when surrounded by cruelty or callousness, it takes enormous strength to show even a hint of humanity. The only thing riskier than being human, is not being human.
A softer translation may be: "In a place where no one is acting like a mensch, be a mensch." For example, when in a social setting and the conversation turns to unkind words about someone, be big enough to gently but clearly signal disapproval and shift the conversation. Hillel warns against how dangerous circumstances can become when indifference goes unchecked. Schools now train our kids to defend against bullies. We need similar training for adults.

Rabbi Fishman: Hillel's call to human responsibility is both loud and clear. What's fascinating is there is a corollary to greatness that we find from another perspective.
"Akavia ben Mahalalel says: Consider three things and you will not come into the grip of sin: Know from where you came, where you are going, and before Whom you will give justification and a reckoning."
This Mishnah reminds us of a truth we sometimes forget: we're all children of the King. We all come from an honourable chain that casts us backward to greatness, a chain that connects us to a voice that calls upon us to act in such a manner that all who encounter us will feel touched by greatness.
This teaching is also future-orientated – know where you are going. How many of us forget to chart a course and have a goal in mind? By setting the expectations of our lives high, we will not fall into the sin of leading an unfulfilled life.

Rabbi Splansky: Your closing thought – "the sin of leading an unfulfilled life" – pointed me to the Mishnah's urging: "And greet everyone with a cheerful countenance." (Pirkei Avot 1:15) At first glance, it seems like a slogan for a greeting card in the "just because" section. But Shammai was no Hallmark card writer. Shammai is known for taking a hard line, for being impatient, for demanding respect for God and Torah. What does that stance have to do with a cheerful countenance?
The Hebrew phrase is "*panim yafot*," literally "a lovely face." It echoes the Torah's description of how God met Moses on the mountain – "*panim el panim*," "Face to face." Perhaps Shammai is teaching us that when we show our best face, we radiate something of the Divine out into the world.
I witness this every day in the face of the crossing guard in my neighbourhood. He's been standing on that corner for years – rain or shine, or 10 below, dressed in fluorescent yellow, holding a stop sign, and flashing the broadest smile you can imagine. The impact of how he greets every passerby with his "lovely face" is apparent. Everyone smiles, waves, and greets him with kind words in return.
To greet another, even a stranger, especially a stranger, is an act of faith, an expression of devotion to God. Like any other mitzvah, we must be deliberate and disciplined in projecting joy.

Rabbi Fishman: You write about permission to be gracious to one another. It's a powerful reality. I've found that there's so much we're unable to achieve because permission has not been granted. In our interactions with each other, so often there is a hesitancy to break the ice and "go first." And yet once "permission" has been granted, in whatever form it may take, people are only too happy to communicate and interact. Shammai's directive to greet others with a smile is just the tip of the iceberg: Behind a silent observer can sometimes be someone with much to say, but who isn't sure how to begin. ■

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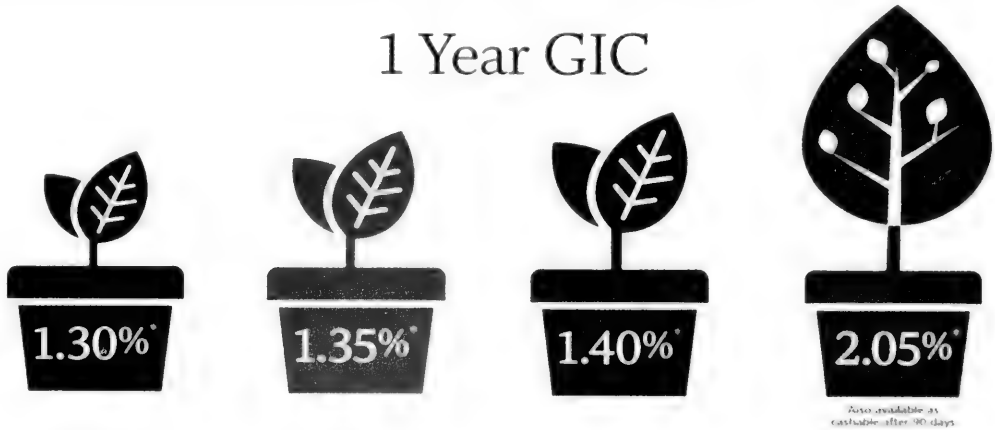

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From the archives

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES PHOTO

Members of Toronto Poalei Zion pose at the foot of Queen Victoria's statue, Queen's Park, Toronto, some time between 1915 and 1918.

SeeJN | Heschel Mitzvah Day

Toronto Heschel School students created gifts and cards for Israeli soldiers as part of the school's annual Mitzvah Day. Other mitzvot included making kinder kits – backpacks filled with school supplies – for children in need and providing lunches and warm socks for the homeless.

From Yoni's Desk

All must be included in our community

Over the next month, *The Canadian Jewish News* will be placing a spotlight on inclusion – the concept that people with disabilities should be accommodated without limitations – in a four-part series called "The Inclusion Project." This venture coincides with a community forum on inclusion in Toronto on May 26, and a conference entitled Current Trends in Pediatric Neuro-Developmental Disabilities on May 26 and 27 (for more information about those two events, please see page 8).

In the field of education, the inclusion theory advocates that students of all levels and abilities be encouraged to study together, and that those young people who may have more difficulty in school because of a disability not be marginalized. Inclusion argues that the disabled have been pitied for far too long, and that's not what they want.

Just ask Talia Soberano, 31, a preschool teacher at the Zareinu Educational Centre in Toronto, who explains why inclusion is so crucial in this week's cover story. Diagnosed with dyslexia, memory retention issues, reading and writing comprehension challenges, mild OCD and ADHD at an early age, Talia experienced first hand how young people with special needs were once treated as outsiders, especially in education.

"In elementary and middle school," she writes, "I remember leaving my class to receive help from remedial sources and feeling like everyone saw me as being different."

Things only got more difficult in high school, where Talia experienced a dreadful trauma: "I was having trouble in most of my courses," as she tells it, "and was definitely not on the road to success. One afternoon, I was called into my guidance counsellor's office and told to sit down.

"She pulled out my high school transcript, looked at me through her thick glasses and said I should 'drop out of school and find a job at McDonald's.' She said I had no academic future and that I should give up.

"I left her office in tears. I was so ashamed that I did not tell my parents for days. Her words haunted me. I dropped out of school shortly after, feeling worthless and defeated. I went into a state of depression and stayed in bed for days at a time."

That trauma might well have derailed Talia's life. Instead, it only made her more determined to succeed in spite of the roadblocks facing her. From her diagnoses, she writes, "I didn't just learn about my weaknesses – I also learned about my strengths." Among those strengths, as it turned out, was working with special-needs children, a vocation she found herself passionately called to.

In The Inclusion Project, reporter Sheri Shefa writes about emerging treatments for those with special needs, organizations that are leading the inclusion movement and even financial planning for families of children with disabilities.

And in the spirit of inclusion, we asked Talia and three other people living with disabilities to write about their experiences, in their own words. By telling these stories, their hope, and ours, is that they won't be repeated.

As Talia puts it: "I fell through the cracks of the educational system. I wanted to make sure that didn't happen to others." ■ — YONI

PERSONAL REFLECTION

In his death, an escape from slavery

Dan Horowitz

In what could only be described as the extreme "good news, bad news" scenario, April 24 was my birthday. It's also the day my beloved father died.

While most of my friends and acquaintances were sending me "Happy birthday" messages, my family and I were making funeral arrangements.

And, while many of those same individuals expressed their condolences, I, not normally considered a "glass-half-full" kind of guy, have in fact, taken solace and comfort in that fact.

You see, my father, Carl Leonard Horowitz, who was 86 when he died, had been given a death sentence some 13 years earlier when he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Dad knew how much all of us wanted him to be released from the "life" that this once nimble and graceful athlete found himself "living," a life lived in the confines of a wheelchair, behind a locked door, unable to speak to or remember the people who cherished this wonderful man for decades.

This was not a "life" that anyone who had a say would ever choose.

And although an estimated 500,000 Canadians have Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia, and that in just five years, this number could rise by 50 per cent, this was not something that was supposed to happen to my family.

Even after he was diagnosed, my dad refused to believe that he would – or could – ever forget the names of his kids, grandkids or wife. After all, he had finally retired not long before the disease hit, and it was time to enjoy the spoils he had earned after all those years of hard work as a pharmacist in Mississauga, Ont., in the eponymously named Carl's Pharmacy.

Carl Leonard Horowitz at his pharmacy, around 1991.

"I don't think I'm Alzheimerish, although I may have to think about it in the very near future," he wrote in a letter to his family years ago. "Then again, if I fight it and think positively, maybe I could conquer this Alzheimer fellow. It would be a pleasure to laugh at him and say goodbye."

Unfortunately, despite those brave and optimistic words, nobody's laughing at Dr. Alois Alzheimer, the man who, in a meeting in 1907 in Germany, presented the monumental findings for which he will, ironically, be remembered.

The case was of a 51-year-old woman whose symptoms included depression, hallucinations, dementia and, upon post-mortem examination, a paucity of cells in her cerebral cortex and clumps of filaments between the nerve cells.

Still, it took my father some 13 years since his diagnosis, with his family looking on, to finally give in to the ravages of this unrelenting, cruel and brutal disease, and I believe he held out that long for one simple reason: he wanted to wait until Passover had ended before, well, passing over.

Dad loved leading seders with our family crowded around the dining room table. Hell, he loved any excuse to bring his family together. And up until he got sick, he would often lead those seders in his fluent Hebrew. He loved going around the table and asking us what Passover meant to us, and often, we'd surprise him by not answering, "It's around the same time the Leafs are eliminated from the playoffs, Dad!"

You don't even want to know about our take on the Four Questions.

Even when he knew that Alzheimer's had started to change him, he joked to me that "if this thing ever gets a hold of me, I won't be able to hide the afikoman anymore, because I'll forget where I hid it."

I believe his death mirrors the Passover story, in particular our escape from slavery into the light of freedom – our Exodus. Today, I believe my dad is at peace, his memories of his beloved family fully intact once again as they were before this devastating disease took them from him. I believe, too, that he is now free, his once limber and athletic body no longer a prisoner of his wheelchair or the locked doors of the facility in which he spent his last eight years.

Every year on April 24, I will not only celebrate my birthday with my wife and my two beautiful children, but, more importantly, I will recall my dad's incredible legacy, as well as his own personal exodus. After my family sings the requisite *Happy Birthday* to me, I will sing the same silly songs that my dad sang to me five decades ago to my son Eli and daughter Shira, so that they'll know the man that Zaidy Carl really was, the man they never got to meet.

I will continue to show them photos and tell them my favourite memories of the man who was once my best friend, a man of infinite jest, infinite wisdom, infinite intellect and, of course, infinite and unconditional love.

And, next year I will hide the afikoman, albeit without Dad's usual flair and humour, and I will pray that, unlike my dad, I will never forget where I put it. ■

Dan Horowitz is director of communications and public relations with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

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'I didn't just learn about my weaknesses, I also learned about my strengths'

The Inclusion Project: First of four part series

TALIA SOBERANO
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

In Grade 1, I was diagnosed with learning disabilities. My teacher asked me to read a page from a book. She quickly noticed that I had memorized the page and was simply repeating it, not reading. Subsequent testing ensued to identify the problem.

I have very specific memories of being tested in small rooms throughout my childhood to identify various types of challenges. The exercises always left me feeling as if I had to perform to prove my worth. In addition, the experiences were always stressful and caused me anxiety, which sometimes interfered with the outcomes of the actual tests.

From a very young age, I recognized I was different from most of my friends. I was eventually diagnosed with dyslexia, memory retention issues, reading and writing comprehension challenges, mild obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). From these diagnoses, however, I didn't just learn about my weaknesses – I also learned about my strengths. I quickly learned I was a "people person" with good social skills, a problem solver who could function well in high-pressure situations, a highly organized person and someone who could meet the goals I set out for myself. These realizations enabled me to see things from a different perspective.

In elementary and middle school, I remember leaving my class to receive help from remedial sources and feeling that everyone saw me as being different.

It was not until Grade 13 that things began to change. I was having trouble in most of my courses that semester and was definitely not on the road to success. One afternoon, I was called into my guidance counsellor's office and told to sit down.

She pulled out my high school transcript, looked at me through her thick glasses and said I should "drop out of school and find a job at McDonald's." She said I had no academic future and I should give up. I left her office in tears. I was so ashamed that I did not tell my parents for days. Her words haunted me, and I dropped out soon after, feeling worthless and defeated.

I went into a state of depression and stayed in bed for days at a time. My parents were at a loss and didn't want to push me too hard.

I recall that my stepmother, Lila, came into my room one day when I was crying. She forced me to stop and really think about what I wanted to do with my life. I realized that working with children was the right career path for me.

I fell through the cracks of the educational system. I wanted to make sure that didn't happen to others.

I finished my two-year college program in a year and a half. I then applied to go on a two-week program to teach in some of the most basic schools in rural Jamaica. There were hundreds of applicants for this program, and I was selected as one of 20 students to attend. On the first day, I walked into a school that was no more than one room divided by three rolling chalk boards. There were 100 little students inside.

I met a five-year-old boy named Raymond and noticed that he was not learning and could not retain information. When I approached his teacher, I was told he would never learn and I should help the children who could. In that instant, I knew my goal there would be to work with Raymond and show his teacher that, with the proper support, he, like any other student, could learn.

I finished my early childhood education program that year and began studying at Concordia University in Montreal, pursuing a bachelor of arts in child studies. The program focused on education, with an emphasis on special needs and physiology. I finished this three-year program in 2-1/2 years, again surpassing my own goal. After Concordia, I was awarded my bachelor of education and my master's in teaching from Griffith University in Australia.

I consider myself lucky. I had a strong support system, with people who believed in me – and I had determination. If I were to give others in my situation any advice, it would be to make sure to always work hard for what you want, as most things worth attaining in life don't come easily.

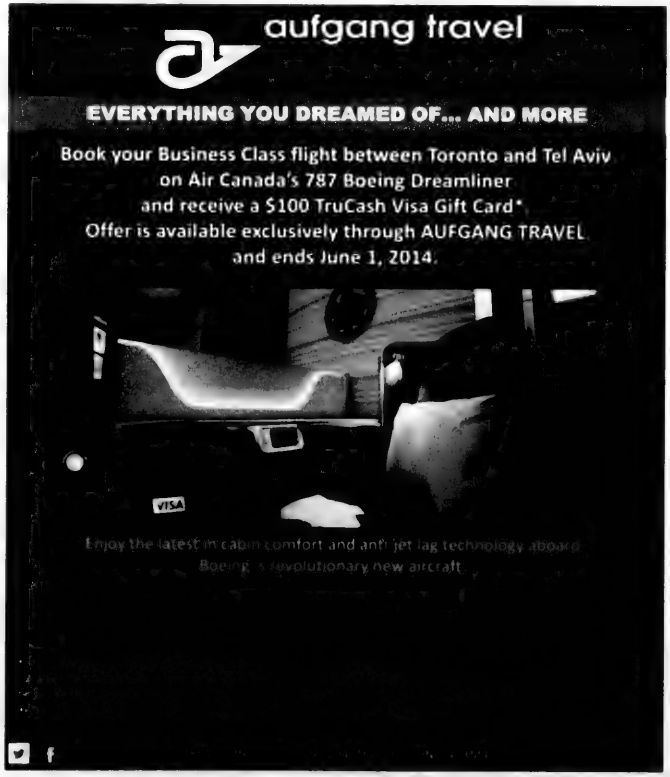
I would encourage parents with children who have special needs to support their kids and let them know how proud they are of them and their accomplishments, however small. With appropriate support and encouragement, and the right tools, there are no limits to what children can learn and do.

I am proof of that. ■

Talia Soberano is a 31-year-old preschool teacher working at the Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto. Each day, she helps children with physical and developmental disabilities reach their full potential.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto hosts a community forum on inclusion, Monday May 26 at 7:30 p.m. at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan.

Zareinu presents a conference entitled Current Trends in Paediatric Neuro-Developmental Disabilities, May 26 and 27. For more information, go to zareinu.org.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'Never stop dreaming,' says dad of child with special needs

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

When Kalman Samuels and his wife, Malki, founded Shalva, an Israeli organization that helps children with physical and developmental disabilities, 24 years ago, all they knew about caring for children with special needs was what they had learned from caring for their own son, Yossi.

Yossi was 11 months old when he became deaf, blind and hyperactive following a routine vaccination in 1977.

Little did they know that this would set them on a course to create a program in Israel that has benefited thousands of children and their families.

Samuels, a Vancouver native and a father of seven, will share his story next week at a two-day conference on Current Trends in Paediatric Neuro-Developmental Disabilities, organized by Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto, Shalva and Hadassah Medical Centre in Jerusalem, to be held May 26 at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre in Vaughan.

His lecture, titled "Empowerment of the child with chronic disability: my personal experience," will focus on his journey caring for his son, and how he and his wife developed a centre that is considered a leader in the field of disability awareness and intervention in the Middle East.

Speaking to *The CJN* from his home in Jerusalem, Samuels explained that his ordeal began the day his wife took Yossi for a routine vaccination.

"There was a problem with this batch, because a number of children were injured. As soon as he got the vaccine, he had a terrible jerking motion and he became lethargic, and when I came home from my studies that night, Malki was hysterical."

Upon confirmation that the vaccine was to blame and that Yossi would not recover from his injury, they decided to go to New York, where they enrolled him in a world-renowned school for the blind called the Lighthouse.

"Malki struggled with Yossi, who came home every day at 1 p.m. as a three-year-old, and her day was over. Literally, everything focused around that child. We were there for almost five years. There was some progress, but not a lot... We decided that in spite of it all, we didn't have much of a life over there," he said, and they decided to move back to Israel.

He said many well-intentioned people suggested that they institutionalize Yossi.

"Malki used to cry and say, 'God, I didn't take Yossi anywhere except from you, and I'm not giving him away. If you ever decide to help Yossi, I will be dedicating my life to other mothers with their problems with their children.'"

Samuels said when they returned to Israel, they enrolled Yossi in a school for the deaf in Jerusalem.

When Yossi was eight years old, a deaf special education teacher named Shoshanna Weinstock taught him to spell using symbols, with a technique reminiscent of the one Annie Sullivan used to teach Helen Keller to communicate.

"It was an amazing moment when she went ballistic, and she came in screaming in her deaf intonation, 'He's got it! He's got it!' And his life was forever changed," Samuels said.

"Malki turned to me and said, 'It's payback time. I made a promise and I know exactly what I want to do to help people.'"

With a $50,000 donation made by an old friend in Vancouver, the Samuels opened Shalva in 1990. Shalva, which means peace of mind in Hebrew, began as an after-school program with 10 kids.

"Little could we have dreamed that this little mom and pop would continue to grow in this really amazing way."

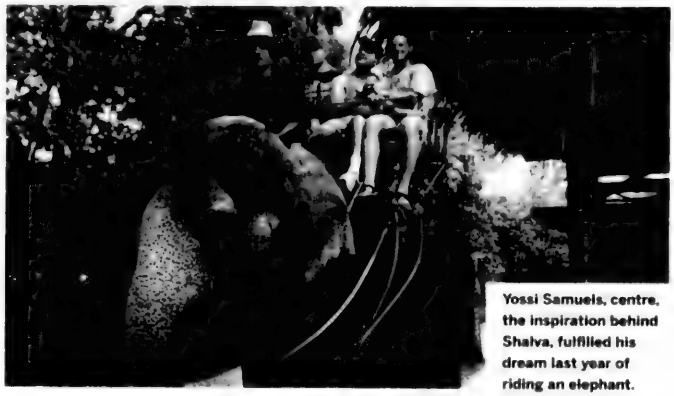
Shalva, funded by the Israeli government and private donations, currently operates out of an 18,000-square-foot building and provides services to more than 500 people with special needs from infancy to adulthood through programs and round-the-clock therapy, run by professionals and volunteers. Samuels said about seven years ago, the Israeli government granted them land upon which to build a national Shalva centre.

"We are in the midst of a $50-million project, which will be 200,000 square feet, 11 floors, with amazing facilities... It'll be a centre for inclusion in which typical and non-typical kids will be studying together and playing together."

Samuels said that the Shalva programs benefit both the children with special needs and the parents who struggle to cope with giving their children the proper care.

He said the biggest challenge in raising children with special needs is training yourself to look at your child's accomplishments through the eyes of the child.

"It is not your journey as a parent, it is your child's journey. You have to stop looking at this child with your measuring stick. Because with your measuring stick, he doesn't measure up too well," Samuels said.



Yossi Samuels, centre, the inspiration behind Shalva, fulfilled his dream last year of riding an elephant.

"My sister was a well-known psychologist in Canada, and she said, 'He's not the problem, you are. You're still dreaming he's going to be a rabbi. You're still dreaming you're going to play ball with him. He's not going to be a rabbi and he's not going to play ball. But that doesn't change the fact that his life can be full of accomplishments... So wake up. Smell the coffee.' I cried like a baby. And it took me years and years of awareness to try to do that."

In spite of his disabilities, Yossi, 37, continues to realize his dreams, Samuels said.

Yossi dreamed of meeting former U.S. president George W. Bush and former British prime minister Gordon Brown, and he met them both, in 2007 and 2012, respectively.

Yossi, who rides horses, dreamed of riding an elephant, and last year, he travelled to Thailand to realize that dream.

Samuels said when he saw a photo of his son on an elephant, he broke down in tears.

"The message for me is to never stop dreaming and not to give up on realizing your dreams. Yossi doesn't." ■

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Rise of Europe's far right is worrisome

Paul Michaels

In the midst of all that's been said and written over the past few weeks about Russia's annexation of Crimea and threat to the rest of Ukraine, it's ironic to see both Russian and Ukrainian leadership boast about protecting Jews while blaming each other for endangering them with anti-Semitism.

Jews, who have historically suffered terrible persecution in both countries, have now become, in effect, a litmus test of each side's virtues.

Last week, *The CJN*'s Sheri Shefa reported Ukrainian-Jewish community leader Joseph Zissels' comments to the paper during a visit to Toronto. Zissels maintained that, contrary to Russian propaganda and despite some isolated incidents, Jews are not being victimized by anti-Semitism in Ukraine and that the country has reformed – a process that started decades before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Zissels even claimed that the far-right Svoboda party, (now part of the Parliament) has, in recent years "completely moved away from anti-Semitic propaganda," although he did admit that individual members of that party have posted anti-Semitic comments on their personal blogs.

On CBC Radio's *The Current* (May 8) host Anna-Maria Tremonti interviewed Robert Singer, CEO of the World Jewish Congress, about events in Ukraine and elsewhere in Europe. Referring to the recent bloodshed in Odessa, she opened with the following: "Europe's upheaval is terrifying on many levels, but one community in particular knows how much is at stake in instability: Jewish people worry that the mayhem might nourish old hatreds. Already, some political parties [across Europe] with anti-Semitic platforms can count on new support."

While Singer backed up Zissels' comments about Ukraine and the Svoboda party, he said the WJC is keeping close watch on events there that affect the 300,000-strong Jewish community. These events, including some isolated anti-Jewish "provocations," which the police are investigating, "keep everyone worried." Yet, "there is no alarm, at least not now." He also mentioned that there's been no discernible increase in anti-Semitism in Russia.

Tremonti questioned Singer about a 2013 WJC publication titled *Neo-Nazi: The Rise of neo-Nazism in the Party Political System.*

"What are you looking at?" she asked.

"We're extremely worried that, almost 70 years after the end of the Second World War, neo-Nazi and right-wing parties are coming to power in many places in Europe, the very place where the Holocaust of the Jewish People happened," Singer replied.

He pointed specifically to Hungary, Greece, France and even Germany.

In Hungary's election last month, he noted, the far-right, anti-Semitic Jobbik party rose in the past three years from 17 to 21 per cent, whereas, only 10 years, ago it had just two per cent of the vote. "This means that over 1 million voters in Hungary voted for Jobbik… Having this situation in the centre of Europe only 70 years after the Holocaust worries us tremendously."

Tremonti: "Essentially, what are you witnessing here – that the neo-Nazi gangs are finding legitimacy in political parties?"

Singer: "That's correct." He added that the same is happening in Greece with the rise of the Golden Dawn party, and even in Germany with the NPD Party.

What also concerns Singer is that, with European elections taking place later this month, several members of these extreme right-wing parties could get seats in the European Parliament. In fact, Singer claims, "15 to 25 per cent of the European Parliament will come from right-wing parties in Europe."

The reasons for the growth of the radical right vary from country to country, Singer said, but mainly boil down to two main factors: a reaction to the economic recession, unemployment and tough austerity measures, especially in Greece; and anti-immigrant sentiments, especially in France.

Last month *Reuters* issued a special report about the rise of the European far-right, fuelled in particular by Jobbik's "regional outreach," which has spread to Poland, Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria, and even to Britain, forging ties with Nick Griffin's British National Party.

Little wonder Singer is worried. ■

Israel and the 'free' press

Leo Adler

As in most democracies, Israel's print media are stuck between a rock and a hard place.

In order to survive, they must not only compete against each other, but they are also compelled to fight, on the one hand, against the growing proliferation of "free" newspapers and, on the other hand, against the increasing strength of broadcast and social media outlets.

In short, they feel that they're dying.

And, according to various members of the Knesset, their death throes are primarily due to the incredible financial clout of an American, right-wing casino mogul Sheldon Adelson, whose free, pro-Netanyahu *Israel Hayom* newspaper has been gnawing away at the circulations – and political influence – of the more traditional journals.

For that reason, the MKs have introduced a bill in the Knesset that would forbid the distribution of "free" newspapers and set a minimum selling price for all papers.

There are numerous issues that flow from any such law. The most obvious concerns are government control of the media marketplace and freedom of the press, and of expression more generally.

Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz, in a recent article criticizing the proposed legislation, pointedly said that the "government should have no right to tell the publisher of a newspaper how best to compete, how to maximize his political impact, how to earn a profit… or how to run his or her business."

However, his is an American perspective superimposed on the Israeli situation.

As Canadians, we know all too well the difficulties of trying to maintain a distinct political culture, ethos and perspective, one that thrives, that does not permit money to "maximize… political impact" and that's reflective of our diversity. That's why, unlike the United States, Canada – and indeed most democracies – have rules that both restrict and promote political spending and political campaigning.

While this had led to the curiosity of Canadians partially paying for the campaigns of the separatist Bloc Québécois and Parti Québécois, it also ensures that all voices, once they achieve a certain level of acceptance, can be heard.

And, contrary to what Derschowitz claims, these laws have not led to tyranny, and certainly not the tyranny of allowing money to prevent more than two viable political parties to exist.

One can, therefore, sympathize with the Knesset's desire to somehow control spending that originates from a foreign-based, unlimited source and that threatens to lead to the demise of those other political voices that simply cannot match *Israel Hayom*'s cash resources.

In fact, Canada, too, when faced with challenges to its cultural icons, has stepped in to either protect or nurture Canadiana.

Whether it be through ownership rules, content regulations, subsidies or the creation of Crown corporations, Canada has seen to it that – at least for a while – the fiscal and regulatory prowess of Parliament has been used to counter-balance foreign (and almost invariably American), pervasive influences.

The proposed Israeli bill does smack more of crude political gamesmanship rather than the articulation of a policy based on the protection and promotion of Israeli political and cultural values.

However, the rationale for the legislation, from a Canadian perspective – namely that money cannot, and ought not, buy political success – is one that is supportable, albeit in a more refined manner. ■

Leo Adler is the senior partner of Adler Bytensky Prutschi Shikhman: Criminal Litigation.

Public punishment for private views

Rabbi Jay Kelman

Our sages teach that we are to be cognizant that hovering over us is "a seeing eye, hearing ear and that all our deeds are written down in a book." While our sages were referring to God, modern technology has allowed this teaching to also refer to us humans created in His image.

Privacy is being eroded all around us, and the distinction between private and public life has been blurred beyond recognition. The Talmud greatly valued the right to privacy – for example, one was not allowed to have a window overlooking a neighbour's backyard. In the 10th century, Rabbeinu Gershom of Mainz declared that all who read the mail of others without permission – and there's no reason why this should not include email – shall be excommunicated. A decree of excommunication meant complete ostracization, including denial of burial rights in a Jewish cemetery.

I thought of this as much of the media's attention was focused on Donald Sterling, the owner of the Los Angeles Clippers who expressed racist views in a private conversation that was recorded illegally and unbeknownst to him.

The outrage was immediate and the announced punishment swift: a $2.5-million fine, a lifetime ban from the National Basketball Association, and being forced to sell his team. That Sterling held racist views was actually quite well known, and he therefore is a person you may want to shun. But to strip a person of his property for expressing such views, even if they're expressed publicly, is excessive punishment. It may be morally offensive, but it's not illegal to hold racist views. What is illegal is acting on those views – and in fact, Sterling has previously been fined for refusing to rent apartments to blacks.

Jewish law takes the prohibition of lashon hara, negative speech, very seriously. And in Judaism, moral wrongs are often much more serious than legal ones. Damaging a person's reputation is worse than eating pork, but Jewish law calls for a human (as opposed to Divine) punishment only for actions – we do not punish views, no matter how vile. One can perhaps choose not to do business with such a person, and even to impose communal sanctions, but one may not actively try and take their business away. Inflicting financial punishment on someone is a most serious matter – the Bible uses the same word, *damim*, to refer both to blood (life) and to money.

Our politically correct society is perfecting the art of meting out public punishment for private views. The law societies of Upper Canada (Ontario) and Nova Scotia recently voted to deny graduates of the soon-to-be-established Trinity Western University law school (TWU) the right to practise law in their provinces. This is in response to the requirement that TWU students and staff sign a "Christian Community Covenant" agreement that forbids "sexual intimacy that violates the sacredness of marriage between a man and a woman." That society can marginalize what was once the norm to such a degree should be frightening to all who value individual rights and freedoms.

And in a further sign of lack of tolerance for dissent, Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau has announced that his party will no longer allow anyone who opposes abortion to run for office under its banner. It weakens us all when people are excluded because of a position on a controversial subject about which there is little broad consensus.

Democracies thrive when they encourage a diversity of views, even and especially if they're views we strongly disagree with. And while we must strongly protest vile views, such protest must be done constructively. It is by having to debate views that run counter to our own that we sharpen, refine and even change our own.

Jewish law rules that when a court unanimously declares guilt without at least one person arguing for innocence, that person must go free. When we shut off dissent, we can never attain complete truth. ■

Comments rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

Learning from death

Norma Baumel Joseph

Death can be a wicked teacher. Right at the moment when one is grappling with the pain of loss, the reality of and desire for life asserts itself. Filled with both intellectual and emotional complexities, death forces us to confront the contradictions and lessons of living.

Assailed by memories both good and bad, we can be overwhelmed with the present. There are so many daily requirements that pull at us exactly when we want to retreat. Drawn to think about the past and our loss, we need to live in the now, while refusing to accept the inevitability of final endings.

With my mother gone, I feel bereft, still waiting for some more time with her. "Wait, I have some questions to ask." But she's not here and I have to go on living, planning for a future in which I am now the matriarch. Additionally, I have to deal with the cumbersome issues of funerals, estates and taxes. I resent the intrusion of these details on my mourning.

Grief needs to be expressed, and in my experience, it takes time and concentration.

Perhaps this is where we can see the genius of the Jewish rites of shivah. These rituals slow down the process of facing life and death and enable a moment to enshrine both the pain and the joy. Seven days dedicated to introspection and memory, a time removed from the usual distractions. Paradoxically, shivah and the following months of Kaddish aid the process of returning intact to life, to the present.

How does one remember a lost loved one? Sharing stories of a life well lived, crying over the bad times, seeking the humorous, we need this mechanism. So shivah gives us a moment in which we can avoid reality and live in the tenuous world of grief. It allows the self-indulgence that's necessary, then gently nudges us on our way to real-time living.

Somehow, we begin to cope with this longing for the past, living in the present and striving for the future.

Barbra Streisand sang a song that expressed these sentiments poignantly. "Between yesterday and tomorrow there is more – there is more than a day." When someone dies, we look back in time. Seeing fullness cut short perhaps or just longing for some more time, a few more memories. Yet, we continue our future-oriented planning. What happens to the now? Today is a very elusive time frame, but it determines the reality of our lives. How do we celebrate the present and maintain our focus on it? The notion of today is certainly more than a day. It's a fleeting moment that requires full attention and a dedicated sense of significance for the now of existence.

But living in the now doesn't come easily. Again I find insight in Judaic notions. The concept of *hakarat hatov*, recognition of the good, is very useful if difficult to maintain. It is usually used to refer to a kind of gratitude. We should be grateful in the very moment that life is transpiring. Right now, I'm breathing, writing, thinking – all actions that take place in the present and for which I should be appreciative. I need to acknowledge the fullness and basic goodness of life even in the face of mourning and loss. It's difficult.

Moreover, while this imperative of gratitude shouldn't be limited to specific experiences or people, it does help to recognize those who do good.

In that vein, I want to acknowledge some very good deeds. Recently, in Quebec, a group of volunteers and rabbis worked diligently to release a woman from the bonds of her dead marriage. The rabbinic court of the Vaad Ha'ir of Montreal deserves special recognition. They issued a *seruv* (a contempt of court order) and wrote letters. Vigils were held. One distinct community co-operated. Right before Passover, she reclaimed her life.

Thank you all. ■

News | GTA

Global poll finds 'persistent, pervasive' anti-Semitism

PAUL LUNGEN
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The U.S.-based Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has released a report on global attitudes toward Jews, and it found that anti-Semitism remains "persistent and pervasive."

The ADL Global 100: An Index of Anti-Semitism surveyed 53,100 adults in 102 countries, including 505 in Canada. It found that "more than one-in-four adults, 26 per cent of those surveyed, are deeply infected with anti-Semitic attitudes. This figure represents an estimated 1.09 billion people around the world."

People were asked to respond to 11 questions about Jewish loyalty to their home country, whether Jews care only about themselves, whether they have too much power in the business, media and political realms, and whether they are responsible for starting wars. Those who responded negatively to six or more questions were considered to hold anti-Semitic attitudes

Among the Canadians surveyed in July 2013, the ADL found that 14 per cent harbour anti-Semitic attitudes, which translates into 3.8 million people nationwide.

That clearly puts Canada below the international average, but not as low as other democracies such as Sweden (four per cent); Netherlands (five per cent); United Kingdom (eight per cent); and the United States (nine per cent).

At the other end of the spectrum, 93 per cent of the population in the West Bank and Gaza hold anti-Semitic views, while Iraq is close behind at 92 per cent. Other Arab countries like Yemen, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia and Jordan have numbers ranging from 81 per cent to 88 per cent.

So, as far as Canada is concerned, is the glass half full or half empty?

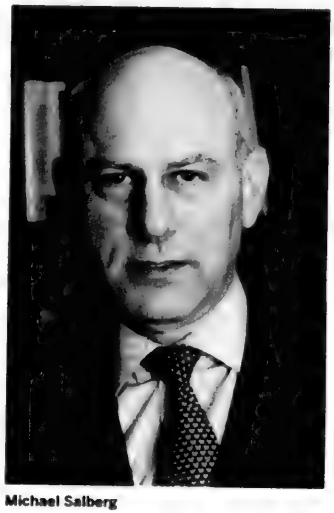
According to Michael Salberg, director of international affairs for the ADL, the Canadian results are similar to those found in other English-speaking countries, in which findings of anti-Semitic attitudes are relatively low.

"It is heartening," he said in a telephone interview from New York. "When you look at the global figure of 26 per cent versus the English-speaking countries at half that, there is something there, whether it's a longer, more developed history of democratic institutions or a robust Jewish community presence.

"There is a social and political culture of disapproval of discrimination and an openness to diversity," he said. "Those kinds of elements play a crucial role. There's a willingness to discuss and be open to the possibility that society has faults that need to be addressed.

"We find that when the political, civic and religious leaders are willing to condemn acts of discrimination, prejudice versus people, especially anti-Semitism versus Jews, it has a positive impact and the message gets through to society."

Steve McDonald, associate director of communications for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), said the ADL methodology was sound and its findings significant.



Michael Salberg

"It's always disappointing to find beliefs in anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and that Jews only care about themselves," he said.

Despite his overall positive analysis of the Canadian responses, Salberg acknowledged there were some puzzling findings. Overall, younger people in the 18 to 34 cohort harboured fewer stereotypes about Jews than Canadians in the 35 to 49 age group and those over 50. But when questioned about whether Jews are more loyal to Israel than to Canada, 32 per cent thought they were, close to the 35 per cent response among those 50+. Globally, that was the most commonly held stereotype about Jews, held by 41 per cent of respondents.

In Canada, 21 per cent of younger respondents also thought Jews have too much power in the business world, compared to 19 per cent of 35-49-year-olds and 27 per cent for those older than 50.

The overall "index score" tabulated by the ADL, based on all 11 questions, found only seven per cent of Canadian young people held anti-Semitic views, compared to 20 per cent among the oldest demographic cohort.

Noting young people's attitudes to Jews in business and their loyalty, Salberg said the findings "need to be looked at more carefully in Canada by Canadians."

Senior CIJA officials have met to discuss the results and are formulating a plan to respond to the findings, McDonald said. "It's disturbing to think that young people with access to all the information in the world and who are more likely to have met a Jew" would hold some of these views, he said.

"You would expect them to be more tolerant.

"For us, it's a sobering reminder of the importance of being more innovative in communicating the horrors of the Holocaust and the dangers of anti-Semitism," McDonald added.

"What we've learned in more than 100 years of dealing with anti-Semitism and combating hatred and bigotry is that the only meaningful, long-term response is education," Salberg said. ■

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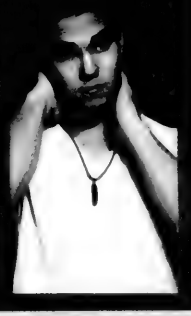

A home-grown Canadian sensation, Tyler's covers of famous songs such as *Invincible*, *Rolling in the Deep*, and *I Wanna Go*, and his debut song *Kiss Goodnight*, have shot Tyler into the music spotlight.

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Shaar Shalom hires rabbi, opens door to egalitarianism

FRANCES KRAFT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

After a year without a rabbi, Shaar Shalom Synagogue has hired a new spiritual leader, opening the door to egalitarianism after four decades as a traditional Conservative congregation.

This summer, Rabbi Steven Schwarzman will leave his pulpit at Congregation Beth Israel in Worcester, Mass., to lead the 400-family synagogue in Thornhill, Ont. The 53-year-old was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2008, after a prior career as a technical writer and trainer for an Israeli software company.

Janice Shachter, president of Shaar Shalom, told *The CJN* that the congregation changed its constitution this past February, following a vote that passed by 86 per cent, to allow for the possibility of concurrent egalitarian and traditional Shabbat services, and also to guarantee the continuation of traditional services.

Any changes will be based on member demand, and will follow a process led by the new rabbi, Shachter said. "There's room for everyone. Conservative Judaism is a pluralistic Judaism."

Shachter is optimistic about the future of Shaar Shalom, despite challenges it has faced in recent years. In 2009, for demographic reasons, the shul's Hebrew school closed.

More recently, in October 2012, the executive and board of governors opted not to renew the contract of longtime spiritual leader Rabbi Martin Berman, who had led the congregation since 1994. Three months later, Rabbi Berman sued for wrongful dismissal. The case was settled out of court in March 2013, and he remained the shul's spiritual leader until last July, working full-time until May.

As well, a number of members left last year amid uncertainty about the shul's future. Six years ago, there were 600 member units, 50 per cent more than today, and in 2012, there were 550.

Shachter noted that there are now some new members with young children, a positive development when many congregations are struggling with aging memberships. With an average age of 61, Shaar Shalom skews lower age-wise than some of its Conservative counterparts in the GTA, she added. She's hopeful that some members who have left the shul will rejoin.

Rabbi Steven Schwarzman

Those who stayed, she noted, have "a real feeling of passion" for Shaar Shalom. While Cantor Ben Silverberg continued to carry out pastoral duties following Rabbi Berman's departure, members also stepped up to lead services and organize study groups on a volunteer basis, Shachter said.

The interim time served as a bonding experience that brought people together, she added. "We need a rabbi. But considering we didn't have one, we really did make the best of it, and managed to thrive and prosper."

Rabbi Schwarzman, who is beginning a two-year contract, shares Shachter's take. "The amazing thing to me," he said, "is not that the shul has gone through a bit of a rough spot. That's not so uncommon. The amazing thing about Shaar Shalom is the energy they've displayed... There's a vibrancy that you feel in the air. People are really excited about the shul... That kind of energy is something you can really build with."

Rabbi Schwarzman and his wife Bettina, a Hebrew school teacher, will move to Toronto with the youngest of their four children. The three oldest will be in Israel – one for a post-university year, the other two as olim following in their parents' footsteps.

The rabbi, a native of Washington, D.C., met his Stockholm-born wife, the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, as a graduate student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. They lived in Israel for almost a decade before relocating to the United States.

In his spare time, Rabbi Schwarzman is collecting stories for a book he's writing about favourite Jewish prayers, a subject he stumbled onto by raising the topic while waiting for a minyan to begin. ■

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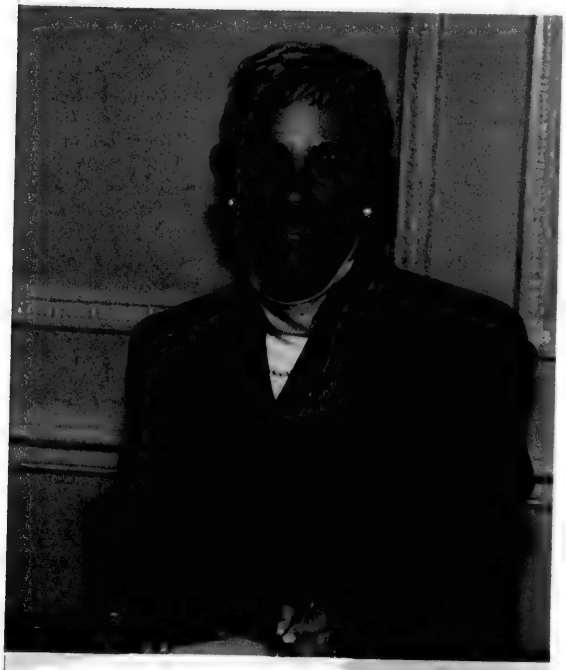

Susan Steinberg signing her Book of Life story. To read her story and to learn more, please visit www.bookoflife.ca.

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Entrepreneurs launch farm guided by Jewish principles

ILAN MESTER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Greenhouse boys, from left, Kevin Karl, Russell Vinegar and Sebastian Belliard.

Castanea Collective isn't your typical farm. For starters, the Peterborough-based collective is a CSA, which stands for community supported agriculture.

Kevin Karl, one of three founders of Castanea, says a lot of these types of farms are relatively anonymous these days. However, his collective stays closer to the concept's roots.

"They can just be kind of like a vegetable delivery service and you never really have that interaction with the farmer or really get the sense of what's going on in the fields," he says of today's CSAs.

"I think it's important to try to get people out there so that they can see what's going on, have a connection with the seasons, and have a stronger sense of where their food is coming from."

Each week, members of Castanea Collective receive a basket of vegetables that change depending on the season.

"With a CSA, you're going on a seasonal eating adventure and it's a way to strengthen that connection," adds co-founder Russell Vinegar.

"You can't be part of a CSA and be totally ignorant about what it is you're eating and how the seasons work because you're going to be talking to us every week."

Vinegar and Karl met at McGill University where they studied agriculture and environmental sciences. While at university, the duo, along with a third friend, Sebastian Belliard, were already brainstorming projects they could collaborate on.

"The ball was rolling with ideas of what we could do, what our common interests were and just keeping an eye out for opportunities for land," Vinegar says. "I guess this was just the right time, the right place and here we are."

It all started last year when Karl, who had already worked on Brazilian and American farms, returned to Canada to take a course in Peterborough. He invited Vinegar and Belliard to launch a farm and together they connected with John Nicholson, a local musician and landowner.

"He's been waiting for someone to do something interesting with the land, or something that he felt good about," Vinegar says. "He turned down some conventional farmers in the area looking to rent it over the years and it was only in December that we were really connected with him and lined that up. It's left us with lots of work."

> *The challenges are practically endless because they're working on land that hasn't been farmed before*

The challenges are practically endless because they're working on land that hasn't been farmed before, the trio needs to develop the entire infrastructure, plan the irrigation strategy, etc. They even had to build their own greenhouse. "We're coming at it pretty much from scratch," Vinegar says.

He adds that a Birthright trip last year – where he got to visit a kosher winery – inspired him to introduce Jewish principles into his farming, including the concept of shmittah.

"The underlying principle is giving the land time to rest and restore, and maintain its fertility," he says. "For us, that's making sure that you're rotating where you're growing – that you're not growing the same thing in the same place every year. [This prevents] diseases [because] you're not drawing the same nutrients."

Karl says they've also borrowed a social action concept from Judaism. He points to a passage in the Torah that says when you harvest, you should leave the edges and the corners for the less fortunate.

"Often, the price makes [food like this] inaccessible for a lot of people," he says. "A lot of what we're trying to do is to figure out how we can meet people where they are, how we can make the food as accessible as possible."

In response to that the trio has introduced a sliding scale, which means members of their CSA can choose three different price points. "We hope that people who can pay at the higher end do and people who can only pay at the lower end do that," Karl says.

Down the line, the friends hope they can teach people how to integrate food production into their everyday lives. One of their goals is to build up a stock of edible perennials that members can plant in their own backyard.

"I think our ultimate goal is to establish these long-lived food production orchards that will keep feeding people long after we've left," Karl adds. "That's one of our driving focuses."

To learn more about Castanea Collective, visit www.castaneacollective.com. ■

Mount Sinai to merge with Bridgepoint

Joseph Mapa, president and CEO of Mount Sinai Hospital, left, along with Jay Hennick, chair of Mount Sinai's board, stand on University Avenue in front of the renowned medical facility.

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Mount Sinai Hospital and Bridgepoint Active Healthcare have signed a memorandum of understanding that will see the two medical institutions merge to provide a more seamless treatment experience for patients.

In addition, a partnership with Circle of Care, a Toronto-based home care provider, will allow the three health organizations to provide treatment from the acute care phase to rehabilitation to support for patients once they return to their homes.

"The proposed amalgamation with Bridgepoint is an extraordinarily exciting growth opportunity for Mount Sinai Hospital and is a testament to Jewish community leaders who founded this great hospital over 90 years ago," Jay Hennick, chair of Mount Sinai's board and Joseph Mapa, the hospital's president and CEO, said in a statement.

"Building on a strong heritage, the proposed Sinai Health System will support our vision to grow our hospital and lead the health-care sector with excellent partners, such as Bridgepoint – a highly respected leader in complex chronic care and rehabilitation, and Circle of Care – a leading provider of home care and community-based services."

They added: "As a Jewish-founded hospital, we continue to go from strength to strength, thanks to the unwavering support of our community. We hope this community will continue to feel pride in Mount Sinai's accomplishments as we work toward offering our patients an integrated and co-ordinated care experience and setting new standards of excellence in patient care."

According to a message to stakeholders from Mapa and Marian Walsh, president and CEO of Bridgepoint, located in the Riverdale area of Toronto, "the proposed amalgamation would see Mount Sinai and Bridgepoint come together to create one new organization on two campuses – Bridgepoint at the corner of Gerrard Street and Broadview Avenue, and Mount Sinai Hospital, Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Health Complex, on University Avenue.

"Each campus and legacy organization would retain its existing brand and its distinct identity, and we will bring together the overall system under the newly created 'Sinai Health System' banner."

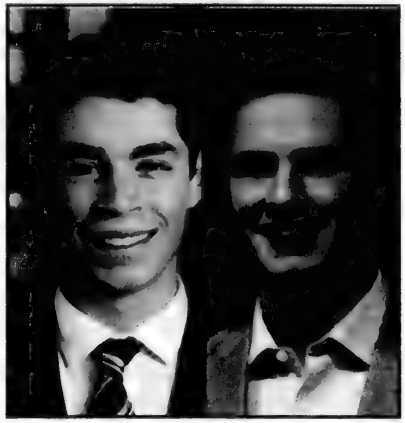
The hospitals are currently seeking regulatory approvals while setting out more detailed planning to complete the merger. The process is expected to be completed by the end of the year. ■

Two Torontonians set to excel in Israel this summer

Birthright Israel Excel names its first Canadian participants

By Daniel Horowitz

Two Torontonians have been selected as the first Canadian students to take part in Birthright Israel Excel, an innovative program for students who combine academic achievement with social responsibility, the desire to succeed in the world of business and, as is the cornerstone of all Birthright Israel initiatives - strengthen their connection to Judaism and the State of Israel.



Daniele Gordon *Richie Chaikof*

The Taglit-Birthright Israel program, supported by the Charles & Lynn Schusterman Foundation, the Steinhardt Family Foundation and the Paul E. Singer Foundation, will bring 40 accomplished Jewish students to Tel Aviv at the end of May where they will intern for 10 weeks with some of Israel's most exciting companies, gaining invaluable experience and making vital contacts that will help them in their future careers. Birthright Israel Excel participants will also meet with a myriad of Israel's political, business, technology and philanthropic leaders.

The two pioneering Torontonians – chosen out of more than 100 Canadian applicants - are Richie Chaikof, a 21-year-old graduate of CHAT's Wallenberg Campus, currently in his third year at Western University and his first year at the Ivey Business School, and 19-year-old Daniel Gordon who recently completed his second year at Queen's University in the Commerce program.

The pair, who will be heading to Israel on May 31st, will be joining 38 other participants selected from across the United States.

"It's definitely an honour to have been selected to this very exciting program and to represent Canada, and, of course, Toronto," said Chaikof. "I had applied for other programs and summer jobs, but Birthright Israel Excel appealed to me because it makes me part of a network with many others, some of whom will hopefully be North America's future business leaders. We're all staying together, in a residence in Tel Aviv, which is wonderful. I can't wait to meet them."

Chaikof, who for now wants to give investment banking a shot, will spend his ten-week internship with a major bank in Tel Aviv.

"I am eager to establish business and personal networks during the summer and continue to bring Israel innovation to the forefront of business discussions when I return to Canada," said Chaikof. "I want to join a network of young Jewish professionals and am seeking to broaden the engagement of North American businesses with Israeli commerce. That's the most amazing part about the fellowship; participating in world-class global business in the context of our Jewish homeland."

As for Gordon, May 31st simply can't come fast enough.

A graduate of TanenbaumCHAT in Vaughan, Gordon, a participant on the 2011 March of the Living, is not only excited about gaining invaluable business experience and contacts, but doing it in Israel.

"Being chosen for Birthright Israel Excel is such an exciting opportunity, and one that I am so grateful for," said Gordon. "The fact that through Excel I have an internship in the financial services industry, which is something I'm looking to go into, in Israel, is tremendous. It will be great to get a feeling for Israel's business sector and it's well known entrepreneurial drive."

And, as someone who continues to advocate for the Jewish state, Gordon feels the time in Israel will better prepare him to continue to advocate, albeit with a different slant.

"In my opinion, the best way to advocate for Israel, especially when dealing with non-Jews, is by focusing on Israel's positive contributions to the world-at-large, and certainly two of her biggest contributions are in technology and business. It's amazing when you realize how much Israel has accomplished in these areas, considering the fact that they are surrounded by many countries they can't even do business with. I hope that this program will give me better insights as to how to better promote Israel, while teaching me leadership and communication skills which I will be able to transfer over to my future career, and even now, at school."

Excel is an extension of Taglit-Birthright Israel, which sends Jewish adults between the ages of 18 and 26 on a 10-day trip to Israel to strengthen each participant's Jewish identity. Taglit-Birthright Israel aims to build an understanding, friendship, and lasting bond with the land and people of Israel and to reinforce the solidarity of the Jewish people worldwide. Taglit-Birthright Israel is funded through a historical partnership between of the people of Israel through their Government, private philanthropists (Birthright Israel Foundation of Canada) and local Jewish communities around the world (in Toronto, through UJA Federation).

"We are thrilled and proud that Richie and Daniel were given the opportunity *to join this elite program," said Elizabeth Sokolsky, VP of Education and Operations for Taglit Birthright Israel, North America. "We hope that we will be able to secure the necessary funding in Canada to expand the number of Canadian participants in the future".*

For more information on Taglit-Birthright Israel Excel visit www.birthrightisraelexcel.com

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GUEST VOICE

Get involved in the provincial election campaign

Stephen Adler

On June 12, voters in Ontario will go to the polls to elect the province's 41st legislature. While federal elections tend to generate more interest, in many ways provincial elections have a greater impact on the daily lives of Ontarians – including members of our community.

Many would be shocked to learn that tens of thousands of Jewish Ontarians live in poverty. Indeed, our community includes a large number of at-risk individuals, such as children from low-income households, seniors (including Holocaust survivors), new Canadians, and those challenged with disabilities. Their quality of life depends on receiving essential services from provincially funded programs, which Jewish communal agencies access.

In the face of budget constraints facing governments in general, it's critical that we make a strong case for the value of well-funded ethno-specific service providers such as Jewish Family and Child (JF&CS), Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) and others. This is why the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) has assembled a coalition of interfaith and inter-ethnic partners speaking with one voice to ensure continued funding for our community agencies. Community-based agencies can deliver unique, client-focused services, which, for various reasons, governments cannot deliver as effectively or efficiently.

For many in our community, one issue continues to be top of mind in the lead-up to Ontario elections: provincial funding to alleviate the costs of day school tuition. We acknowledge the apprehensions Ontarians have toward the funding of faith-based schools. While such concerns tend not to be directed toward the Jewish community, we understand that Ontarians are wary of funding faith-based schools that might adhere to lower standards than those of the public system or, worse, include curricula contrary to Canadian values.

We believe the next provincial government should consider ways in which it can better support a variety of schools outside the public system. This is particularly the case when it comes to essential public services that have nothing to do with religious curricula. Day school students with identified special needs do not qualify for the same services that they would receive in the public system. A student in need of speech and language therapy, to cite one example, should enjoy the same access to services regardless of whether they attend public or private school. Unfortunately, this is an unfair discrepancy that continues to prove costly for those families having no choice but to make up the difference out-of-pocket.

Whatever issues are most important to your family, our collective voice will only be heard through active engagement in the democratic process. Despite our relatively small size, our community has always had an impact beyond our numbers. Moreover, we are a community large in geography, with active communal leaders across Ontario. I encourage readers to contact CIJA's local leadership in the GTA, Ottawa, Hamilton, or in other areas via the Regional Jewish Communities of Ontario. For details on getting involved in local advocacy efforts, visit www.cija.ca.

In addition to voting, I encourage you to get involved beyond the ballot box. Meet your local candidates and let them know your priorities. If you feel strongly about a particular party, but have never taken an active political role, consider volunteering, attending a campaign event, putting up a lawn sign or donating to your local candidate. You will be doing your part to uphold our community's long tradition of civic engagement. ■

Stephen Adler is associate director of Ontario government relations at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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2014 TORONTO JEWISH LITERARY FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2014 | 4:30 PM | FREE
TJLF @ Yidishtog, Annual Simcha Simchovitch Lecture:
Goldie Morgentaler on Chava Rosenfarb
Miles Nadal JCC, Room 318, 750 Spadina Ave.
Goldie Morgentaler on Chava Rosenfarb, with readings by Eileen Thalenberg in Yiddish and English (Presented as part of Yidishtog together with UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish and as part of Ontario Jewish Heritage Month).

MONDAY, MAY 26, 2014 | 7:30 PM | PWYC
Matti Friedman: The Aleppo Codex
Temple Emanu-El, 120 Old Colony Rd.
Direct from Israel! *Jerusalem Report* and *Times of Israel* reporter Matti Friedman - hailed by the *Canadian Jewish News* as a "modern-day Indiana Jones" - on *The Aleppo Codex*, winner of the prestigious Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature, one of the largest literary prizes in the world.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2014 | 7:30 PM | PWYC
Ira Robinson, Canada's Jews: In Time, Space and Spirit
Temple Emanu-El, 120 Old Colony Rd.
Ira Robinson on *Canada's Jews: In Space, Time and Spirit*, a collection of essays about the history, geography, and spirit of one of the world's largest Jewish communities.

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2014 | 7:30 PM | FREE
Nora Gold: Fields of Exile
Artscape Youngplace, Flex Studio, 180 Shaw St.
Nora Gold launches *Fields of Exile*, the first novel about anti-Israelism in the academe, selected by *The Forward* as one of the "5 Jewish Books to Read in 2014."

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014 | 1 PM | FREE
Chantal Ringuet: Voix Yiddish de Montréal
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.
French-language anthology of Canadian Jewish writers, with a lecture in English, readings in English, Yiddish, French (Presented together with UJA Federation's Committee for Yiddish, Friends of Yiddish, and the Toronto Workmen's Circle).

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014 | 3:30 PM | PWYC
A Basket of Apples: Stories by Shirley Faessler
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.
Journalist/publisher Bill Gladstone on a new edition of Shirley Faessler's beloved *A Basket of Apples*, with readings by Karen Hines, the author's granddaughter.

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TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2014 | 8 PM | FREE
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FICTION
The Lion Seeker by **Kenneth Bonert** (Knopf Canada)

YIDDISH
The Exile Book of Yiddish Women Writers by **Frieda Forman** (Exile Editions)

JEWISH THOUGHT & CULTURE
Unclean Lips by **Josh Lambert** (New York University Press)

POETRY
Correspondences by **Anne Michaels** for Poetry & **Bernice Eisenstein** for Portraits (McClelland and Stewart)

SCHOLARSHIP
The Long Life and Swift Death of the Jewish Reschitsa by **Albert Kaganovitch** (The University of Wisconsin Press)

BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIR
An Ode to Salonika: The Ladino Verses of Bouena Sarfatty by **Renée Levine Melammed** (Indiana University Press)

YOUTH
Dear Canada: Pieces of the Past by **Carol Matas** (Scholastic)

HISTORY
In the Shadow of the Shtetl by **Jeffrey Veidlinger** (Indiana University Press)

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SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Michael Grossman

It is never planned, and when it happens, it is always a shock. A child is diagnosed with a serious illness or has special needs.

Families can be torn apart, daily routines can be disrupted, financial devastation can result if one or both parents miss work for extended periods of time.

To help raise awareness of these kinds of problems, a group of young professionals has partnered with Chai Lifeline Canada to organize Conspire 2 Inspire, a fundraising event set for May 29 at the Burroughes Building, 639 Queen St.W.

"Conspire 2 Inspire was born with the intent of having every young professional resonate with this organization, and know of the important... work that Chai Lifeline does," said Michael Grossman, lead chair of Conspire 2 Inspire.

"Thirty-five committee members have been working tirelessly on their own time to make a difference to our kids and our families. These are our future leaders, and it is inspiring to see them engaged in a way that is so meaningful," said Craig Fried, director of development for Chai Lifeline Canada, an organization that provides support to more than 200 Canadian families who have children with serious illnesses or other disorders.

"The organization is personal for me, as, a couple of years ago, dear friends of mine had their youngest child diagnosed with a serious illness," Grossman said.

"It is very important to me that Chai Lifeline becomes a recognized charity within the young professional demographic. My friend had to quit her job. Her husband had to leave town in order to take a job earning more money."

The organization helped the family in many ways, Grossman said.

"From paying for her numerous parking bills at the hospital, providing meals when she was too exhausted at the end of the day to even lift a finger for her other children, providing babysitters, tutors, and even carpool services for her other children, Chai Lifeline provided incredible assistance," he said.

Chai Lifeline has more than two dozen programs and services to help ease the almost insurmountable difficulties of caring for a sick child or one with ongoing special needs. Many services are provided free of charge.

The organization can offer financial support for medical expenses, counselling for each member of the family, Big Brothers and Big Sisters who bring an extra measure of adult attention to the children's lives, tutoring for children who miss school for extended periods of time, family retreats, sibling programs and two summer camp programs.

> *Chai Lifeline has more than two dozen programs and services to help ease the almost insurmountable difficulties of caring for a sick child or one with ongoing special needs.*

Fried will attend the next Conspire 2 Inspire committee meeting to provide two options of where the funds raised can be directed to provide the greatest impact.

"This is very exciting and personal for us – to choose where the funds raised from Conspire 2 Inspire will go," Grossman said.

The event is expected to attract some 400 young professionals, and will feature great music, dancing, a kosher sushi bar, and a burger bar with a barbecue on the rooftop patio. Everyone will go home with a swag bag full of goodies.

"We anticipate raising tens of thousands of dollars. Our goal is to have the children of Chai Lifeline be the winners at the end of the day," Grossman said.

Visit www.chailifelinecanada.org/conspire to purchase tickets.■

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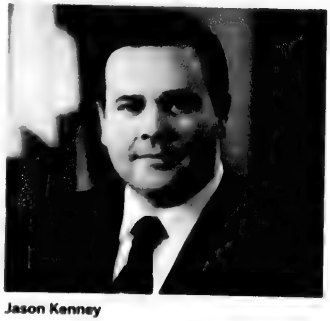
UN Watch to honour Kenney for 'moral courage'

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca



Jason Kenney

Hillel Neuer well remembers the lead-up to the 2009 Durban Review Conference, the UN anti-racism followup parley popularly known as Durban II. Durban I, which was held in South Africa some years before, had degenerated into what many critics termed an anti-Semitic hate fest. With then-Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad scheduled to address the Durban II delegates in Geneva, right across the street from the offices of the organization he heads, UN Watch, Neuer expected a similar festival of anti-Israel agitation.

But in January 2008, more than a year before the conference was scheduled to proceed, the government of Canada said it would not participate. Canada's lead in boycotting the conference was followed by about a dozen democracies, including Israel and the United States.

Taking the lead in announcing Canada's boycott, was Jason Kenney, then minister of citizenship and immigration.

"It was a seminal moment for us at UN Watch," said Neuer. "Canada took the moral lead."

In recognition of Kenney's role in that event, UN Watch was scheduled to present Kenney with its Moral Courage Award at a May 22 event in Geneva.

"It's for people who take a stand, and Jason Kenney has taken a stand on the true principles of the United Nations – human rights – which we are trying to safeguard from the political blocs trying to distort the meaning of human rights," Neuer said.

Last year's winner was Shin Dong-hyuk, the only known surviving escapee from a North Korean prison camp.

Speaking on the phone from Geneva, Neuer said Kenney has been a consistent voice on the world stage speaking against anti-Semitism and bigotry.

He also commended Kenney and the government of Canada for speaking against Richard Falk, former UN special rapporteur for Israel. When Falk spoke at the UN and called for UN Watch to be investigated, Kenney rose in Parliament to defend UN Watch. He called Falk a 9/11 conspiracist, said he was "a disgrace" to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and he called on the UN to fire him.

Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, who was also highly critical of the Durban conferences, applauded Kenney's role as "a leader both in and outside of the Canadian Parliament on issues of respect for multiculturalism and diversity, the combating of racism and anti-Semitism, support for Israel's right to live within secure and recognized boundaries free from any threats or acts of force, and support for fairness and due process at the UN, including combating the singling out of Israel for discriminatory treatment while giving human rights violators exculpatory immunity. We have been close colleagues and friends for some time, and I have been proud to work with him in common cause across party lines."

A tribute page posted online by UN Watch included congratulations from Canadians of Vietnamese, Burmese, Pakistani, Uyghur, Chinese and South Sudanese descent. In addition, a message from the Dalai Lama noted Kenney's support for Tibet and for "the rights of oppressed people around the world."

UN Watch was also scheduled to present its Morris B. Abram Human Rights Award to Iranian dissident and author Marina Nemat, who now lives in Canada.

Nemat was jailed and tortured as a political prisoner in Tehran at age 16.

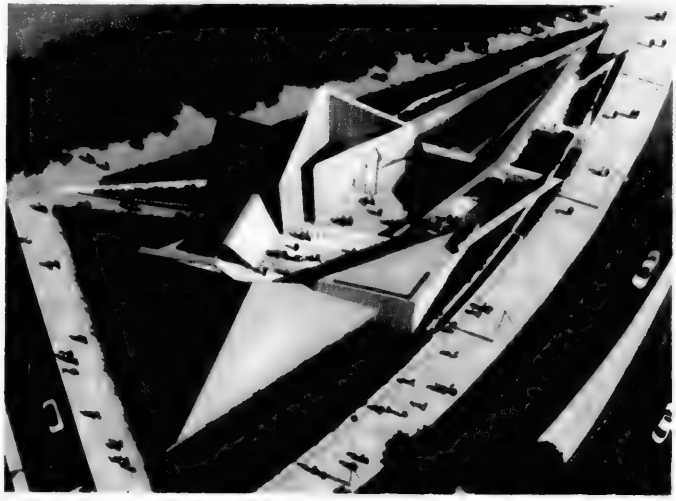
"UN Watch is honouring Marina Nemat for her brave and outstanding work worldwide in bearing witness to the horrific crimes perpetrated against her by a regime that continues to assault, jail, torture, rape and execute human rights defenders, religious, ethnic and sexual minorities, and thousands of other innocent men, women and children," said Neuer, who's marking 10 years as UN Watch's executive director.

Previous winners of the prize include Russian dissident and chess champion Garry Kasparov; Massouda Jalal, the first woman in Afghanistan to run for president and to serve as minister for women's affairs; and Esther Mujawayo, an activist for victims of the genocide in Rwanda.

Also last week, UN Watch condemned the UNHRC's "bizarre, nepotistic, and politically driven" decision to name Hilal Elver as special rapporteur on the right to food. Elver is Falk's wife. Her appointment came the same day he ended a six-year term as UN special rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian territories. ■

NATIONAL

Libeskind team will design monument



The National Holocaust Monument will be built in Ottawa. LORD CULTURAL RESOURCES PHOTO

DIANE KOVEN
OTTAWA CORRESPONDENT

Canada's National Holocaust Monument is one step closer to being built after the government's announcement of the winning design, to be erected adjacent to the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa.

The winning team, chosen over five others, includes renowned architect Daniel Libeskind, artist-photographer Edward Burtynsky, Quebec-based landscape artist Claude Cormier and University of Toronto Holocaust scholar Doris Bergin. Team leader will be Gail Dexter-Lord, co-president of Lord Cultural Resources, which also consulted on the Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg and the 9/11 Museum in New York City.

The announcement was made May 12 by Canadian Heritage Minister Shelly Glover, Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird and Multiculturalism Minister Tim Uppal, whose private member's bill – the National Holocaust Monument Act, Bill C-442 – was responsible for the chain of events leading up to the announcement.

The monument is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2015. Its design features a large gathering space for ceremonies with room for 1,000 people enclosed by six triangular, concrete segments to create the points of a star, reminiscent of the yellow stars that Jews were forced to wear during the Holocaust.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) was actively involved in advancing the National Holocaust Monument from its earliest stages, working with MPs from all parties to secure unanimous support for Bill C-442. Funding for the project will come from both the Jewish community and the federal government.

CIJA chair David Koschitzky acknowledged the collaboration. "We thank the members of the National Holocaust Monument Development Council, ably chaired by Rabbi Daniel Friedman of Edmonton, and the government of Canada for their diligence in bringing this project yet another step closer to realization. Special thanks are due to the Hon. John Baird and Heritage Minister Shelly Glover for their efforts in advancing this project," he said in a statement.

Once completed, Canada "will no longer be the only Allied nation without a national Holocaust monument," CIJA noted.

"In bearing witness to the Holocaust, the monument will be a compelling reminder of the dangers of unchecked evil and the enduring imperative to confront all manifestations of anti-Semitism and hatred," it said. ■

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 22, 2014

How to end infighting among kosher certification agencies

Nafatli Bennett offers a solution, but will kashruth organizations go along with it?

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

In his book *Kosher, Private Regulation in the Age of Industrial Food*, American author Timothy Lytton recounts an old rabbinic joke featuring two mythical creatures created by God at the dawn of time: the Behemoth, a giant ox, and the Leviathan, a giant fish.

In the joke, a rabbi explains to his students that at the end of days, when the Messiah arrives, there will be a feast and God will slaughter the Behemoth to feed the entire world. The Leviathan will also be slaughtered at the same time, and it too will be used to feed the entire world.

"But rabbi," one of his students asks, "if the Behemoth can feed the entire world, why also slaughter the Leviathan?"

"Because there will be those who won't believe the Behemoth is kosher, so they will be able to eat fish," the rabbi answers.

Clearly, disputes over kashrut go back a long way – and if there's any truth to the joke, the Messiah's arrival might not resolve the matter.

Lytton, a professor of law at Albany Law School, told *The CJN* that the current certification system in North America, in which a handful of big players effectively dominate the market, developed as a result of widespread corruption and uncertainty in the kosher food market in the early days of the 20th century.

Things then were so bad that people had no confidence that the food they might consume was actually kosher. Many kosher-observant Jews simply stopped eating meat, because they did not trust any certification.

Standards began improving 50 or 60 years ago, and today, industrial producers of all sorts of foods eagerly seek out kosher certification for entry into a desirable market.

But rivalries among certification agencies can have a negative effect, Lytton writes.

"Personal animus and institutional rivalries can skew judgments about reliability. Information networks and supply-chain influence can be used to poach clients and stifle competition.

"Too many rivalries and accusations can spill over and create a public perception and a consumer response that is bad for both sides."

Kosher certification agencies, are "hostages of each other... If the competition gets too bad or nasty, it tends to degrade the reputation of kosher supervision overall. If the nastiness gets bad enough, the history of kosher certification suggests it will be bad for the public reputations of all the certifiers. There's a long history in kosher certification of rabbis running each other down, and if they do it in public, the public won't trust any of them," he said.

One solution to infighting among certification agencies is being considered in Israel.

Naftali Bennett, the country's economy and trade minister, who also serves as minister for religious services, recently announced plans to introduce a three-tier system that aims to make certification easier for restaurants and their patrons.

Naftali Bennett

According to *The Times of Israel*, Bennett's system would award food-producing establishments with one to three stars, indicating their level of adherence to Judaism's dietary laws.

"Each business or company can decide how many stars it wants," Bennett said.

The new approach would also revise the system of funding for certifica-

tions. Currently, food establishments pay for their own supervision, a practice that has drawn criticism for creating potential conflicts of interest for inspectors. The new reform proposes a third-party body that would handle the financial side of the kashrut supervision.

The Times of Israel reported there was plenty of criticism of the new government plan. Shahar Ilan, deputy director of Hiddush, an Israeli non-profit organization that promotes religious freedom and equality, said Bennett's arrangement would maintain the state rabbinate's monopoly over the kashrut system instead of opening it up to the free market.

PAUL LUNGEN PHOTO

He called on authorities to encourage kashrut liberalization, including non-religious, Reform, and Conservative kosher certifications, enabling consumers to choose to be kosher according to their own beliefs.

Lawrence Lax, a kosher consumer and an addiction counsellor by profession, has his own suggestions about reforming kosher supervision in Toronto. He suggests that the Kashruth Council of Canada, which administers the COR hechsher and is known by that name, faces "a conflict of interest" in its operations – though different than the one centred on the way mashgichim are paid.

"On the one hand, they have to be of service to the people they work with in the food industry," Lax said. "On the other hand, they have to make it possible for us to have kosher food at good prices."

He suggested that COR should use its market clout to negotiate better prices for meat.

Lax also suggested COR should transition into a community service organization; that it "age-out senior salaries" when older employees retire; and turn over most mashgiach services to young men coming out of yeshivas who wouldn't command large salaries.

COR declined to answer *The CJN's* questions. It published an "Open Letter to the Jewish community" in which it described itself as being "dedicated to serving our community.

"COR is a not-for-profit organization and all fees collected go towards covering our operations and providing services to the community. In the food service division (i.e. restaurants and caterers) we actually operate at a financial deficit – our expenses are greater than our fees. We are able to marginally compensate for this loss from our other divisions. Customers choose COR because they know that we are reliable, we provide professional service and our prices are in line with the other major kosher certifiers," COR's open letter stated.

Timothy Lytton

COR, however, has adopted the practice being criticized in Israel – it permits restaurants, caterers and suppliers to employ mashgichim directly, though they report to COR and are under the supervision of COR personnel.

Moti Bensalmon, a spokesman for Badatz Toronto, a kosher certification agency founded in 2008, said, "the conflict of interest whereby a mashgiach is paid directly by a business is finally going to end in Israel. Any agency allowing mashgichim to be paid by ownership loses its credibility in today's world."

Referring to other Israeli proposals for reform of its kashrut certification system, Bensalmon rejected the idea of a three-tiered approach.

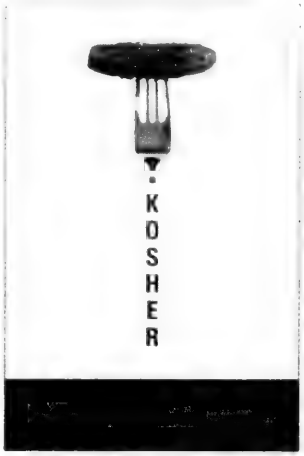
"I believe a three-tiered system is bad here and in Israel. What we need to strive for is a solid one-tier system that is acceptable to everyone. This means that the haredim and modern Orthodox should negotiate unified minimum standards and apply them to everyone.

"If a restaurant or caterer wants a higher level of supervision, there are many reputable private hechsherim that can fill the void. What Bennett is trying to do is undermine the legitimate operations of the private hechshers and have the government be the sole certifier of kashrut.

"I believe the best way to move forward is for the Israeli Rabbanut to be more of a governing body for all hechshers. In order to provide kosher certification, the non-government hechshers would have to be accredited by the Rabbanut, meet certain standards, regulate their business practices and treat their mashgichim with fairness.

> *Any agency allowing mashgichim to be paid by ownership loses its credibility in today's world.*
>
> **Moti Bensalmon**

"This would also eliminate the back-room deals and put an end to agencies blocking each others' products from entry into their establishments. This is the real solution, and it will open the hashgachah market up to more real and fair competition, which would eventually bring all prices down," he said.



As to Badatz's disputes with COR, Bensalmon said, "Everywhere there is a large Jewish community like Toronto, there are multiple kashrut agencies. It's a fact of life that the COR must come to terms with. We harbour no ill will to the individuals running COR in any way. We would like to run our organization without interference from COR and vice versa.

"We have reached out to them multiple times and tried to have meaningful discussions centred on having two organizations operate by the same sets of rules in Toronto. Their position we were told is that the only solution is to join COR under their leadership and administration. As we see in other parts of the world, it's difficult to reach an agreement with people who harbour those views." ■

Ex-professor loses appeal of extradition order

DAVID LAZARUS
dlazarus@cjnews.ca

Lawyers for Hassan Diab, a former Carleton University sociology professor implicated in a notorious 1980 Paris synagogue bombing that killed four people, said they'll seek leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada after Ontario's Court of Appeal upheld a lower court decision to extradite him to France for the crime.

Judge Robert Maranger ruled May 15 that he had no other option under Canadian extradition law but to send Diab back to Paris for trial.

Diab, a 60-year-old native of Lebanon, has been accused of being a one-time member of the terrorist group Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) when the bombing occurred. He has maintained his innocence for the last six years, saying he did not enter France in 1980.

Diab has no criminal record in Canada and has insisted, with his lawyers, that he is a victim of mistaken identity.

In his decision, Maranger agreed that the evidence against Diab did not necessarily meet standards for conviction in a Canadian criminal court, but at an earlier hearing, he said France had enough prima facie evidence to warrant Diab's return there for trial.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs applauded the decision.

"The fact that the main suspect in this hateful terrorist attack will indeed face the justice system gives hope to the survivors and to the families of the innocent victims," CIJA said in a statement.

"The upholding of the extradition order does not assume Diab's culpability. Diab will be able to defend himself before France's judicial system, which is just as impartial as Canada's."

On Oct. 1, 1980, as Simchat Torah began, a bomb containing a large amount of the plastic explosive Semtex detonated outside the Union Libérale Israélite de France synagogue on Rue Copernic in Paris, killing four non-congregants and injuring more than 40.

At the time, then-French prime minister Raymond Barre called it a "heinous crime against Jews."

Diab, a Canadian citizen since 1993 – with dual citizenship – and an Ottawa resident since 2006, has a PhD in Sociology from the University of Syracuse in New York.

He was first arrested by the RCMP in Ottawa in connection with the bombing in November 2008 at the request of French authorities, based on German intelligence that used handwriting samples suggesting that Diab was a member of the PFLP implicated in the bombing.

Experts, though, have had conflicting opinions over the handwriting evidence.

In July 2009, Carleton University terminated Diab's teaching contract over the allegations, but professors there say his firing breached the university's contract with him.

After a series of extradition hearing delays going back to January 2010 over intelligence and evidentiary disputes, Maranger ordered Diab extradited in June 2011. In April 2012, then-justice minister Rob Nicholson ordered the same thing, but the case has continued under appeal under strict $250,000 bail conditions.

Diab has only been able to leave his home for work at the University of Ottawa, for meetings related to his case or for personal appointments. He has also been required to wear a GPS ankle bracelet pending resolution of his extradition case. ■

Liberal MP visits Middle East

JANICE ARNOLD
jarnold@cjnews.ca

Liberal foreign affairs and international trade critic Marc Garneau says he has gained a better insight into perspectives on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after his first official visit to the Middle East.

Speaking by phone from Cairo after spending two days in Israel and one day in the West Bank, Garneau said that speaking to Israelis and Palestinians in the wake of the collapse of the U.S.-brokered attempt to renew peace talks was instructive.

"Each feels it didn't work because there was not a willingness to compromise to an extent acceptable to both," he said. "Each felt the other side was not willing to give enough."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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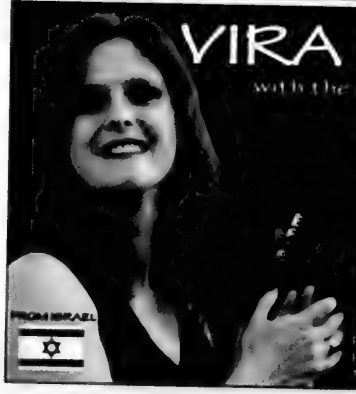

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Marc Garneau gains insight from Mideast trip

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Yet, he has the sense that "things are evolving. They are not static."

The highest-ranking Israeli official he met was Strategic and Intelligence Affairs Minister Yuval Steinitz, and in the Palestinian territories, Azzam al-Ahmed, a senior Fatah representative and chief negotiator with Hamas in trying to form a unity government between the two factions.

Garneau's scheduled meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas was cancelled the day before, apparently because a meeting May 15 with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in London, the first since the process broke off in April, had been scheduled.

Garneau described his trip, which also included Egypt and Jordan, as "fact-finding" in nature.

He found it useful hearing Israeli officials' assessment of Iran's nuclear program and the United Nations Security Council's role in containing it, as well as of the Syrian civil strife.

Also informative was his discussion with former Israeli ambassador to Washington, Michael Oren, now associated with the Interdisciplinary Centre in Herzliya.

Garneau had visited Israel twice before: in 2003, while president of the Canadian Space Agency, and in 2009, a year after he was elected MP for the Montreal riding of Westmount–Ville Marie, on a Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs-organized trip.

Garneau said some of his Palestinian interlocutors claimed the current Canadian government is unbalanced in its approach to the conflict and biased toward Israel.

He was interviewed by the editor-in-chief of the Ramallah daily newspaper *Al-Ayyam*, Akram Haniyya, and had dinner with Palestinian business people.

Garneau, who was careful in his answers, said that despite, the "perception," there is "no substantive difference" between the Conservative and Liberal parties on the key issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both parties support a two-state solution.

"In substance, it's essentially the same. The only difference perhaps is the way it is put forward," he said.

"We certainly do not want to make [the Israeli-Palestinian conflict] a wedge issue, but rather take reasoned positions."

Garneau, a retired naval officer and engineer, was the first Canadian astronaut to fly in outer space 30 years ago.

Liberal foreign affairs critic Marc Garneau, right, meets with Yuval Steinitz, Israel's minister for strategic and intelligence affairs.

He especially enjoyed the parts of his visit that pertained to these areas. He toured Tel Aviv's Sde Dov Airport, which is used by the Israeli Air Force for intelligence gathering operations on the borders, and meeting with Col. Salman Zarka, a physician, who headed the field hospital on the Golan Heights that has treated wounded Syrians.

Conversing with Menahem Kidron, head of the Israel Space Agency was gratifying, Garneau said.

"I went to Israel in 2003 to start a discussion on possible co-operation between the space agencies, but when I went into politics, I gave that up. I was happy to hear that current Canadian Space Agency president Gen. Walter Natynczyk [former chief of the defence staff] is keeping that up."

Garneau met with Rona Ramon, widow of Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, who was killed in the fatal 2003 Columbia space launch. Garneau had been friendly with Ramon since they trained together in Houston.

Garneau gave a talk on "An Astronaut's View of Peace" at the Institute for National Security Studies, in which he described how being in outer space changed his perspective of what goes on on Earth.

The Palestinians were similarly interested in Garneau's expertise on space. He spoke on a radio science program and at two high schools on the subject.

A highlight of his day in the West Bank was touring Rawabi, a planned town in the hills where up to 20,000 people will live. "It's very modern, very green, very wired... quite spectacular," Garneau said.

The goal of the Liberal party, if it forms the next government, will be to "see if there is anything we can constructively do to bring the two groups together. But we're a middle power. We are cognizant that we do not have as much clout, for example, as the U.S." ■

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INTERNATIONAL

Former Israeli PM sentenced to six years in prison

JTA
JERUSALEM

Former Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert was sentenced to six years in prison for accepting bribes in the real estate scam known as the "Holyland affair."

The sentence handed down May 13 in Tel Aviv District Court would make Olmert the first Israeli premier to be sent to prison. Olmert also was fined 1 million shekels, or about $290,000, (US) in what has been called Israel's largest corruption scandal.

Olmert was convicted in March on two counts of bribery for accepting about $150,000 from developers of the Holyland project when he was the mayor of Jerusalem and later a government minister. The project involved the development of high-rises in Jerusalem.

He and six others sentenced – including his successor as mayor of Jerusalem, Uri Lupoliansky – were ordered to present themselves to the prisons service on Sept. 1.

Judge David Rozen ruled that Olmert's conviction includes "moral turpitude," which comes with a ban on seeking public office for at least seven years after his sentence has ended.

"Those who give bribes are corrupt, but those who receive it inspire disgrace and cause the public to lose faith in the state," the judge said in the courtroom. "A public servant who accepts bribes is equivalent to a traitor."

Olmert said in court that he never accepted bribes and vowed to appeal the conviction and the sentence.

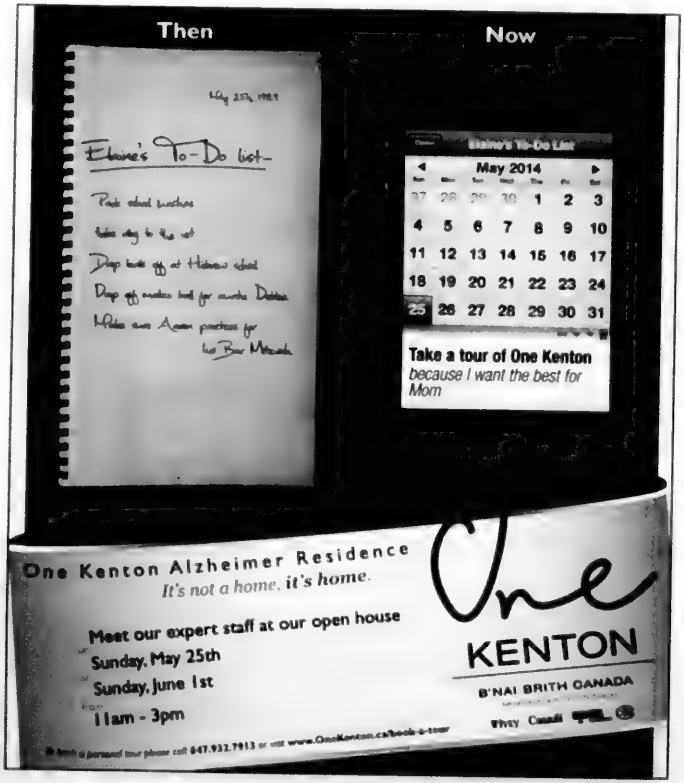
Ehud Olmert at his trial in Tel Aviv.
ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

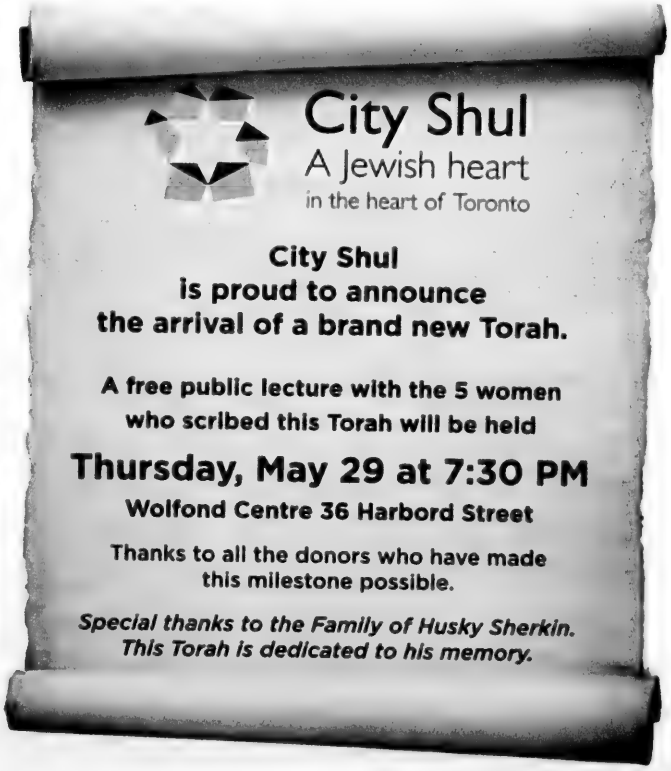
"I am proud of the decade in which I ran the honest city [of Jerusalem]," he said.

Olmert resigned as prime minister in September 2008 after police investigators recommended that he be indicted in multiple corruption scandals.

The Jerusalem District Court acquitted Olmert in 2012 on charges of fraud, breach of trust, tax evasion and falsifying corporate records in what became known as the Talansky and Rishon Tours affairs.

He was found guilty on a charge of breach of trust in what is known as the Investment Center case but has appealed. The case centered on charges that he improperly involved himself in decisions benefiting his friend and former business partner Uri Messer. ■

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OPINION

Eye-opening sites along the Israel National Trail

Yair Lootstein

My friend Elie and his son, Emanuel, embarked on a special mission as part of the lead-up to Emanuel's bar mitzvah: hiking the 940-km-long Israel National Trail, which meanders through much of the country from Kibbutz Dan on the Lebanese border all the way south to Eilat. Almost two years into this endeavour and a year after Emanuel's bar mitzvah, they've completed nearly half the trail – no mean feat, considering they hike on weekends and school vacations, and mostly when the weather can accommodate both camping and hiking.

My son, Natan, and I have joined Elie and Emanuel on several sections of the trail. It's great for bonding. Four guys hiking and shmoozing, making their way on paths that are at times difficult. The vistas are often breathtaking, and the people you meet along the way always seem interesting. For the kids, the nightly campsites are the best – setting up tents, rolling out sleeping bags, collecting wood and cooking on open fires.

A few weeks ago, the four of us spent three days on a section of the trail running along the Carmel Ridge and Mediterranean coast from Zichron Yaacov to Givat Olga, a neighbourhood of Hadera. Along the way, we enjoyed the luscious greenery of springtime Israel, along with well-preserved archeological sites, beaches and rich agricultural lands.

Toward the end of our first day, we walked along Roman-era aqueducts into the Arab town of Jisr az-Zarka, a place I'd never visited before, although I've driven by it on countless occasions on the coastal road between Tel Aviv and Haifa. It was a real eye-opener.

The village, with roughly 14,000 inhabitants, is almost 100 per cent Muslim and is the only solely Arab community in Israel with a beach on the Mediterranean. The beach is quiet and non-commercial, with a small, old-style fishing village. But Jisr az-Zarka is also one of the poorest towns in the country, with one of the highest dropout rates for high school students. For different reasons, until the 1980s, villagers married only within themselves. Other Israeli Arabs looked disparagingly upon the village and its residents.

Walking into town, I felt we were truly entering the Middle East, with narrow streets and lanes, not particularly clean, and houses built in close quarters. Esthetically, I was reminded of my military days in Gaza.

But things are changing, and partly because the Israel National Trail runs through the village. Reaching its main junction, we entered Juha's Guesthouse. It's jointly owned by its namesake, a wonderful local entrepreneur, and a Jewish woman from a nearby moshav. Although the 12-bed inn was full when we arrived (it's been that way for months), Juha took us home, where we enjoyed a meal served by his wife, Heyfa, and where we learned much about the village and of Juha's vision for making it more attractive to visitors and thereby raising the standard of living for all its residents.

During our trip, we had many other experiences. Upon completing our days of hiking, we caught a cab to where we'd left our vehicles. Our driver was from Umm el-Fahem in the Lower Galilee. During the ride, he told us of a hate crime perpetrated in the town a day earlier. The door of a mosque had been set ablaze and graffiti calling on Arabs to leave was sprayed on its walls. He noted the growing number of anti-Arab hate crimes around the country and his frustration that not enough was being done to apprehend the perpetrators, adding his certainty that if anti-Semitic graffiti was sprayed on a synagogue, those responsible would be caught within days.

The Israel National Trail allows us to take pleasure in the natural and man-made splendour of this country, but I'm glad it's also providing Emanuel and Natan some lessons about its blemishes. I hope that they, like Juha, will want to make Israel an even better place. ■

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Israeli government called on to respond to proliferation of "price-tag" attacks

JTA
TEL AVIV

Houses of worship have been vandalized, businesses defaced and car tires slashed.

So-called "price-tag" attacks have proliferated since Israeli-Palestinian peace talks were suspended at the end of April.

Intended to exact a price for Israeli government policies seen as detrimental to the settlement enterprise, such attacks have long been a problem in the West Bank. But suspected Jewish extremists increasingly are targeting Israeli Arab citizens, mosques and churches within the country's borders.

Israel's government has been left in the awkward position of confronting a string of ideologically motivated attacks perpetrated by Jews. Now calls are growing for the government to mount a stronger response.

The latest attacks come at a particularly sensitive time – just weeks before Pope Francis is due to make a high-profile visit to Israel. Anti-Christian graffiti has prompted the Vatican to express concern for the safety of Israel's Christians.

"What began as love of the land has become, in part, a wild west sown with hate toward Arabs, the state of laws and its representatives," Justice Minister Tzipi Livni wrote in a Facebook post May 7.

Attackers have slashed the tires of Arab-owned cars in the Israeli towns of Yokneam, Acre and Fureidis. Graffiti reading "Death to Arabs" was sprayed in Yokneam and eastern Jerusalem. Last week, Jerusalem's St. George Romanian Orthodox Church was defaced with the words "Price tag, King David is for the Jews, Jesus is garbage."

Even Jewish and Israeli Defence Forces institutions are not immune. Also last week, vandals reportedly defaced an Israeli army base with slogans demeaning the Pope and Arabs. The same day, swastikas inside Jewish stars were found outside Jerusalem's Conservative Moreshet Yisrael synagogue.

Israeli security forces have responded as they have since the price-tag attacks began in 2008 – with investigations and arrests.

Amos Oz, one of Israel's leading literary figures and a stalwart of the left, likened price-tag perpetrators to neo-Nazis in a nationally televised speech last week in honour of his 75th birthday.

"'Price tag' and 'hilltop youth' are sweet, sugary nicknames, and the time has come to call this monster by its name," Oz said. "We wanted to be like all other nations, we longed for there to be a Hebrew thief and a Hebrew prostitute – and there are Hebrew neo-Nazi groups."

Oz's analogy drew immediate criticism.

Reuven Rivlin, a Likud Knesset member and former Knesset speaker who was present for the speech, called it "a cheapening of the Holocaust." The Samaria Residents' Committee, a West Bank settlers' advocacy group, filed a police complaint accusing Oz of incitement to racism.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has condemned price-tag attacks, but some said the government needed to give security forces a freer hand to prevent them. Last week, Livni and Public Security Minister Yitzhak Aharonovitch recommended that Israel's Shin Bet internal intelligence agency classify the price tag attacks as terrorism.

The former head of counterterrorism operations in Netanyahu's office, Nitzan Nuriel, told *JTA* that continued price-tag incidents could lead to a bloody backlash from Palestinians, either against the attackers themselves or other Jewish targets.

Last week, in an apparent response to the price-tag attacks, graffiti was found in northern Israel on the tomb of Abba Halafta, a second-century rabbi, reading "Tag will pay a price."

Nuriel called for a pre-emptive approach to the price-tag attacks, similar to how Israel deals with Palestinian terror groups.

"We need to frustrate it, to cause it not to happen," said Nuriel, now a research associate at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya's International Institute for Counter-Terrorism. "We need to act against it with more determination, to set rules."

Some Israeli media have taken to calling the attacks hate crimes, but Hebrew University political sociology lecturer, Eitan Alimi, said the definition obscures the political element in the attacks. The hateful language is a means of protest, Alimi said, not an end in itself.

"There's no doubt that the price-tag phenomenon is very influenced by political processes," Alimi said. "I'm not sure these are primarily hate crimes. They're violent acts with political logic and political goals."

While government officials decide how best to respond, a group of civilians has attempted to help the attacked communities heal. Founded in 2011 and called Light Tag, the coalition of activists from a range of left-wing and pluralist non-profits has visited places where attacks took place to meet with community leaders and offer emotional support.

On Sunday, Light Tag organized a protest opposite Netanyahu's residence in which it invoked guarantees of tolerance in Israel's Declaration of Independence. Gadi Gvaryahu, Light Tag's chairman, noted that price-tag attacks have included attempts to burn down mosques and feared they could lead to deaths if not curbed.

"A Jewish state cannot allow itself, based on Jewish beliefs, to burn down a mosque," Gvaryahu said. "People think that price tag is just graffiti. It's not just graffiti. They hurt people." ■

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Government needs to support tourism industry in Israel

STEVE K. WALZ
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Despite a steady upward trend in the numbers of foreign tourists visiting Israel during the first quarter of 2014, the Israel Hotel Association (IHA) has criticized the Israeli government for not devoting enough financial resources towards boosting incoming tourism from North America and beyond.

According to the latest Israel Ministry of Tourism statistics, 1.16 million visitors arrived in Israel between January and April 2014, which is five per cent more than during the same period in 2013, five per cent more than 2012 and nine per cent more than 2011.

Of these, 1.05 million were foreign tourists, which is 16 per cent more than 2013 and 12 per cent and 21 per cent more than 2012 and 2011 respectively.

Despite these optimistic figures, IHA president, Eli Gonen chided the Israeli government, claiming that tourism was still not a national priority and called on the Israeli government to pump millions of additional dollars into the Ministry of Tourism's annual budget.

The IHA's own statistics reflect only an eight per cent increase in the number of new hotel rooms built in Israel since 2000. Local and foreign hoteliers are not in a rush to invest in erecting new or revamping older hotel properties, as the current incoming market has not grown fast enough to spur the growth of potentially profitable enterprises.

"The government must give the hotel and tourism industry the proper support and put it at the top of the list of priorities," claimed Gonen. "As far as I am concerned this is no different than the crisis that the USA faced after the 9/11 attacks. America had an image problem, so the federal government stepped in to create a special budget for advertising, while many hotels offered special prices as well. The emergency budget had a tremendous impact on luring tourists back to New York and the USA.

The Sheraton Tel Aviv is offering special packages for summer visitors.

"Israel already suffers from an image problem based on the events that take place every day in the Middle East," said Gonen. "It's truly a shame. I have friends in the USA who have come to Israel and told me after a few days of arriving here, 'Gee, we had no idea that Tel Aviv was such a cool city and the country was so beautiful.' People have to know that we have so much to offer."

On a positive note, a substantial number of North American tourists are on the verge of booking their summer vacations in Israel. A number of quality hotels are offering a potpourri of deals including:

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Hotels offer special rates

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Inbal Jerusalem Hotel - (www.inbalhotel.com)
During the summer months the Inbal is offering several packages including: Kids staying free in their parents' room when staying a minimum four consecutive nights; Free car rental for guests who book for three consecutive nights, as well as a bike tour of Jerusalem.

Special deals are confirmed upon availability and have blackout dates and conditions. During the summer vacation season the hotel features their beautiful outdoor pool, kids club and grill bar.

Sheraton Tel Aviv Hotel - (www.sheratontelaviv.com)
Two new guestroom floors called "New Executive Club Rooms" will be completed by mid-July. These rooms are the most exclusive accommodation options at the Sheraton Tel Aviv. The Club Lounge on the 18th floor has been expanded. Club guests can have breakfast, and all day cold and hot hors d'oeuvres, private check-in and check-out reception desk.

Link@Sheraton located in the lobby of the hotel is now available for hotel guests. Designed as a social destination, Link@Sheraton invites guests to interact with each other while they check their emails, research local attractions and even print boarding passes using free Wi-Fi and computer stations. One of the hotel's most popular summer deals includes tickets to the Cirque du Soleil performance of *Quidam* in Tel Aviv, based on a minimum five night package from Aug. 7-16.

Dan Hotels - (www.danhotels.com)
The Dan chain has upgraded its rooms and public areas highlighted by major makeovers at the Dan Panorama Jerusalem and Dan Panorama Tel Aviv. There are special summer rates at the Dan Panorama Jerusalem, Dan Jerusalem, Dan Boutique Jerusalem, Dan Tel Aviv and Dan Panorama Tel Aviv.

The Dan Panorama Tel Aviv, Dan Boutique Jerusalem and Dan Panorama Haifa are offering a free child staying in the parents' room special. In Tel Aviv, the free child deal is valid when reserving three nights or more. Terms and conditions apply and vary during July and August.

The chain will be operating its annual Danyland children's centers at the hotels (except for the King David Hotel in Jerusalem). The Danyland theme this summer will focus on "Our Green Environment" and "Animals We Love".

The outdoor pool at Dan Tel Aviv

Rimonim Hotels - (www.Rimonim.com)
The Rimonim chain recently took over the Palm Beach Club Hotel in Akko (Northern Israel).

The hotel is nestled on the tranquil shores of the Mediterranean, just minutes from Akko's fascinating old city. Covering over eight acres, the property includes a hotel, country club, spa, events centre-including nearly a dozen halls of varying sizes.

The hotel's 125 rooms are fully equipped for business or leisure, couples or families, independent travellers or tour groups. The hotel offers free entrance to the country club with indoor and outdoor pool, gym, tennis court and jacuzzi.

Orchid Hotels - (www.OrchidHotels.com)
In Tel Aviv, the Park Plaza Orchid Hotel is located along the majestic oceanfront promenade. The hotel offers free Wi-Fi, bicycles, a 24/7 business centre and free international calls from rooms and Internet lobby. The Orchid Jerusalem View Hotel, which is located in pastoral Ma'ale Hachamisha (Jerusalem mountains), highlights a free gym and sauna, bicycling throughout the breathtaking scenery surrounding the facility, as well as a free shuttle bus that drops visitors off in downtown Jerusalem. There are also creative activities for the children. ■

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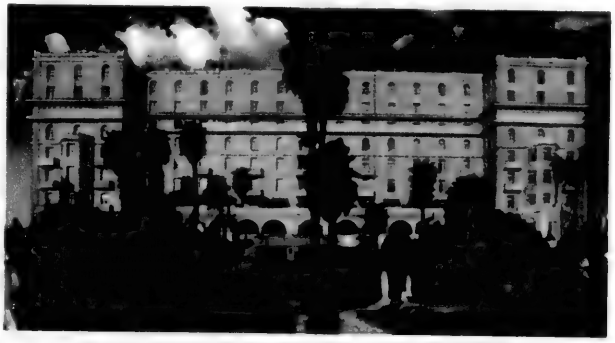

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Jewish Life

Joshua Max Feldman places himself within the pantheon of modern Jewish writers. Page 36

Mother and daughter to perform together

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Elissa Miller-Kay, a pianist who won first prize in the prestigious International Beethoven Piano Sonata Competition, is the guest soloist in an upcoming performance of the York Symphony, an orchestra that includes her mother on violin.

Miller-Kay's mother, Rickey Miller, who studied piano seriously up to the end of high school, learned to play violin as an adult. She took lessons with her then-six-year-old son, Jeremy, who's now 28.

"She learned violin alongside him," Miller-Kay said. "It's amazing to learn an instrument as an adult." She said her mother always encouraged her to take music seriously, as did the other family members, including her music-loving grandmother, Faye Miller, who at 97, still goes to the opera and symphony.

"It's a tough career," Miller-Kay said.

Miller-Kay, a Thornhill, Ont., native, won the Ben Steinberg Musical Legacy Award in 2006, an award created by Temple Sinai in Toronto to support the careers of young Jewish artists in Canada. She said that when she competed in the 13th Biennial International Beethoven Piano Sonata Competition in Memphis, Tenn., in 2009, she tried not to think of it as a competition in order to deal with the stress.

"I focused on communicating the music to the audience and the judges."

When it was announced that she had won, she said, "I was kind of overwhelmed and a little surprised." She added that the win was a good boost for her career.

Miller-Kay currently lives in New York, where she's doing her PhD in piano studies at New York University and teaching. She performs regularly in cities on both sides of the border and has played Carnegie Hall. She said she likes performing in Canadian cities, where there are not as many concerts as in New York "so audiences can be more enthusiastic."

She said she chose NYU so that she could study with the university's internationally acclaimed piano faculty member, Martin Canin. Also, she enjoys research and writing about music, and the university offers a program that allows her to write a dissertation. Miller-Kay is writing about the way Beethoven's piano sonatas were performed in the 19th century.

Unlike today, classical musicians improvised. They were "a lot more free," she said. She said she feels connected to many composers, but Beethoven is the one she's "drawn to the most." There's deep suffering in his music, she said, and "there's a feeling of triumph.

"That's true of many of his works. Beethoven was very bold and doing something new. He almost invented Romanticism in music. He really shocked people at the time."

Miller-Kay plays Beethoven's *Piano Sonata, Op. 110*, in a documentary the actor Ethan Hawke made about the piano teacher, Seymour Bernstein.

In *Seymour: An Introduction*, which is currently in post-production, Bernstein gives a master class to three students, and she is one of them.

Miller-Kay has an unusual background for a musician. She studied biochemistry at the University of Toronto. While she was there, she was also attending the Royal Conservatory of Music.

"It became clear that after two years I had to make a choice," she said. "It came down to my love of performing. There's nothing like performing for an audience." ■

Miller-Kay, 32, pictured, and her mother, Rickey Miller, perform with the York Symphony Orchestra on May 24 at 8 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church in Aurora, Ont., and on May 25 at 7:30 p.m. at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Miller-Kay will play Beethoven's Emperor Concerto, and the orchestra will perform Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5. For more information about Miller-Kay, visit www.elissamillerkay.com.

Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

LACHAN JEWISH CHAMBER CHOIR PERFORMS AT HOLY BLOSSOM JUNE 2

Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir performs music from the 12th to the 21st centuries in Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino and English in a 20th anniversary performance at Holy Blossom Temple in early June.

Twenty years after the choir was founded by **Cantor Benjamin Maissner**, it has performed in Canada, United States, Europe, Israel and China. Its upcoming concert honours composer **Ben Steinberg** and features cantors **Charles Osborne** and **David Rosen**.

1950 Bathurst St., June 2, 7:30 p.m. Admission free; suggested donation $20 at the door. www.lachan.org

• • •

Silent Film with Live Music: Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two screenings of *Breaking Home Ties*, a 1922 restored silent film drama that protests the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States. With live musical accompaniment by **Jordan Klapman** on piano and **Rebekah Wolkstein** on violin. $15, $10. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday June 1, 4 and 7:30 p.m.

• • •

New in Print: *Klara's Journey*, a new historical novel by American writer **Ben G. Frank**, focuses on a 17-year-old heroine who leaves Moscow on the newly-built Trans-Siberian railway on a trek to find her father who has gone to Winnipeg. Weeks after the Revolution, Russia is caught in the grip of a civil war and Klara meets threadbare armies, famished beggars, violent protesters – and a young soldier who protects her.

A love story set against the backdrop of a turbulent era, *Klara's Journey* paints a vivid picture of the times and offers insight into why so many Russian Jews left for America and Canada. Published by Marion Street Press.

• • •

Names in the News: The Jazz Performance and Education Centre was founded by **Raymond** and **Rochelle Koskie** in 2008 as a charitable organization dedicated to the preservation and development of jazz music in Canada. JPEC presents the **Pat LaBarbera Quartet** (piano, sax, bass, drums) performing two sets at the Paintbox Bistro, 555 Dundas St. E. May 24, 8 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Cover $20. 647-748-0555.

• • •

Music Notes

• **Jose Feliciano** performs a concert to benefit the Canadian Friends of the Israel Guide Center for the Blind. $55, $70, $85. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. May 22, 7:30 p.m. 1-855-985-2787, www.ticketmaster.ca. VIP tickets $180, 416-577-3600.

• **The MNJcc Community Choir** performs its 18th annual spring concert with conductor **Harriet Wichin**, pianist **Len McCarthy**, and percussionist **Dick Smith**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, May 28 and May 29, 8 p.m. Tickets, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• **Stella Walker** and **Cantor David Rosen**, accompanied by **Waylen Miki**, perform *Abi Gezunt*, a selection of musical gems from Borscht Belt humour to cantorial works, highlighting the parallels between Yiddish music and the synagogue. Presented by Active 55+ as part of Jewish Music Week. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday May 22, 2 p.m. (Doors open 1:30 p.m.) Free admission.

• "Yidishtog" Yiddish Concert with **Vira Lozinsky** and the **Emil Aybinder Ensemble**. Miles Nadal JCC, May 25, 8 p.m. $20, $25. Follows set of Yiddish and English lectures celebrating mamaloshen with **Yael Chaver**, **Elly Gotz** and **Goldie Morgentaler**, 2 to 6 p.m. $10. Both events $25. 416-907-0468, www.mnjcc.org/yidishtog

• Guitarist **Brian Katz** plays music from his recent solo CD, *Leaves Will Speak*. Mezzetta Restaurant, 681 St. Clair Ave. W., May 21, 9 to 11 p.m. Cover $8. 416-658-5687. The following evening Katz joins with singer **Ori Dagan** and bassist **Kobi Hass** in a tribute to the late Israeli singer **Arik Einstein**, as part of Toronto Jewish Music Week. Monarch Tavern, 12 Clinton St., May 22, 7:30 p.m. $20, $25.

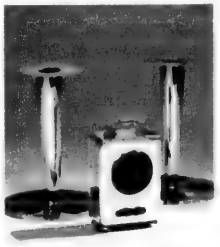
Arts in Brief

• **Adam Nayman** continues his series on the works of filmmaker **David Lynch** with an examination of *Twin Peaks and Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me*. Miles Nadal JCC, May 26, 7 to 9 p.m. $12 drop-in, students $6.

• Toronto's Civic Light Opera Co. presents *The Glorious Ones*, the **Flaherty-Ahrens** "*Kiss-Me-Kate*"-style musical that focuses on the onstage and backstage antics of a troupe of dedicated 17th-century Italian actors. $28. Zion Cultural Centre, 1650 Finch Ave. E. (east of Don Mills). May 28 to June 15. 416-755-1717, www.MusicTheatreToronto.com

At the Galleries:

The Royal Ontario Museum presents *Around 1914 – Design in a New Age*, featuring more than 100 objects created by the artisans and designers working at the time of the ROM's 1914 opening. This original exhibition showcases some of the best pieces from the museum's renowned European decorative arts collections, strengthened over the years through donations from patrons such as the **Ostrys**, **Tanenbaums** and others. On view until March 2015. ■



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GRAY, HERBERT
Yeshiva University and Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University mourn the passing of the Right Honourable Herb Gray P.C., C.C., Q.C. B. Comm., LL.B, LL.D born Herbert Eacer Gray who served as a Canadian Member of Parliament for four decades 1969-2002 and Cabinet Minister under three Prime Ministers and as Deputy Prime Minister from 1997-2002. He was Canada's first Jewish Federal Cabinet Minister and was granted the honorific "The Right Honourable" and was the third longest continuously serving Member of Parliament in Canadian history. He was the Guest Speaker at a Yeshiva University Heritage Award Dinner of Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University in March 1971 and was praised in a letter from Dr. Samuel Belkin, then President of Yeshiva University "for strengthening the bonds for still greater cooperation between our two countries and particularly the Jewish communities, in working towards the ideals we cherish". May Herb Gray always be remembered with reverence for his active involvement in Jewish life and the prestige he conferred upon our people through his unique and distinguished leadership role in Canada's government from 1962-2002. May his memory be a source of enduring pride to all Canada's citizens and especially to Canadian Jewry.
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Author discusses *The Book of Jonah*

BILL GLADSTONE
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Jonah Jacobson is a young Manhattan lawyer immersed in an important legal deal that could make him a partner, and in relationships with two beautiful women each in love with him, when the heavens open and he has a bizarre biblical vision at a party.

Suddenly he sees "the Empire State Building collapsed and Grand Central Station collapsed and the subway tunnels flooded with water and then water rising to the streets through the concrete so that what had been the city, this city, became an island again interlaced with rivers and buried in the rubble of things collapsed or burned or bombed or pulled apart like the shining marble pulled from the pyramids . . . ."

This is the beginning of Jacobson's life-changing existential crisis as described in *The Book of Jonah*, a novel by first-time Florida novelist Joshua Max Feldman, who recently visited Toronto on a promotional tour.

"I wanted to reimagine the biblical story (of Jonah) in a contemporary setting," Feldman told me as we sat in a coffee shop at Lawrence Avenue and Bathurst Street.

"I wanted to present the Jonah in my book as someone who is very worldly, very focused on his career and his somewhat fraught dating life, and someone who is not really interested in higher metaphysical questions. It's something that really doesn't register with him at all, and the initial conceit of the story is that he's suddenly confronted with what he takes to be a metaphysical divine vision."

Born and raised in Amherst, Mass., Feldman formerly worked with some success as a playwright in the "nitty gritty world of off- and off-off-Broadway theatre." The idea for the book came about after he decided to try writing 10 short stories, each one based on a different book of the Bible. "The Book of Jonah was one of the first ones that I started working on; it just grew and grew until I realized I needed to make it into a novel."

No longer enmeshed in a community of struggling theatrical artists, Feldman found the act of writing a novel a very solitary activity. But after several years of lonely work the reward came when, with the help of an ace literary agent, the manuscript was sold to two top publishers: Henry Holt in the United States and Random House in Canada. Both versions were published simultaneously and came out in February.

Joshua Max Feldman

God commands the biblical Jonah to warn the wicked residents of Nineveh that they will be punished; Jonah tries to evade this duty and is swallowed by a giant fish. Eventually he is spat up on the shore of Nineveh, delivers his prophecy and all of the Ninevites repent. Happy ending? Not really, Feldman relates.

"Jonah is actually so upset with what's happened that he tells God that he'd rather die than live. Those contradictions in the story are never really explained – and I think that's a good thing, it gives the story credit. It acknowledges that there's always going to be a degree of the unknown when we're dealing with a higher plane or a higher being."

Although it alludes centrally to a biblical tale, Feldman says his novel is not a religious book but rather "a novel about people encountering religious issues and religious questions. I try to ground the events of the book, however extraordinary, in the experiences and the relationships of the characters."

With *The Book of Jonah*, Feldman places himself centrally within the pantheon of modern Jewish writers, perhaps even somewhere within range of one of his favourites, Nathan Englander, although the former's prose style seems jarringly cluttered and contemporary by contrast.

Since he's written a psychological novel, it seems less than surprising that Feldman names Fyodor Dostoyevsky as "probably the writer I admire most in the world." He also admires the writing of Herman Melville, which again is not surprising since he's attempted an epic of his own. He also cites Virginia Woolf as a special influence. "She had such insight into the way the mind works," he says. "And she found such poetry in the everyday, and that's something I aspire to do in my writing." ■

The Book of Jonah is published by Bond Street Books, a division of Random House.

Challah bake unites Jewish community

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

What happens when a group of rebbetzins gather over kosher sushi on a Saturday night? A powerful community-wide project is born.

A joint project of 25 Chabad centres in southern Ontario brought together 1,500 Jewish women for the area's inaugural Mega Challah Bake May 14 at the Terrace Banquet Centre in Vaughan.

The evening's master of ceremonies Nina Miller, a community member from Toronto's Chabad on the Avenue, welcomed the guests with the words, "Before me, I see a sea of beautiful Jewish women of many generations with open hearts and smiling faces. Scan the room so as to have a sense of this magical imaging.

"Challah and Chabad have something uniquely in common," she said. "They unite Jews from all walks of life and levels of observance no matter what culture, country or Jewish factors they stem from. Tonight we are making history by forming our very own sisterhood community."

The evening also honoured the memory of two rebbetzins, 37-year-old Rashi Minkowitz from Alpharetta, Ga., in the United States, and 49-year-old Rivkie Barber from Melbourne, Australia.

The tradition of baking challah for Shabbat has been routinely passed on from mother to daughter, from one generation to the next. The task provides an opportunity for women to centre their lives in ritual and prayer, and to bless their families. It is taught that when a woman bakes challah and recites the appropriate blessings on the dough, she is bringing additional blessings into her home.

From left are some of the participants in southern Ontario's recent Mega Challah Bake: Rochelle Grimson Kerzner, Michelle Scolnick Moll, Marcie Nadler-Fisher, Samantha Fisher, Suzanne Neumark, Lisa Tarshis and Rebbetzin Rivky Gansburg of Chabad of York Mills. SUSAN MINUK PHOTO

"The mitzvah of challah strengthens our faith by reminding us that all our sustenance comes to us though the hand of God. The Jewish woman not only nurtures her family physically, but also brings spiritual awareness into her home," said Rebbetzin Goldie Plotkin, of Chabad of Markham.

During this period in the Jewish calendar, the days between Pesach and Shavuot, we count the Omer. It's a time when we focus on examining and refining specific aspects of our emotions.

"To have 1,500 women from different walks of life coming together, unified as one soul, and performing a special mitzvah [in baking challah] is powerful. This is a special time for us to have unity and to show our love and respect for one another," said Rebbetzin Rivky Gansburg of Chabad of York Mills.

Hundreds of volunteers helped prepare for the event. All participants received an apron; a bowl; containers of pre-measured sugar, oil, salt, yeast and flour; and an egg.

"We had shifts of 40 women every hour on the hour pack the ingredients needed to make the challah," Plotkin said.

The vibe of the evening was both spiritual and enthusiastic. Plotkin led the audience through a kabbalistic explanation, dedication and meditation for each ingredient used in preparing the challah and the effect that it has on the different parts of our lives.

"While sifting the flour, sing because joy is the foundation of all spiritual success," she said.

"Add each ingredient consciously: sugar, for the sweetness you hope to see in your family's life; yeast, so that each member of your family will grow and expand; water, representing Torah, which flows from a higher place to this world; flour, for the material blessings HaShem sends our way; eggs, for the blessings of life and children; and salt, representing rebuke – fill three tablespoons, then shake some back into the container because we should always give away less rebuke than we think we should; oil – anoint each member of your family by name, praying for his or her specific needs Oil also symbolizes the secrets of the Torah, which permeates everything."

On each table was a tzedakah box. "Jewish tradition has… been that we give charity before… we do a mitzvah," Plotkin said, referring to the mitzvah of separating the challah, reciting a blessing, taking a portion of the dough and burning it before shaping and baking the challah.

A girls choir entertained the women, who linked arms, singing and dancing in circles around their tables.

The final step in the challah baking was a braiding demonstration by an expert. She demonstrated the four-braided challah, whose strands represent arms intertwined – symbolizing love, truth, peace, creation, freedom, harmony, family connection, unity and justice.

Each woman went home with two loaves of challah to bake and a positive connection to the mitzvah of challah in Judaism. ■

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 22, 2014

Young cellist receives Temple Sinai award

RUTH SCHWETIZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Beth Silver, 22, the winner of this year's Ben Steinberg Musical Legacy Award, has been playing cello since she was four years old.

"Most string players start very young," Silver said on the telephone from Montreal, where she is taking a master's degree in cello performance at McGill University and playing in the McGill Symphony Orchestra.

Silver won the Steinberg award for her musical talent, instrumental technique and overall musicianship. The award, named after Ben Steinberg when he retired as music director at Toronto's Temple Sinai in 1996, was created by the temple in 1983 to support the careers of young Jewish artists in Canada.

Silver said that while she was growing up, people told her how well she played cello. "But it wasn't till university that I discovered how much I loved it," she added.

When she was two years old, Silver told her mother, Carla, who teaches band instruments and choral music at Roselawn Public School in York Region, that she wanted to play cello.

But Carla Silver would have preferred that her daughter play flute, clarinet or horn. "Cello isn't her area of expertise. She wanted me to play something she could help me with," Silver explained. However, Silver insisted on cello, and at the age of four, her wish came true and she was enrolled in lessons.

Silver learned how to play cello outside of public school, as York Region schools – she's a Richmond Hill, Ont., native – don't offer a string program. "I had many teachers who inspired me," she said.

Attending Unionville High School, an arts high school, gave her the chance to play cello at school. This year, Silver is enthralled with the classical composers Benjamin Britten, Brahms and Bartok, but she said last year she was big on French romantic music.

The tastes of music students change constantly, she added, and sometimes "we're discovering new things in the music we've heard before. Our ears get more sophisticated."

She spends a couple of hours practising each day, but she said that it's important for her to get out and play with other musicians. On the day *The Canadian Jewish News* spoke to her, Silver was on her way to rehearse with a trio.

After she finishes university, she said she plans to audition for orchestras. But she added that classical musicians should be flexible, "keep an open mind" and expand their musical horizons. A fan of klezmer, gypsy bands and bluegrass music, Silver has been playing in the indie folk scene in Montreal, improvising with other musicians.

"Everyone brings something different, depending on their instrument, their personality," she said.

Silver has received awards from the Royal Conservatory of Music, the York Region Arts Council and the Kiwanis Festival. She's a recipient of the Martin Gelber and Yo Yo Ma scholarships, and she has played with the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra and the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

This year, she performed in the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's Young People's Concert Series. ■

Beth Silver

Silver performs a free concert at Temple Sinai on May 28. She will play the Poulenc Cello Sonata and Brahms Violin Sonata No. 2 in A Major, Op. 100, which she arranged for cello. She'll also perform a piece by Ben Steinberg, music by George Perle, and songs by Gabriel Faure. She will be accompanied by pianist Jenna Richards.

Crown Height riot focus of book for young adults

MYRON LOVE
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Eva Wiseman's stories have ranged throughout Jewish history. Reflecting her Hungarian Jewish background, Wiseman's first four novels explored various aspects of the Hungarian Jewish experience during and after World War II.

For her fifth novel, *Pupper*, she reached back into the 19th century and the blood libel in a Hungarian Jewish community. For her sixth novel, *The Last Song*, she went even farther back in time to the Jewish experience at the time of the expulsion from Spain over 500 years ago

Now, with her latest work, *The World Outside*, (Random House) Wiseman has returned to recent times. *The World Outside* is set in August, 1991 at the time of the Crown Heights riots in New York City.

Wiseman describes the Crown Heights riots as a modern day pogrom. The riots began on Aug.19, 1991, after a black child was accidentally struck and killed by an automobile in the motorcade of the late Lubavitcher Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. Several Jews were seriously injured during the riot and Yankel Rosenbaum, a follower of Rabbi Schneerson, was murdered.

Wiseman's novels are intended for teenage and young adult readers. *The World Outside* focuses on Chanie Altman, a 17-year-old girl from a Lubavitch family in New York who aspires to be an opera singer in a society where women singing for an audience that includes men is strictly forbidden. "She meets a Jewish boy from outside her world who opens her eyes to the possibilities of the wider world outside," Wiseman says.

"I had read about the Crown Heights riots but didn't know a lot about them when I decided to write this novel," she says, "and I knew less about Lubavitch."

To learn about the Lubavitch lifestyle, she arranged to spend six days living with a Lubavitch family in New York. "I tried not to have any preconceived notions," she says. "While I was there, I followed their customs and wore long skirts and kept my head covered."

She describes her time with the family as a most interesting experience living amidst people who follow a thousand-year-old lifestyle but use modern technology in the form of computers and smart phones in their mission to reach out to other Jews.

"The people were very welcoming," she says. "I davened with them at 770 Eastern Parkway (the home of Schneerson). I even had four invitations for Shabbat."

As part of her research, she interviewed eight teenage Lubavitch girls. "They all seem to be well-adjusted," she says. "All aspired to be shlichim (the Lubavitch representatives in communities worldwide). It is very much an insulated community."■

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Rabbi Silver, Israel and the Diaspora

MARTIN LOCKSHIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Sixty-six years after the creation of the State of Israel, Jews in the Diaspora still struggle to define its significance for our lives. Does the success of Zionism logically mean the ultimate demise of all communities of Jews outside of Israel?

On the other hand, can Diaspora Judaism simply continue as if the State of Israel did not exist?

The Downfall of Abba Hillel Silver and the Foundation of Israel, a new book by Ofer Shiff of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, traces the early history of these debates through the depiction of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver (1893-1963), one of the first and most prominent Reform rabbis to work toward the establishment of the State of Israel.

At the inception of the Reform movement, its leaders felt that Jewish nationalism was incompatible with their religious principles. The famous Reform manifesto, the Pittsburgh Platform, declared in 1885: "We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine . . . nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state."

Like many Jews today, Reform and otherwise, early Reform Jews believed that the modern democracies of the West were hospitable homes for Jews and that the processes of enlightenment and emancipation had made it possible for Jews to live fulfilling Jewish lives in the Diaspora. They advocated various adjustments to Judaism to make it fit better into the West.

Early 20th-century Zionist leaders, on the other hand, argued that the so-called "Jewish problem" could not be solved in the Diaspora. The Jewish people, they felt, ought to abandon the Diaspora, where they had been mistreated for much of the last 1,800 years, and establish an autonomous Jewish state where they could finally regain control of their own fate and not depend on the grace of others.

Rabbi Silver, a leading Jewish American thinker and activist, changed the equation that a Reform Jew was a non-Zionist Jew. He believed that in the 20th century the Jewish people was going through two distinct but compatible processes of adjusting to modernity: religious accommodation to allow integration in the West, and Zionism.

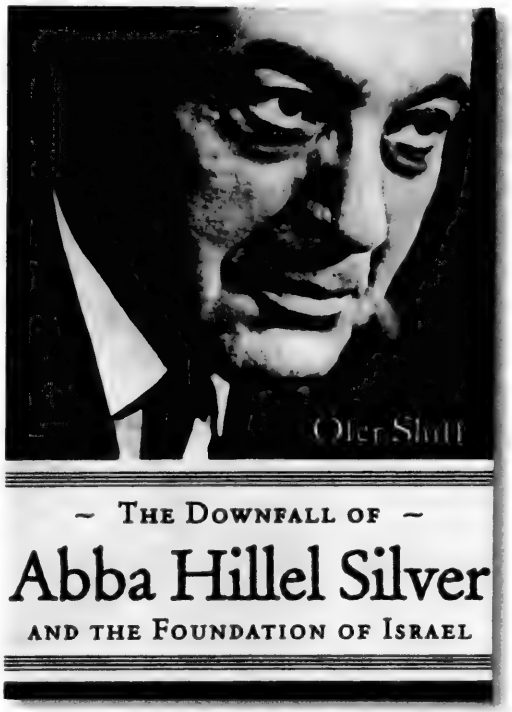
Proving to ourselves and to the world that we were capable of running a democratic state was an important step in the process of becoming modern Jews. To this end, he worked tirelessly for the movement, developing close personal relationships with Israeli Zionist leaders.

> *Rabbi Silver... changed the equation that a Reform Jew was a non-Zionist Jew*

Shiff paints an interesting portrait of Rabbi Silver. Not surprisingly, despite his Zionism he still had much in common with classical Reform Judaism. In the 1930s, his sermons encouraged German Jews not to emigrate but to stay in Germany, fighting for democracy and for their own rights, and thereby proving that in modern times, Jews could thrive and live freely in the West. He felt that if Jews left, it would be an admission that emancipation had failed. By the end of the 1930s, he abandoned this position. Yet after 1948, he regained some of his optimism, arguing that an important result of the creation of the State of Israel was that world Jews could once again trust the nations of the world, a trust that had been undermined by the Shoah.

Shiff's book centres on the surprising story of the last 15 years of Rabbi Silver's life, right after the State was founded. After years of being a central participant in the Zionist movement, he was pushed out of the corridors of power. Shiff argues that the leaders of the State, particularly David Ben-Gurion, had been willing and eager to receive Rabbi Silver's help before 1948 but that once the State was established, they had no more use for someone who believed there was a congenial home for Jews outside of Israel. They believed in a Zionism that negated the Diaspora, and had worked together with Rabbi Silver before 1948 only to take advantage of his influence and connections.

A careful reading of the book shows that other factors as well may have led to Rabbi Silver's political "downfall." As a supporter of the Republican Party in the United States, the Israelis should have been able to use Rabbi Silver's political connections between 1952 and 1960, when the Republican Dwight Eisenhower was president. But Ben-Gurion's left-of-centre world view was not a good fit with Rabbi Silver's. On a trip to Israel in the early years of the State, Rabbi Silver received a cool reception from Israelis, with the notable exception of members of the General Zionist party, which was more to the right than Ben-Gurion. Many Israelis also found Rabbi Silver's American Reform style off-putting even though he spoke a rich and fluent modern Hebrew. A *Ha'aretz* editorial insultingly labelled him a preacher, and criticized him for unrealistically promoting world peace.



Shiff has done careful archival research on the papers of Rabbi Silver. His story involves detailed political machinations both in Israel and in the United States, which are difficult to understand without a good knowledge of the history of the middle decades of the 20th century. Knowledgeable readers, though, are likely to be interested in Rabbi Silver's story as Jews throughout the world still ponder today the relationship of Israel and Diaspora Jewry. ■

The Downfall of Abba Hillel Silver and the Foundation of Israel
Ofer Shiff

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What's New

MAY 22 - MAY 29

by Lila Sarick

Thursday 22	Friday 23	Saturday 24	Sunday 25	Monday 26	Tuesday 27	Wednesday 28
Explore the power of music or Jews' genetic history tonight.			Walk with Israel	Learn about five biblical sisters from a noted scholar.		

Thursday, May 22

THE POWER OF MUSIC
Yehoshua Lavner discusses "The Power of Simcha and Music," 8 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue.

SEXUAL ABUSE: A JEWISH SECRET
Stephen Marcus discusses "Sexual abuse: Jewish Toronto's Dirty Little Secret," 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

GENETIC HISTORY OF THE JEWS
Dr. Karl Skorecki discusses "The Genetic History of the Jewish People," Park Hyatt Hotel, 4 Avenue Rd. Reception at 7 p.m., presentation at 8 p.m. Presented by Technion Canada and University of Toronto faculty of medicine. For tickets, call 416-789-4545 or email info@technioncanada.org. $54.

JEWISH PASSION
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Jewish Passion: Living a Passionate Judaism," 8:30 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. May 29, the topic is "Mashiach Ben Yosef: Another Missionary Dead End."

FILM SERIES
The film *The Rape of Europe* will be shown at Lodzer Centre Synagogue at 7 p.m. $5.

JEWISH HISTORY
Gerald Ziedenberg discusses "The Trial and Capture of Adolf Eichmann," 7 p.m. at Beth Torah Congregation.

Saturday, May 24

BNAI SHALOM
B'nai Shalom, a Conservative congregation in Halton-Peel meets today. Call 905-901-9889 or email info@bnaishalom.ca.

Deadline Reminder:
The deadline for the issue of June 3 is May 26. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Walk with Israel

May 25 is the date for UJA Federation's annual Walk With Israel. Walk starts at 9 a.m. from Toronto's Coronation Park.

Sunday, May 25

ISRAEL DAY
Beth Jacob Synagogue celebrates Israel Day, 4- 7 p.m. at 147 Overbrook Place. Events include an eyewitness account from a soldier who participated in the liberation of Jerusalem in 1967, food and music. Call 416-638-5955 for tickets. $5.

MORLEY TORGOV
Novelist **Morley Torgov** discusses the art and craft of writing, 10:15 a.m., Temple Sinai. RSVP 416-487-3281.

NICKY'S FAMILY
Shaar Shalom Synagogue shows the film *Nicky's Family*, about rescuing Jewish children from the former Czechoslovakia in 1939, 8 p.m.

LEMONADE STAND
Jamie and Alexandra's lemonade stand, benefiting Ve'ahavta, will be held at Bannockburn Park, 2-5 p.m. There will be food, games and a canine variety show.

DOORS OPEN TORONTO
First Narayever Congregation participates in Doors Open Toronto, with brief talks about the shul's history, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Monday, May 26

CROSS-EXAMINATION
Canadian Hadassah-WIZO Rachel chapter presents an evening with criminal lawyer **Edward Greenspan** and director **Barry Avrich**, 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. For tickets, call 416-630-8373. $50.

A TALE OF FIVE SISTERS
Avivah Zornberg discusses "To be or not to be: A tale of the daughters of Zelofchad," 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

Tuesday, May 27

LUNCH AND LEARN
Tom Sandler discusses "I'll Never Smile Again," 12:15 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $20. Call 416-221-3433.

UNDERSTANDING TEENS
Deborah Epstein-Franks discusses "Why Teens Do What They Do," 8:15 a.m., Leo Baeck Day School, 501 Arlington Ave. RSVP scrsvp@leobaeck.ca.

BAYCREST ART SALE
Baycrest holds an art sale today, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and May 28, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Wortsman Hall, 3560 Bathurst St.

JEWISH GENEALOGY
Dorion Leibgott discusses "Learning from Family Heirlooms," with the Jewish Genealogical Society, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. www.jgstoronto.ca.

CHUG HATANACH
Prof. Martin Lockshin discusses Chapter 8 of the Book of Psalms, 8 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

Wednesday, May 28

JEWISH HISTORY
Hana Werner discusses "Ezra the Scribe: Architect of a Nation," Beth Tzedec Congregation. Refreshments at 1:30 p.m.; lecture at 2 p.m. $10.

DINNER DRAW
Beth Emeth Synagogue holds a dinner draw, 6:30 p.m. Grand prizes of $5,000 and a trip to Israel. For tickets, call 416-633-3838.

JEWISH IDENTITY
Pearl Goodman discusses "Why aren't Ward and June Cleaver my parents? The search for one's identity," 2 p.m., Barbara Frum Library.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Thursday, May 29

ART TOURS

Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation invites young professionals to an art tour of the collection held by Torys. Tours start at 6:30 p.m. To register, call 416-781-3584 or visit youngheartsarttour.ca. $18. Other tours scheduled for June 9 and June 25.

GIRLS GONE GLAM

Yasmin chapter of Canadian Hadassah-WIZO holds its Girls Gone Glam event featuring speakers, shopping, music and more. For tickets, email yasmin-chapter@rogers.com.

COMING EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Reena is looking for volunteers to work as "Rec Buddies" at Camp Reena this summer. No experience needed. Call **Mille Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 4-week bereavement group for adults who have recently lost a parent starting June 7. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

LACHAN CONCERT

The Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir celebrates 20 years of singing Jewish music with a gala concert, June 2, Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m. With special guests **Ben Steinberg, cantors Charles Osborne** and **David Rosen.** Suggested donation at the door, $20. www.lachan.org.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **Adolescent Anxiety and Depression: When to Worry, What to do:** A 1-session workshop for parents and/or professionals. May 21 at 7 p.m.
- **Effective Parenting:** A 4-session group for parents of children aged 2 to 10. Starts May 21 at 7 p.m. at Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 9600 Bathurst St.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents.

- Grief counsellor **Andrea Warnick** discusses "Supporting Families When Death Touches Our Lives," May 26 at 7:30 p.m., Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave. Call **Beth Feffer** 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Stella Walker** and **Cantor David Rosen** perform Yiddish songs, May 22, 2 p.m. **Katherine Barber** discusses "Yiddish and Hebrew are alive and living in English," May 27, 1 p.m. To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Specialty fitness classes in osteofit, posture perfect and tai chi are offered at the Miles Nadal JCC. Call 416-924-6211, ext. 526 or email colinb@mnjcc.org.

- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. May 27, **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses "Lawrence of Arabia," 10 a.m.; May 28, Health Fair, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; May 29, **Cindy Aparicio** discusses "Frauds and Scams Targeting Seniors," 1:30 p.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine May 28 (register in advance); Dance with live music, May 25, 7 p.m. Lunch and Song, June 19, noon. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise 10 a.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

- **Kevin Courrier** discusses Marlon Brando, Wednesdays June 11-July 2, 1 p.m. Pre-registration required, call ext. 4235.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of Francis Bacon and Henry Moore, May May 27 and June 3, 1 p.m.
- The book club discusses *Americanah* by **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** June 2, 1 p.m. Pre-registration required. Call ext. 4235.
- **Daniel Aronchik** reviews the latest in electronics, Mondays June 2-16 at 1 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

- Drawings submitted to the Jewish Music Art Week Contest on display in the gallery until June 5.
- Yiddishtog: A day of lectures and music celebrating Yiddish, featuring **Yael Chaver, Elly Gotz, Goldie Morgentaler** and a concert by **Vira Lozinsky** and the **Emil Aybinder Ensemble,** May 25. For tickets, call 416-907-0468 www.ticketwise.ca
- Critic **Adam Nayman** analyzes the work of **David Lynch** Mondays until June 23, 7-9 p.m. May 26: *Twin Peaks.*
- Tickets on sale now for the MNJCC community choir spring concert, May 28 and May 29, 8 p.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. Call ext. 250.
- The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Gillian Steyck** offers small group vocal lessons Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.
- Harmonia, a choir for youth aged 8-18, meets Sundays 4 p.m. until June 1. Email: harmonia@mnjcc.org.
- Tikkun Leil Shavuot, June 3. All-night Jewish learning festival. Call ext. 154.
- Toronto Jewish Film Society presents the silent film *Breaking Home Ties,* with live accompaniment by **Jordan Klapman** and **Rebekah Wolkstein,** June 1, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Box office opens one hour before screening time.
- Healthy breast program and mind-body approaches to cancer and health presented by **Sat Dharam Kaur** and **Dr. Gabor Mate,** May 26-May 31. Call 519-372-9212 or www.mammalive.net.
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

- Supervised bridge meets Thursdays July 10-Aug. 28, 10 a.m.
- Red Cross babysitting course for children 11 and up, will be offered June 6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

To register for programs, call **Jennifer Appleby** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275. ■

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Ask Ella: Is it acceptable to pass on gift giving?

Ella Burakowski
eb@thecjn.ca

Dear Ella,

Three months ago, my son Joshua became a bar mitzvah. We had a kiddush luncheon after the service and a big party later that weekend. Josh did amazing reading the Torah and his speech was meaningful. His dad and I couldn't be prouder. The uncomfortable part, though, is that a few people who joined in our celebration all weekend long have not given Joshua a gift. We've tried to let it go, but can't. We've always given generously at their simchahs. How do we deal with this when we see these people?

Can't Get Past It

Dear Can't Get Past It

Mazel tov on Joshua becoming a bar mitzvah. Sounds like you've done everything to make Josh's day special.

There are many customs we follow when making a simchah, and one of those is gift giving. People are always asking, "How much?" What if it's just a luncheon? What if it's someone not so close? What if I have 10 of these things to attend this year?

Giving gifts at bar and bat mitzvahs and weddings is customary, but some people just do not adhere to this custom. It's a fact of life that I've seen over and over.

Let me ask you this: if you knew in advance that your invited guest will not be giving a gift, would you still have invited them? Was the gift the reason you wanted them to be part of Josh's special day? Probably not.

In our society, it's customary to give gifts. They're often monetary, but they're always an acknowledgment of the occasion you are celebrating.

In the end, you can't control what others do. You can only control how you react to it. Do and say what you have to behind closed doors, but be thankful that you were able to give Joshua the kind of bar mitzvah experience you dreamed he would have and take comfort and pride in knowing that you've done the best by your son.

Others have to live with their choices. Try not to judge them. It may be as simple as they forgot, or they may have purposely decided they can't or won't give.

When you send out thank-you cards to those guests, thank them for joining Josh on his special day, and don't mention anything about a gift.

Do I think it's right? I do not. I think Joshua's bar mitzvah should be acknowledged with a gift, no matter how small. Sometimes something homemade and personal is more special and meaningful.

The gift is symbolic and expresses to Joshua and to you that he is special and appreciated. It's the proper thing to do.

Dear Ella,

I've been living with my partner for the last two years. We get along well for the most part, but no matter what we argue about, he needs to be right. If he feels he is losing ground in an argument, he leaves. When he returns, he's fine, but I'm seething by then. Do you have any idea how I can fix this problem?

Needs to be Right

Dear Needs to be Right

You are arguing with someone who needs to have control. This is less about you than it is about him. He's not doing this purposely. It's part of his personality. If he feels he's not getting anywhere, he becomes frustrated. The next step that he can control is to remove himself from the situation. By leaving, he becomes the winner.

I would venture to say that the subject matter of your argument is not all that insurmountable, however establishing control in his mind is. It's part of his personality, and he probably doesn't even realize it. If you try to explain it to him, once again, he'll be losing his control, and you can't win. He may try to be controlling in other situations in his life as well.

If this trait is interfering with your ability to communicate, you need to look into professional counselling. Getting him to accept this would be a big step, as he would first have to admit there's a problem.

Communication is key to any good relationship. Hopefully the love you share will trump his need to control a situation, and you will both come out stronger in the end. ■

Ella's advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

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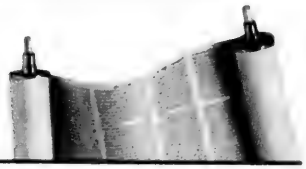
Parshah

Bamidbar | Numbers 1:1 - 4:20



Rabbi Ilan Acoca says charity and unity bring about redemption and a new Temple
Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl explains why even the best plans sometimes go sideways
Rabbi Catharine Clark argues focusing on the task at hand helps us deal with tragedy

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

The book of Bamidbar mainly deals with the laws and history of the Tabernacle.

Parshat Bamidbar starts by speaking about the position of the Tabernacle and the formation of the 12 tribes around it.

The verse (2:2) says, "The Children of Israel shall encamp, each man by his banner according to the insignias of their fathers household, at a distance surrounding the Tent of the Meeting shall they encamp."

The Ben Ish Chai explains that unity and charity are two character traits that will bring the redemption and the building of the Temple, and both are alluded to in the above verse.

In Hebrew, the cumulative total of letters in the names of our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is 13, the same as the numerical value as the word *echad* (aleph is one, chet – eight, dalet – four), meaning one. The tribes represent our forefathers, and they must be one .

Tzedakah is symbolized by the word *mineged* (surrounding). We could divide it into two and have two words, *min* and *gad*. The word *min* means "from," and *gad* comprise the letters gimmel and dalet, which the Talmud says (Shabbat 104a) stand for "*gemol dalim*," alleviate the plight of the poor.

The Ben Ish Chai says that if we give tzedakah and also work on our unity, we will merit to be "surrounding the Tent of the Meeting," alluding to Am Yisrael residing around the Temple, which will once again serve as HaShem's heavenly abode on earth.

This message comes during the period of the Omer, when 24,000 disciples of Rabbi Akiva died because they did not treat each other respectfully. History has taught us repeatedly that when Jews aren't united, calamity happens.

Let us all improve these two middot and together see the glory of HaShem residing among us as in days of old. ■

Rabbi Ilan Acoca is rabbi at Congregation Beth Hamidrash in Vancouver.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl

The Torah portion of Bamidbar begins after 10 static ones. Leviticus has theology and ritual, but no plot, no character development and no movement. In contrast, the Book of Numbers finds the People of Israel on the move in the wilderness, taking us from the second year after the Exodus to the edge of the Land of Promise, 38 years later.

Bamidbar begins with a census of men fit to bear arms. Our portion focuses on the Levites, exempt from military service, who are divided into three families and dedicated for Sanctuary service.

The people are structured by tribe and ancestral house, stationed surrounding the Sanctuary and organized to march forward, arranged for battle and conquest. Everything is prepared as the people ready themselves to leave the mountain of God, escorting the portable representation of the divine Presence, the Ark of the Covenant.

Then, unexpectedly, everything goes sideways. The people murmur and complain. The scouting expedition ends in panic. There are conflicts over food and leadership. The water becomes bitter. There are losses in battle and plague. The plan for conquest becomes confused and chaotic. Despite the *balagan*, by the end of the 10 portions of Bamidbar, the people stand at the cusp of the Land. The generation of the Exodus has died off. A new cohort is prepared to move forward.

Many of us imagine our lives progressing in an orderly way, according to a framework we lay out for ourselves. But often, plans go sideways. There may be war, revolution, illness, family fracas, career change, or economic and geographic upheaval. Hopefully, we can stay alive, hold on, keep faith, maintain some direction and approach the uncertain land with some sense of promise and possibility.

A friend often repeats these words: The end of the story will be good. If it isn't good, it's not the end. Perhaps bitter water can become sweet. ■

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl is senior rabbi at Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto.

Rabbi Catharine Clark

The main topics of Parshat Bamidbar are the census of the Israelites in the desert and the duties of the Levites in maintaining the Mishkan. The latter is introduced with the information that "Nadav and Avihu died by the will of the Lord when they offered alien fire before the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai, and they left no sons."

This reference to the deaths of Nadav and Avihu seems almost an aside. The tragic fate of Aaron's two sons after offering alien fire to the Lord was related many parshiyot ago, in Parshat Shmini. The Torah has covered numerous topics since then, such as rituals for purifying a leper and the laws of the shmittah year of rest for the land. Their deaths aren't essential background for the instructions that follow. Yet here again, their deaths are brought to our attention.

This parshah isn't the only time that the Torah refers to the deaths of these two priests after they occur. Mention is made elsewhere in Leviticus and Numbers also. While in none of these instances is the reference essential to the narrative, neither is the mention ever a mere aside. Rather, the Torah is telling us something important about the process of grief.

The loss of a loved one, especially of a child or in the case of an unexpected death, always remains at the edge of consciousness. The slightest suggestion of a somewhat related topic brings the loss to the forefront. Mourners don't "move on" or "forget about it." Rather, they develop ways to cope. Acknowledging the tragedy, even if only internally, then focusing on the task at hand is one of these strategies. That's exactly what happens in this week's parshah when the mention of Nadav's and Avihu's deaths is followed by important instructions for the functioning of the Mishkan. ■

Rabbi Catharine Clark is spiritual leader of Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ontario.

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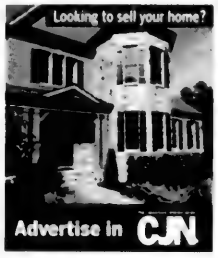

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Hillel presents three Mikeys to two universities

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

The Mikey Network prides itself on providing easy-to-use defibrillators to public institutions, and last week the organization announced that in co-operation with Hillel, three more life-saving devices have been placed on two Canadian university campuses.

Hillel student representatives made the presentations to the University of Winnipeg, located in the city's downtown, and Dalhousie University in Halifax.

The donations are part of Hillel's goal of giving back to the campus community, said Josh Winestock, Winnipeg Hillel and Jewish Campus Life director. "We like to help out, so we want the defibrillators to be put to good use."

"When I first heard of their plans to donate the automated external defibrillators [AEDs], I was very excited," said Ethelinda Padua, the University of Winnipeg's safety and health specialist. "The accessibility and availability of these life saving devices benefits not only the University of Winnipeg campus, but also the surrounding community."

Hillel student Daniel Kroft demonstrates the use of a defibrillator using a trainer.

The university has acquired other AEDs and plans to have one in every building on campus within a few years, she added.

Presentation of the Mikeys was accompanied by a demonstration of its use by Hillel student leader Daniel Kroft. The Mikeys were placed in the campus' Richardson College for the Environment and Science Complex and the Buhler Centre.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) helped bring Hillel and the Mikey Network together, said Judy Zelikovitz, CIJA's vice-president for universities and local partner services.

The local Hillels raised most of the $1,500 cost for each defibrillator, and CIJA "topped up" any shortfall, she said.

Hillel's involvement further integrated them into the campus community.

"When you lead by example and contribute to the benefit of all students, it can only help you feel part of the university community," Zelikovitz said.

The "Mikeys" are named for Mike Salem, an avid golfer who died of a heart attack while playing his favourite game 12 years ago. He might have been saved had a defibrillator been present.

Morty Henkle, executive director of the Mikey Network, said "we're certainly delighted both universities took up the offer of a donation by Hillel."

The Winnipeg and Halifax universities now join other Canadian campuses in receiving Mikeys. The University of Toronto, Ryerson University and Wilfred Laurier University are among several that have received the devices, he said.

To date, some 1,550 Mikeys have been placed in public buildings across Canada accounting for "19 saves" – people alive today thanks to prompt use of the apparatus, Henkle said. ■

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 22, 2014

David Abitbol: Jewrotica promotes Jewish sexuality

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Former Montrealer David Abitbol, founder of the popular blog *Jewlicious.com*, spoke to *The CJN* recently about his involvement with a different kind of Jewish site – one that's described as "a pluralistic and sex-positive organization that explores the intersection of Judaism and sexuality, relationships, gender and body image through essays, literature, erotica, Torah commentary and in-person programming."

Abitbol, 49, who was born in Israel and raised in Montreal, only to move back to Israel nine years ago, explains his role with Jewrotica.org as its web designer and contributor, and what excites him about the 1-1/2-year-old site that attracts up to 50,000 visitors a month.

You're a Jewrotica co-founder?

Ayo [Oppenheimer] came up with the idea... We met in the context of – did you ever hear of ROI Community [a global network of Jewish innovators]?... She came up with this idea and I said, "Wow that is awesome. I will help you make a logo right now, and we've got to build a website."

That was June or July of 2012, and within a couple months, we had a website up and we were churning out articles and the attention was almost immediate. We were getting press coverage from Russian and Spanish, German newspapers and others... and it was great.

We recruited a crew of volunteers, everything from graphic artists to editors to editorial staff and they all work really hard to put together this project. We also have a speaker series, so we have sessions and whatnot in different cities... It's a cool hook, because everyone comes in for the sex and you slip in a little bit of Jewish education, and then you learn something.

David Abitbol with Jewrotica co-founder Ayo Oppenheimer

What was it that got you so excited about the idea of a Jewish-themed erotica website?

I live [in Jerusalem] right next to a haredi neighbourhood and I can't help but see all these signs all over the place about modesty and conducting yourself properly, but it's always aimed at women... I grew up Orthodox. I'm still Orthodox, I'm traditional and everything... [but] it struck me as foreign, this obsession with female sexuality and suppressing it, and then I realize that these sorts of things are the result of centuries of living in the Diaspora among Christians and Christian values and morals regarding sexuality that must have seeped into Judaism, because Judaism's perspective on sexuality is not the same as the Christian perspective. In Judaism, the first mitzvah in the Torah is *pru urvu*, be fruitful and multiply. So, the reason why I was excited about Jewrotica was not because I wanted to read stories about two people getting it on by the light of the menorah. There is some of that there on the website, but the part that excited me the most was the discussion on sexuality in Judaism and how Judaism strives to elevate sexuality.

What is Jewish sexual expression and how is it different from secular sexual expression?

Jewish sexual expression, I guess, it's that it's just a more thoughtful expression of sexuality. Not that you can't be thoughtful about your sexuality if you're secular, but Judaism mandates a thoughtful and considered and respectful approach to sexuality.

As a contributor, what do you like to read about and write about?

The things I tend to write about are certainly not anything that would be described as erotica [laughing]. The things that interest me the most are things that relate directly to Torah's attitude toward sexuality and those sorts of discussions. The erotica stuff, the more XXX-rated stuff, I'm happy that it's there, because at least it spurs discussion, but I don't think I'd ever write something like that.

When it comes to some of the X-rated content, there is really nothing inherently Jewish about it, other than the fact that the character's names are Moshe and Rachel...

I have to tell you, it makes me uncomfortable.

You're uncomfortable reading it, or having it on the site?

Both. I'm not 100 per cent comfortable with it at all. I'm glad that it's there, because it's part of the conversation. I mean, I'm not the Taliban. I'm not going to sit there and decide for anyone else what Jewish sexuality or what Jewish erotica should be. There is some poetry on the site, which is stupendous, but the standard Jewish *Penthouse* letters, that kind of thing, I'm not as excited about. But there is definitely stuff in there that is great.

What are you most proud of?

That we put it out there and people are talking about it and contemplating the role of sexuality and Judaism. My whole purpose in doing this was to distinguish us from Christian-influenced values that have seeped into Judaism, and to whatever extent we've done that, that's what I'm most proud of. ■

See full interview on www.cjnews.com

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Sholom Aleichem's *On Account of a Hat*

Backstory

PAUL SOCKEN

Sholom Aleichem's famous story recounts the adventure of a certain Sholem Shachnah of Kasrilevke, known as the Rattlebrain, who is rushing home from Minsk in time for Pesach. He must switch trains in the middle of the night at Zlodievka, and that's when the trouble starts. In the small, crowded waiting room, he squeezes onto a bench beside an official in an elegant uniform, snoring away. Before falling asleep himself, though, he pays a porter to be sure to awaken him when the train for Kasrilevke arrives.

The porter awakens poor Sholem the Rattlebrain from such a deep sleep that Sholem takes the official's hat by mistake, red band, visor and all. At the crowded ticket window, people move aside for "His Excellency" and Sholem is stunned by the newfound respect. He thinks they are mocking him, but is glad to get his ticket in time to board the train for his return to Kasrilevke before Pesach.

Once on the train and settled in, Sholem the Rattlebrain passes a mirror and sees his reflection. The first thing that catches his eye is the official's cap, and it's the only thing that he sees. He concludes that it's the official who's on the train and he must be asleep back in the train station!

So what does he do? He jumps off the train to go back to the station to wake himself up. Of course, the train leaves, and the suitably named Rattlebrain must spend Pesach with strangers in a strange city. When he finally does make it home after Pesach, he is properly berated by his irate wife and mocked by the Kasrilevke townspeople who follow him everywhere calling him, "Your Excellency." And so the story ends.

What is the meaning of this bizarre, funny story? The whole narrative centres on Sholem seeing only the official's cap in the mirror and not himself. If that's the official's cap in the mirror, he must be thinking, then that couldn't possibly be Sholem, a simple Jew, who could never reach such a position in prewar eastern Europe. Even a Rattlebrain knew his place, and that place was decidedly on the lowest rung of the social and economic ladder.

> *As is so often the case in literature, it takes a fool to make us see ourselves*

As is so often the case in literature, it takes a fool to make us see ourselves. The rest of us are too busy evading or denying the truth. Fiction doesn't deal with facts, but it is in the business of revealing the truth. In this case, Sholom Aleichem invents a character and a situation to portray a society in which the Jew was so lacking in status in the surrounding, hostile society that it was positively unimaginable that he and that cap could ever inhabit the same space. It's a dramatic image of powerlessness. It speaks to the Jew's utter lack of dignity and self-respect. The humour is a mask to deaden the pain, but the truth remains with the reader of the time as a stark reminder of his situation.

That the event takes place at Pesach serves to emphasize the theme. The Passover festival commemorates the Jews' liberation from slavery, their moral empowerment and spiritual redemption. This story is highly ironic, as the Jews, represented by the hapless Sholem Shachnah, millennia after the original Passover of freedom, are emotionally and psychologically demoralized and living in a society that dehumanizes them.

The story's title, *On Account of a Hat*, privileges the object, the hat, not the person. In such circumstances, it's not the person – certainly not the Jew – who has any value, but rather the symbol of power and prestige, the hat. Employing humour to draw in the reader and entertain him or her, Sholom Aleichem draws a poignant and revealing portrait of the life of the Jew in eastern Europe before the Holocaust.

Our situation is very different today. Isn't it? ■

Paul Socken is distinguished professor emeritus at the University of Waterloo.

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We asked Dr. Bell what would be the best way his friends and UHN supporters could thank him. His response was immediate and straightforward: "Support for our UHN research enterprise would be the best gift that anyone could provide to honour and remember my time as CEO at UHN."

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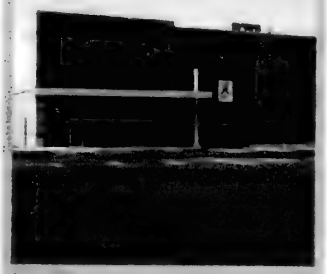
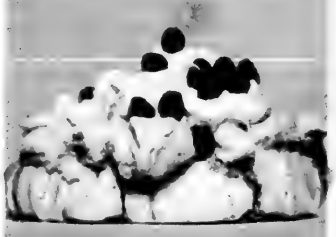


Trampoline club defends decision

Laval, Que., facility remains firm in its policy of no longer accepting Jewish camps as clients. **PAGE 20**



Food

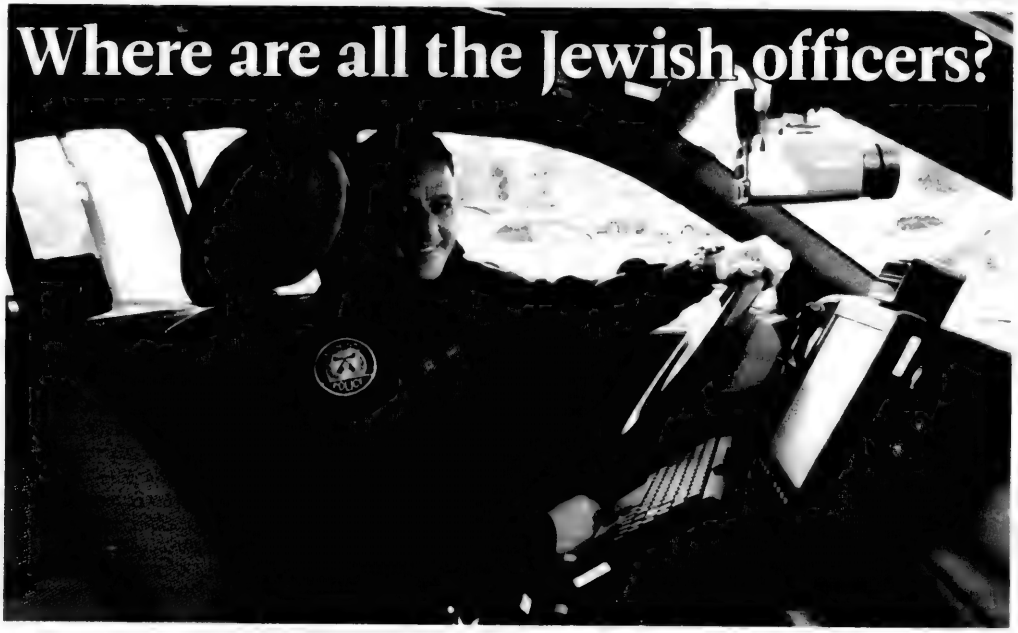
It's time to create that perfect Shavuot meal.

PAGE 34

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:32 p.m.	9:47 p.m.
Montreal	8:15 p.m.	9:31 p.m.
Toronto	8:32 p.m.	9:45 p.m.
Winnipeg	9:08 p.m.	10:34 p.m.
Calgary	9:21 p.m.	10:51 p.m.
Vancouver	8:49 p.m.	10:13 p.m.

Where are all the Jewish officers?



Sgt. Lawrence Sager is a 25-year veteran of the Toronto Police Service. He estimates that out of 7,000 officers on the force, there might be 40 to 50 Jews.

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Jewish religion and culture place great value on helping others, on social justice and on the concept of tikkun olam, or repairing the world. In fact, Jewish law not only encourages an observer to engage in kindness and good deeds, but requires it.

Perhaps it's no coincidence that the professions stereotypically linked to Jews – medicine and law – are based on the philosophy of helping others and promoting justice and morality.

Yet, when it comes to law enforcement careers – ones that include justice, keeping the peace and protecting citizens – Jews are highly under-represented in these roles.

Sgt. Lawrence Sager, who recently celebrated 25 years with the Toronto Police Service (TPS), recalled his experience when he decided on a career chosen by so few members of his community.

Sager, who started his career working as a first responder and in public security as part of Montreal Police Service's civilian staff before being recruited by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in 1987, said that when he reported to the RCMP Training Academy's depot division, he felt like the odd man out.

"When I went through Regina, those guys hadn't seen a Jewish policeman or a Jewish recruit ever. I don't know if I was the first – I probably wasn't – but there had been so few that they couldn't even remember the last time," Sager said.

"When I left for the RCMP, the *Canadian Jewish News* did an article... because it was so unusual for a Jewish person to be a policeman. At that time, only one other Jewish person that I knew of was in the Montreal Police Service."

He said the fact that he was a member of such a small minority made him nervous.

"I didn't want to be a pioneer, and let's face it, it was very much a Christian organization then. We didn't have too many minorities. It wasn't officially Christian, but when more than 90 per cent are white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant or Catholic, as a Jewish person, you're going in there and you're kind of breaking down barriers that some people may not necessarily want broken."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

TORONTO THEATRE STARTS HERE: MIRVISH.COM

Guitarist's estate to sue Zeppelin, and defining a dip

Was it a partly Jewish stairway?

Lawyers for deceased guitarist-songwriter Randy California are getting ready to sue British rock legends Led Zeppelin for allegedly stealing part of their biggest hit *Stairway to Heaven* from him. California, who died in 1997, wrote the song *Taurus* for the 1968 debut album of the band Spirit, which opened for Led Zeppelin on a North American tour that year and next. Six years ago, *Stairway* was estimated to have earned $560 million in royalties and record sales. The album it appears on, *Led Zeppelin IV*, is America's third-biggest-seller ever, with 23 million copies sold.

Robert Plant, left, and Jimmy Page in 1977
JIM SUMMARIA PHOTO

It's a chickpea thing

If Sabra Dipping Co. has its way, naming dips made from black beans, lentils or soybeans as hummus will be verboten in America. The hummus maker, co-owned by PepsiCo and Israel's Strauss Group, has asked the Food and Drug Administration to create a standard for dips to be called hummus. It would mandate that hummus consist primarily of chickpeas and at least five per cent tahini. The 11-page proposal asks that the dip be defined as "the semi-solid food prepared from mixing cooked, dehydrated, or dried chickpeas and tahini with one or more optional ingredients." Similar standards exist for other condiments, such as ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise. Sales of hummus have soared in the United States over the last decade, and Sabra controls 60 per cent of the market.

Father of three wins on *The Voice*

Thirty-eight-year-old Jewish soul singer Josh Kaufman won Season 6 of NBC's *The Voice* singing competition May 20 with a show-stopping version of Stevie Wonder's *Signed, Sealed, Delivered*. The Florida-born Kaufman, whose father is Jewish, lives in Indianapolis with his wife and three children and supports himself with local music gigs and SAT tutoring. The bespectacled, fedora-wearing singer was part of Team Usher and beat challengers Jake Worthington and Christina Grimmie to win the reality competition. ■

Gematria

56

The percentage of Tnuva, Israel's largest food company, purchased last week by China's Bright Foods from U.K. equity firm Apax, which had controlled the former dairy co-operative.

6

The number of Euroleague basketball titles won by Maccabi Tel Aviv, who beat Real Madrid 96-86 May 18 for its latest crown. Maccabi's all-time title count is second only to Real Madrid's eight.

Quotable

And now Putin is doing just about the same as Hitler.

— Prince Charles, in a private conversation May 20 with a guide at the Canadian Museum of Immigration in Halifax, reportedly comparing Russian President Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea to Adolf Hitler's 1939 invasion of Poland.

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Letters to the Editor

Kosher retailers also at fault

After reading your article ("The politics of kashrut," *The CJN*, May 8), I wanted to express my frustration with prices of kosher food, in particular, meat.

On Passover, I purchased a 12- to 12.5-pound brisket from a kosher butcher and paid a shocking $268. I asked the retailer why it was so expensive. Of course their response was because it is kosher and all the related expenses to make it kosher. I understand and accept that, however, I find it hard to believe that COR (the Kashruth Council of Canada) would charge that much to justify such an outrageous price per pound. My educated guess is that the profit margins, in particular for meat, are substantially higher, as was the case with my brisket.

Although I'm fortunate enough to be able to indulge in such a luxury, I feel it's unfair to others who may not be able to enjoy what is a Jewish tradition. One wonders how many families have opted to buy "kosher style" because they blame COR or the retailer.

My opinion is that COR may have some impact on kosher meat, but I believe retailers are marking it up substantially.

David Papernick
Toronto

Add women to COR board

I have found the current series of reports on COR (the Kashruth Council of Canada) to be very interesting, relevant and especially timely.

I have a further question: If the Jewish woman is the *akeret habayit*, or mainstay of the home, and is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the kashrut of her home, how is it that there is no woman on the board of COR?

I would think that with all the experience in shopping, cooking and keeping kashrut in general, a woman would be an ideal candidate to monitor and help run COR.

Gale Borison-Socken
Toronto

Fanning the flames

The article about COR ("The politics of kashrut, *The CJN*, May 8) is a chillul HaShem. You have accomplished nothing by printing a story about the animosity between the COR and the Badatz hashgachot. What was the point? The article only serves to fuel the flames of anti-Semitism, particularly on the part of PQ MNA wannabes who claimed that the cost of kosher certification serves only to line the pockets of rabbis.

Ruth Sacher
Montreal

Stop eating animals

In response to the many pages of print dedicated to a discussion about kosher food, I appeal to all readers to consider their choices. Yes, if indeed kosher food is more expensive, this would be appalling. I have yet to see kosher plant-based foods at exorbitant prices.

As someone who is Jewish, I have stood before kosher slaughterhouses in Montreal and Toronto. There are literally tears coming down the eyes of the cows. Some of the chickens are dead, and certainly all appear diseased and sick. In general, the animals can be seen to be suffering greatly and covered in their own filth.

In Israel, plant-based restaurants and diets are on the rise. Why can't we, in the Jewish community in Canada, follow suit? There is passage after passage in the Torah about minimizing the suffering of animals and showing humans' relationship to the rest of the earth. Surely this is what is spoken of in all Jewish sacred texts: not only the minimizing but the absolute abolition of harm done to others.

We now are finding that a plant-based diet is the healthiest for humans, reducing heart disease, diabetes and many cancers. For the environment, our health and for all the sentient beings around us, we owe them all and ourselves such compassion.

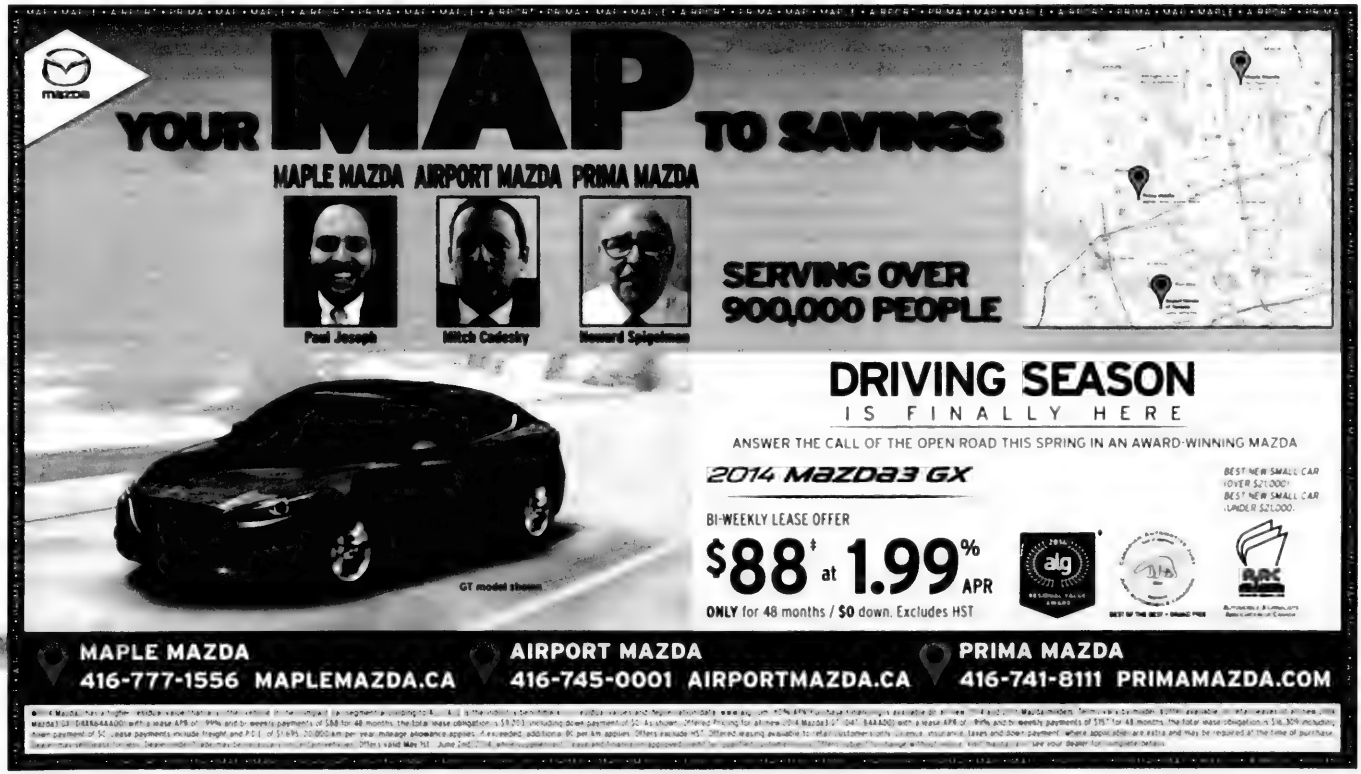
Sharon Lax
Toronto

Thanks from Calgary

Mazel tov to *The CJN* on your new look. I especially enjoy the Rabbi-2-Rabbi weekly piece. Coming from a small Jewish community like Calgary, clergy is limited, and we are not often provided with such riveting dialogue. It is great to read about the wonderful events and activities that are taking place in other communities, and your paper is a vehicle to keep us in the West connected with Canadian Jewry.

Susan Dvorkin
Calgary

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*



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RABBI-2-RABBI

Testing the limits of tolerance

Should we be as open as possible or balk at extending full respect to denominations that don't validate our own approach to Judaism?

RABBI AVI FINEGOLD
FOUNDER, THE JEWISH LEARNING LIBRARY, MONTREAL

RABBI PHILIP SCHEIM
BETH DAVID B'NAI ISRAEL BETH AM CONGREGATION, TORONTO

Rabbi Finegold: What are the limits you have regarding pluralism and other denominations? I am always torn between wanting to be as open as possible and hesitating to extend full respect to denominations that don't recognize my approach to Judaism as valid.

Personally, I used to be much less tolerant, but I was quite influenced by Brad Hirschfield's book *You Don't Have to Be Wrong For Me To Be Right*, the title of which has become something of a mantra for me. Nevertheless, I feel uncomfortable praying in a setting that's not religiously aligned with my own ideas. How do you navigate the varieties of religious experience?

Rabbi Scheim: I am fascinated by the varieties of behaviour exhibited by Jews far to the right of my Conservative congregation who attend a Shabbat morning service as guests of a simchah family. I give them credit for attending, because I recognize that being in a mixed-seating, microphone environment is uncomfortable for them, and a significant compromise in order to honour family. Sometimes, they blend in with the crowd. Other times, they need to make it known that they're not davening, that they're really there under duress, and exhibit looks of pain throughout the service.

On one occasion, an extremely observant man sat in the service reading the Sunday *New York Times*. I considered it a major rabbinic success when he put down the paper a few minutes into my sermon and looked up.

I fully recognize the right of a Jew to determine the religious environment where she or he feels comfortable and to place limits on the modes of Jewish practice that he or she finds acceptable. To be sure, I do the same. But *derech eretz* and *k'vod habriyot* enjoin us to keep our reservations private, unless the form of Jewish practice we're avoiding represents a gross violation of Jewish law, theology or morality.

Rabbi Finegold: Not that I agree with such behaviour or theology, but doesn't the individual who openly demonstrates he has checked into the building, but checked out of the service believe that your congregation is a gross violation of Jewish law and theology? He would appear to be saying, "Look, I am here because my cousin, *nebach*, married a Conservative Jew, and now I have to go to their son's bar mitzvah, but I think this is all heresy, so I'll show how much better I am by reading the paper"? Wouldn't it be better for the family and the kavod of the congregation for you to ask that they not attend such services?

I had an acquaintance who refused to attend conventional Orthodox services, now that there are egalitarian options available that align with his theology. I like this borderline case much better, because we often fall into the trap that anything more observant than us is acceptable while one should not take part in something that one views as less observant because they are just rationalizing an "easier" religion.

What if you had gone to the individual reading the paper and asked him to leave, not because he wasn't respecting the service, but because your congregation only includes those who are inclusive of all others, including women and LGBT individuals? Perhaps the liberal Jewish community needs to articulate that its values of inclusion and modernity are a form of theology that it considers as important as the relationship with God and Jewish practice.

Rabbi Scheim: I agree that one whose attendance takes the form of protest should stay home. A more frequent scenario unfolds at funeral services in the synagogue. Those opposed to the form of Jewish practice in the host synagogue will refuse to step into the sanctuary, and stand in the lobby or the parking lot. I find it hard to imagine how the family is honoured when, at the same time, their chosen place of worship is so disrespected.

It's tempting, I admit, to ask such offending individuals to leave, and in particularly egregious instances, I would be prepared to do so, but part of being welcoming requires admitting those who are unsympathetic to our standards and our practices, as long as their behaviour is not disruptive. ■

How to reach us

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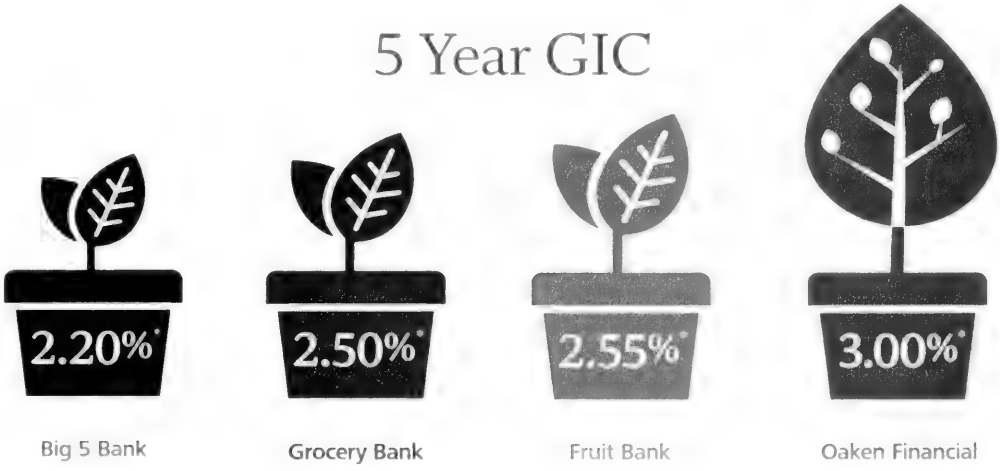

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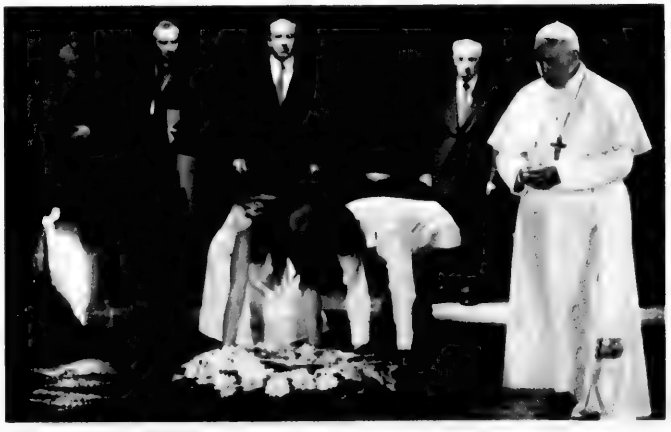
From the archives | Walking for Israel

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES PHOTO

A participant crosses the finish line at the YM-YWHA Koffler Centre of the Arts on May 25, 1979, during the UJA's 10th annual Walkathon to raise money for Israel.

SeeJN | Papal visit



ISAAC HARARI/FLASH90 PHOTO

Young students help Pope Francis lay a wreath of flowers in the Hall of Remembrance at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial museum in Jerusalem on May 26. Pope Francis was on a three-day visit to Israel, Jordan and the West Bank.

From Yoni's Desk

Christians and Jews have much in common

Many would say that relations between Judaism and Christianity in Canada have never been better, and with good reason. Canada, a majority Christian nation, scored well on the Anti-Defamation League's recent worldwide index of anti-Semitism. There is robust interfaith dialogue. And, of course, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, an evangelical Christian, stands as one of the Israeli government's strongest allies.

Canadian Christians have also no doubt been influenced in their approach to Jews by Pope Francis, who just under a year ago stated Christians "cannot be anti-Semitic." If that were literally true, Canada would have garnered a better score from the ADL, but the sentiment is still powerful. What else would you expect from a pope who co-wrote a book titled *On Heaven and Earth* with his Jewish best friend, Rabbi Abraham Skorka?

Pope Francis, who was accompanied by Rabbi Skorka when he made his first trip to Israel earlier this week, has emerged as something of a folk hero/pop star during his short time as Pope. The simplicity of his message has been refreshing, and he has focused on the importance of humility and generosity, two themes that are also central to Judaism. His "who am I to judge?" proclamation about gay people was so profound that it transcended all religious boundaries.

"Who am I to judge" followed from 2010's *On Heaven And Earth*, where the then-Cardinal Bergoglio wrote: "when one reads Maimonides… and Saint Thomas of Aquinas, two nearly contemporary philosophers, we see that they always start by putting themselves in the position of their adversary in order to understand them; they dialogue from the standpoint of the other." The search for understanding requires that we see beyond ourselves. Therein, the Pope is saying, lies the genesis of religious co-existence.

But it's not always so easy to be understanding. Sometimes, try as we might to see things from another perspective, we fail to find positive insight. That is certainly the case in the aftermath of the shooting at Brussels' Jewish Museum on Saturday that left four people dead. This shocking, tragic act will force some Jews – in Europe especially, but also everywhere else they live, Canada included – to retreat inward, to lose trust.

The Brussels disaster, on the heels of the Toulouse shooting, raises a fundamental question: how safe is Europe for Jews? As Paul Michaels described in last week's *CJN*, parts of Europe are experiencing a neo-Nazi resurgence. Political parties that either advocate or tolerate anti-Semitism are gaining followers in Hungary, Greece and France, a trend borne out by Sunday's European Parliament elections. According to the ADL's survey, western Europe is 24 per cent anti-Semitic, a full 10 points higher than Canada. In eastern Europe, the number is 34 per cent.

Canadian Jews are fortunate to live in such a tolerant country. European Jews aren't so lucky, and in the aftermath of Brussels, we are reminded of the reasons that many fear for the future of European Jewry. The threat is real and growing. That's why Pope Francis' powerful message that Jews are not the enemy – that, in fact, Christians and Jews have much in common, and plenty to learn from each other – is of such crucial importance. ■ — YONI

ESSAY

The CJN *and the memory of the Holocaust*

Magdalena Kubow

Today more than ever, the media have an important place in spreading awareness on important issues and upholding the memory of the past. In a recently published academic paper I authored, titled *Kanada: The Effect of The Canadian Jewish News and Survivors on the Memory of the Holocaust*, I explored the influence that this newspaper had on helping to foster Holocaust memory, commemoration and education when few outlets would.

Historians Harold Troper and Irving Abella exposed the unreceptive attitude toward Jews, and particularly Holocaust survivors, held by gentiles, nativists and government officials, in *None is too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe: 1933-1948*, but what is less known and more unexpected is the unreceptive attitude of the established Jewish community toward survivors.

The established Jewish community in Canada were not strangers to latent and overt anti-Semitism, and were focusing on becoming fully assimilated into mainstream society. Few in the established community were interested in assisting new Jewish immigrants who stood out as more religious, based on dress and practice, and who were unfamiliar with Canadian language and culture. The eventual integration of survivors into society, supported and facilitated by *The CJN*, resulted in their participation in defining what the Holocaust meant to the Jewish and wider community.

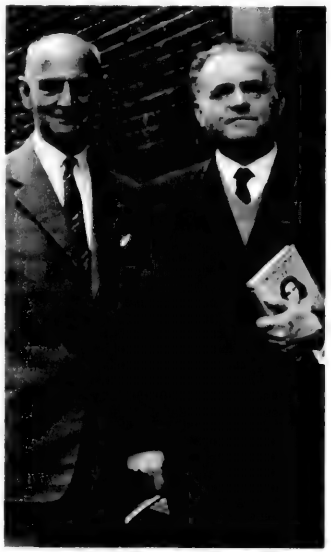
The CJN was founded in 1960 by M.J. Nurenberger and his wife, Dorothy. It quickly became the leading newspaper of Canadian Jewry and was able to bridge the gap between the established community and survivors by covering and connecting issues both parties felt were important. An objective of *The CJN* was to show the inter-connectedness of the Canadian Jewish community (such as the maintenance of synagogues), and wider global issues, such as the protection of Israel and the memory of the Holocaust.

Articles such as *Duty And Recognition* reinforced the responsibility of Toronto synagogues to "keep alive… the spirit of Israel and at the same time to provide strength and sustenance to the people of Israel." *The CJN* published articles from all over the world, including New York, Israel and Argentina, on issues concerning international Jewry – the rise of neo-Nazism and the protection of Israel.

In response to these issues, Nurenberger wrote in a commentary that the swastika epidemic was not only a Jewish issue but "constitutes a threat to freedom and human dignity the world over… The incidents are minor, but the significance is of major importance." Nurenberger and the position of *The CJN* understood and used the connection between the Jewish Holocaust and hatemongering.

The tactic of connecting the Holocaust to hatemongering and other genocides, to stress its relevance to a wider audience, was not common until the late 1970s; Nurenberger, as the leader and voice of *The CJN*, was well ahead of the times in this respect. It is this crucial connection made early on, that the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and hatemongering, became not only a Jewish issue, but an issue that had implications for everyone that set *The CJN* apart – apart from other newspapers, media outlets, or awareness-raising events.

The CJN was also aware of the plight of survivors (Nurenberger had interviewed Warsaw Ghetto veterans) and aimed to counter the "greenie" stereotype and the suspicion that so many new Jewish immigrants encountered in the established community upon arriving in Canada.



CJN founder M.J. Nurenberger, right, pictured here with Otto Frank.
COURTESY OF ATARA NURENBERGER BECK

One survivor of the Warsaw Uprising told Nurenberger he fought against "the indifference of our fellow men. The western governments knew what transpired in Auschwitz." *The CJN* sought to counter indifference with articles intended to educate Canadian Jewry on the plight of the Jews and articulate the horrors and bravery they witnessed, so that the survivors, to an extent, would not have to.

It is worth reiterating that initially the survivors who did want to speak out about their experience lacked a receptive audience in the 1950s. By 1960, the attitude of *The CJN* was clearly one of dialogue on the issue of the Holocaust. Although the term Holocaust was used infrequently until 1963, the topic was widely covered.

Besides bringing the Holocaust back into mainstream consciousness and helping to close the rift between the established Jewish community and survivors by presenting a situation that was relevant and significant, *The CJN* stressed that the rise of neo-Nazism, commemoration and the Adolf Eichmann trial (of 1961) had long-term implications. The events of the early 1960s inspired long-term ambitions in the Canadian Jewish community: the continued commemoration of the Holocaust and empowerment of survivors by focusing on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, exposure of hidden Nazi criminals and the lobbying for new legislation against the spread of hate propaganda.

If not for the pioneering achievement of *The CJN* and the Holocaust survivors who politicized important issues and made them resonate with the wider public, Canada's memory and recognition of the Holocaust, legislation on hate crime and school curriculum would be greatly lacking.

Magdalena Kubow is a PhD candidate in the history department of the University of Western Ontario. The Effect of the Canadian Jewish News and Survivors on the Memory of the Holocaust *was printed in* Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History. *You can read it at:* http://vallentinemitchell.metapress.com ■

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'Being from a Jewish household I knew I was never going to be a policeman'

Sonia Halpern WALTER ZIMMERMAN PHOTO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Having grown up in Cote-St. Luc, a Montreal suburb Sager described as a "ghettoized" town highly populated by Jews, he wasn't used to standing out as the only Jew in a group.

"I was the first one that they'd ever met. That was a big shock to me. But I was able to relate to them quick enough."

After spending two years in Sudbury doing undercover work for the RCMP drug squad, Sager decided he wanted to do uniform work for the TPS and requested that he be placed in 32 Division – bordered by Steeles and Lawrence avenues, and by the CN Rail line (near Dufferin Street) and Bayview Avenue – because of its large Jewish community.

But despite the large Jewish community 32 Division served, Sager said that when he joined the TPS in 1989, he was still an anomaly.

"I knew that there was a detective in the homicide division that was Jewish, and two other police officers in the city who were Jewish outside this division. Then taking into account a few people I didn't know of, maybe there were 10 Jewish policemen."

More than two decades later, the Jewish demographics in the TPS have not drastically changed. Sager estimated that out of 7,000 TPS officers, there might be only 40 to 50 Jews.

Jacob Berkenblit, a probation officer with the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, said the number of Jews in his field is also relatively low. He said that in his eight years in the field, he's met only three or four other Jews and guessed that there aren't many more working for the province in this role.

The 33-year-old Thornhill, Ont., native said that by the time he entered high school, he knew he wanted to pursue a career in law enforcement.

"After I finished university, I went through the motions of trying to become a police officer… After a couple years, I got a job working at a facility [a detention centre] for youths that offend, where we tried to transition them back into the community," Berkenblit explained.

As he continued to gain experience in other areas of law enforcement, including as a probation officer, a job he has held for the past four years, he discovered that he enjoyed it.

"I work with the aftermath. I work with people who have been through the system, been arrested, have been in jail and in court, and I get to work with them afterward to try to give them a better outcome."

Berkenblit suggested that perhaps the reason there aren't more Jews choosing law enforcement positions is that parents don't typically push children into this line of work."Growing up, you never heard of Jewish parents saying, 'You should be a cop,'" he said.

Sonia Halpern, an English and writing studies professor at the University of Western Ontario, recently wrote a study titled *A Yiddishe cop: An investigation into contemporary Jewish issues of police work*.

"In Judaism, we tend to associate particular careers, like law, medicine, accounting, dentistry… with Jewish careers, as it were. It's interesting to me that police work, much of the time, deals with medical issues, with legal issues, with justice, so it deals with a lot of the same issues that the so-called Jewish professions deal with, and yet, it's not really advocated as a profession that Jews should pursue," Halpern said in an interview.

In her study, Halpern highlighted a number of reasons she believes Jews avoid police work. For one, police officers belong to a para-militaristic organization, the kind of groups that historically mistreated European Jews. Jewish culture also places high value on education and intellectualism, and policing was not traditionally a career that required a post-secondary education. Another factor Halpern highlighted was that policing could be dangerous, which conflicts with the values Jews place on the sanctity of human life.

But Sager argues that perhaps the most compelling reason more Jewish young adults don't pursue careers in law enforcement is because their worried parents try to deter them.

"Being from a Jewish household, I knew I was never going to be a policeman. My parents were dead set against it, and no one from my community had ever become a policeman."

Sager said his parents pushed him along a more traditional path toward medicine, or dentistry, or law, or even the family business.

"I have three siblings – two brothers and one sister. My father was in the shmatte business, and they are there with him. I had a job waiting for me, which paid a lot more than I'm getting paid now, but that wasn't my dream. My dream was to be a policeman," he said.

"My parents tried to dissuade me from being a policeman by saying, 'You're going to be living in the poorest area of Montreal, you won't be able to afford this and that because policemen are paid so poorly.'"

He said he decided to look into the issue further by utilizing a vocational service to learn more about a career in law enforcement, and he learned that, actually, the police services pay very well.

"My parents are still sitting shivah," he said, laughing. "But it's funny, because my parents are very proud of me… although it wasn't so apparent at the beginning… They wanted to dissuade me because it's such a dangerous profession."

Berkenblit had a similar experience with his worried parents, but they were less vocal about whether he should or should not have entered the law enforcement field.

"My mom was very worried about me becoming a cop, and she is still worried about me. I think my mom thinks… I'm in danger at all times. She'll ask me, 'Are you OK?'" he said, adding that his clients, who are as young as 12 years old, have committed offences including something as minor as petty theft, and as serious as murder.

"She knows that we're dealing with [dangerous people] but… my parents never pushed me one way or the other. My parents were never the type of parents that told me to be a doctor or a lawyer, like a typical Jewish boy. Nothing is wrong with that type of work, but I never gravitated toward it," Berkenblit said.

"I was too interested in being on the front lines rather than being behind a book. I'm educated, but I wasn't interested in being in a work environment like a doctor or a lawyer, because it didn't appeal to me." ■

NEXT WEEK

***The CJN* examines the relationship between police and the Jewish community, whether anti-Semitism is an issue in the field and how demographic trends may be changing the profession.**

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 29, 2014

What are the boundaries of pro-Israel solidarity?

Shira Herzog

It's often called "loving criticism" of Israel, and the much-debated question is whether such a phenomenon can exist. If criticism requires moral integrity and detachment, how does that square with concepts such as the love of – and solidarity with—the people of Israel?

In a thought-provoking essay published in *Ha'aretz* last month, Eva Ilouz, the renowned Israeli sociologist, opened the kimono on this question philosophically and politically. In so doing, she drew on philosophers and writers such as Euripides, Gershom Sholem, Hannah Arendt, Albert Camus, Michel Foucault and Michael Walzer. It's a feast for the mind, but it provokes a series of weighty questions.

The fundamental theme of the essay is whether the Jewish critic is obligated to consider that extra, indefinable but palpable quality of "ahavat Israel," love of the Jewish People, which sometimes requires refraining from the truth due to "*herzenstakt*" – the duty of the heart. Ahavat Israel, which first appears as a biblical injunction to "love thy neighbour" in Leviticus 19, is best associated with Rabbi Akiva, who sought to control erupting infighting among Jewish sects after the Second Temple's destruction. Ilouz contemporizes the concept by quoting Gershom Sholem's criticism of Hannah Arendt's "heartlessness" in reporting on the Eichmann trial, specifically on the grounds that she lacked ahavat Israel. Arendt didn't deny this, arguing instead, that a true intellectual needed distance and independence to voice her opinions.

For Jewish critics in the second half of the 20th century, ahavat Israel had become a virtual gateway to legitimacy, claims Ilouz. Criticism of Israel is only acceptable if it's permeated with an embrace of the country and its people's history. The measure of acceptable solidarity isn't always clearly defined, resulting in an emotional demand for "hypersolidarity." Otherwise, the Jewish critic is subject to accusations of being anti-Israel or anti-Zionist and runs the risk of public excoriation for his views. Ilouz invokes a recent example of this dynamic. Journalist Ari Shavit's book, *My Promised Land*, is infused with hypersolidarity. This has made his chapter on Jewish violence in Lydda during the 1948 war palatable to the book's prime audience – North American liberal Jewish readers.

Ilouz attributes this insular perspective to history, but more recently, to the institutionalization of Zionist groups, as well as the memory of the Shoah as a key component of secular Jewish identity and the prevalence of U.S. interest group politics. Each is worthy of independent discussion, but together, they've contributed to the difficulty of discussing Jewish Diaspora institutions and Israeli policies.

Precisely because of this, today, it's important to open our own kimono and discuss changes in North American Jewry. The Open Hillel movement challenging Hillel's restrictions on speakers' credentials and the much-criticized Conference of Presidents' recent vote against admitting J Street are just two examples of the need to have a new debate. I believe this can be done because of allegiance to – and not in spite of – ahavat Israel.

Hypersolidarity can close down a conversation, because it can become a no-win, futile ideological debate. So we need to determine the boundaries of solidarity. What does it mean to be "pro-Israel" today? Is it supporting all members of the coalition? Is it support for laws that will weaken Israel's democracy by giving even greater preference to its Jewish national component? Is it supporting a prime-minister-sponsored law to weaken the presidency in order to influence the results of the next election? And is supporting groups that want to challenge such moves an "anti-Israel" act? Surely we can go beyond such simplistic definitions. As Ilouz underscores: "If the contemporary Jewish intellectual has a task, it's to unveil the conditions under which Jewish solidarity should or should not be accepted, debunked or embraced." ■

Bible contest reminds us that we're people of the Book

Daniel Held

On Yom Ha'atzmaut Eitan Amos, a Toronto Grade 12 student won the International Bible Competition held in Jerusalem. While Eitan's win is only the second time a Canadian has finished first, we have a proud history in the competition.

Each year in February, regional competitions are held across the country. Hundreds of middle and high school students from day and supplementary schools write the first round of tests. The winners from these regions move on to the national competition, which alternates between Toronto and Montreal. This year, more than 150 students from across the country came together for two days of competition. With each level of competition, the number of chapters covered and the complexity of the questions increases. For the first time, I attended the award banquet on the final day of competition. Nerves were high and emotions were raw as students fretted about their placing.

The winners of the national competition travel to Israel for the international competition, the finals of which take place on Yom Ha'atzmaut.

The competition is a celebration of Bible study. For months, students pore over the hundreds of chapters assigned for that year's competition. Their attention to detail and concern for accuracy is a lesson to all of us. During my own (incredibly unsuccessful) childhood run at the competition, I sat with a friend reading, re-reading and taking notes. Two of the winners of this year's national competition, who will travel to Israel together next year, were study partners, motivating and challenging one another other along the way.

In truth, the competition is about much more than Bible.

Founded by David Ben-Gurion in the early years of the state, the competition is a marker of what it means to be the Jewish People.

In 2001, a student I taught made it to the international competition. I happened to be in Israel at the time and he gave me a coveted ticket to the final round. Taking place in the Jerusalem Theatre on Yom Ha'atzmaut, the final round is broadcast live on national television, and the prime minister asks one of the final questions. I have a clear image of Ariel Sharon, seated among the crowd, standing up to ask his question on a seemingly obscure section of the Bible. Rest assured, the contestants knew the answer.

Four years ago, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's son, Avner, was one of the finalists. He answered the first two questions correctly, but stumbled on the question asked by his father. While the prime minister would usually write his own question, due to the circumstances, Netanyahu's question was written by the moderator but asked by the prime minister.

The central place of the Bible competition on Yom Ha'atzmaut has always struck me as a profound message. On a day of celebration, when Israeli television could be focused on countless other issues and the prime minister could be attending hundreds of other events, both make place for a group of high school students competing on their knowledge of Bible. Unlike the National Spelling Bee, which is televised in the United States, the Bible competition serves as an important symbol of the state, underlining the meaning of Israel as a Jewish state.

Similarly, the competition highlights the role of the Bible as a unifying feature of our people. In our regional and national competitions, students from across denominations and from both day and supplementary schools compete. In the international competition, competitors come from across North and South America, Australia, South Africa, Europe, the former Soviet Union and Israel. While biblical interpretation can, at times, pull us apart, in these instances it unites a diverse group of learners in friendly, though heated, competition.

Eitan Amos deservedly won accolades for his performance in this year's international competition. His knowledge of the Bible likely puts most of us to shame. Beyond promoting rote knowledge, however, the competition reminds us that we truly are the people of the Book. ■

The power of a minyan

Jean M. Gerber

What do you think of when you think of a minyan? Ten men? Ten people? A prayer congregation? To me a minyan is a group with whom I pray, one that's most deeply felt and needed when, for example, we say *Kaddish* for family and friends. They are 10 people who know grief and loss, who will provide acceptance and understanding.

But the Power of Ten is not a prayer group, but 10 people in Victoria, B.C.

And it all started with a play.

We see the homeless bundled into sleeping bags and blankets, asking for spare change. Not content with wringing his hands over the sight, Victoria's Belfry Theatre director Michael Shamata wanted to make a more public statement about homelessness. He commissioned dramatist Joel Bernbaum to write "documentary" theatre, with dialogue created from people's actual words.

Bernbaum's theatre combines his training as a journalist and actor to use both in bringing social issues to the fore. And boy is the issue of homelessness ever an issue!

Their play, *Home is a Beautiful Word*, uses dialogue based on some 500 interviews Bernbaum conducted with street people, city officials and even the mayor of Victoria.

I interviewed Bernbaum by phone from Saskatoon, where he's based. What, I asked, prompted him to do this play and what effect does his Jewish background have on the play?

He got right to the heart of the matter: "We are talking during Passover with its stories of suffering, when we should recall how important it is to see the suffering of others." The Jewish community, he went on, is good at reacting on a larger scale, but needs to seek out opportunities where they can move away from their comfort level. "Art" is a good trigger, because it gets to an emotional place.

One street person challenged him, "Do you think as you walk past us that each and every one of us is somebody's child?"

Ouch, I thought.

Bernbaum went on: "Our values are only as strong as how we use them. We have a responsibility as human beings. The need to help our fellow humans is increasing." Those invisible to us would become real people on his stage.

It just wasn't on the stage, but in the street. The Power of Ten is a group of 10 people who decided to do something radical. They chose a street person and mentored him through a year of classes, helping him to find a home and acquire long-suppressed life skills, including learning to drive. In short, they went from art to action.

I asked Bernbaum: "Can a play change us? Can it make an invisible situation, visible, and can we then act on it?"

Wow, what an answer he gave. "When well done, yes! People crave this human connection. This theatre [which he calls verbal theatre] is the way to reach our community. It allows the artist and the audience to understand the world better," a chance to live our values.

To Bernbaum, the minyan represents a community of those values: the Power of Ten is, in Bernbaum's words "prayer as tangible action."

(A sidebar: Vancouver has been a part of an ambitious national program to determine whether the homeless and hard to house can benefit from being housed with support systems. Surprise! It's better for those living on the street to have a roof over their heads. I shudder to think how much money was spent on this no-brainer, but that's just me.)

The play *Home is a Beautiful Word* and the Power of 10 minyan deserve all the praise they can get. Making a person sleeping in a doorway something more than a pile of rags seems to me the essence of what a minyan can mean. It's a way to community. A way to reach out. A way to help people find their way home. ■

Herb Gray got results

Ron Csillag

Columnist Michael Taube falls into the easy and clichéd when he writes on why former deputy prime minister Herb Gray did not merit a state funeral (*CJN*, May 14). Yes, Gray was dull, stolid and, well, grey. Those, of course, are not reasons for denying him a state funeral. But when Taube asserts that Gray, in his 40 years as a Liberal MP and through 11 cabinet portfolios, "didn't introduce significant political and economic policies" and "had little to do with important legislation," he's being facile, inaccurate and a little churlish.

In chronological order, Gray, an economic nationalist, stirred up controversy in 1972 with a foreign-investment policy review that led to the release the Gray Report. The study set the stage for the creation of the Foreign Investment Review Agency, which ensured that foreign investors brought significant benefits to Canada.

Later, as consumer and corporate affairs minister, Gray introduced an unusual piece of legislation, the Anti-Profiteering Bill, which aimed to halt gouging of consumers by giving the government power to roll back price increases that produced "above customary profits." The bill was later dropped, but Gray's heart was in the right place. Of course, as a conservative, Taube doubtless would recoil at this level of government intervention in the private sector.

But surely Taube must approve, even if grudgingly, of Gray's legendary 1980 rescue of Chrysler Corp. As industry minister in the Trudeau government, he negotiated federal loan guarantees that were widely credited with helping to save the Windsor-based car maker, along with some 10,000 well-paying jobs. It may stand as Gray's singular achievement and as one of the most successful public bailouts in Canadian history.

Later, as solicitor general, a job he wasn't keen on, Gray heeded calls for tougher treatment of violent criminals while also emphasizing the importance of rehabilitation and reducing the root causes of crime.

More quietly, as Jean Chrétien's House leader, Gray did more to bolster parliamentary democracy that anyone at the time. In a little-noticed shift in 1996, he introduced measures that would refer bills to committee before second reading, rather than after. Sounds dry, but it allowed MPs to play a greater role in crafting legislation, because a bill that passes second reading implies approval-in-principle.

Later that year, he used the new legislation to amend the Canada Elections Act, creating a permanent register of electors and shortening the election period by several weeks.

As *National Post* columnist John Ivison asked in his tribute to Gray: "Can anyone imagine the Conservatives [today] amending the rules unilaterally to give backbenchers on all sides of the House more say in the legislative process? Even their own MPs believe they have acted like 'tone-deaf bullies' with their version of the Elections Act."

Green party Leader Elizabeth May, perhaps buffeted by emotion following his death, said Gray, in 2001, "saved" the Kyoto environmental protocol. That could be hyperbole, but we know Gray was certainly onside when it came to the accords, from which the federal Tories withdrew in 2011.

Gray also headed the wrenching file on residential school abuse, working with aboriginal groups to successfully settle outstanding claims and begin a healing of past wrongs.

Also outside the strict legislative process, Gray frequently slagged his own government, in public, for not doing enough to counter the Arab economic boycott of Israel. It was also Gray who persuaded human rights activist Irwin Cotler to take up the case of Soviet prisoner of conscience Natan Sharansky, and he brokered a meeting between Pierre Trudeau and Sharansky's wife, Avital.

It adds up – perhaps not to a state funeral, but to a list of solid achievements over a half-century of which Taube is either sadly unaware or blithely ignores. Yes, as Taube writes, Gray "had a dull personality and didn't stand head and shoulders above his political colleagues, Liberal or otherwise." He never sought to. For this eminently humble and decent man, what mattered were results. And he got plenty. ■

News | GTA

Ve'ahavta campaign running until end of the year

Drive aims to move Jews to help others

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Ve'ahavta's Mobile Jewish Response to the Homeless van outreach project operates two vans in downtown Toronto.

Ve'ahavta is hoping its new $1.5-million fundraising campaign, It Is A Jewish Cause, will stimulate discussion about what responsibility Jews have for communities outside their own.

The money raised by the campaign, which runs until Dec. 31, will be earmarked for four Ve'ahavta programs: its outreach vans for the homeless, its street academy, a Jewish/aboriginal health program in Northern Ontario and a new youth leadership program, said Robyn Segall, director of communications and operations for Ve'ahavta: The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee.

Volunteer and logistical teams distribute food, clothing and hygiene supplies to clients, and provide referrals to self-improvement and counselling facilities.

The Ve'ahavta Street Academy (VSA) is an eight-week program, in partnership with George Brown College, for people who live on or near the streets of Toronto. VSA helps marginalized people access education as a way to become self-sufficient.

Ve'ahavta's recently announced a health promotion initiative, Bri'ut (Hebrew for "health"), in conjunction with seven First Nation communities in Kenora, Ont. Bri'ut aims to improve the long-term physical and mental health of aboriginal populations in Northern Ontario by strengthening the delivery of community-based health programs.

The campaign It Is A Jewish Cause is "expressing that homelessness and aboriginal health are some of the causes the Jewish community should be concerned with," Segall said. "As a people, it is our responsibility to help others in need."

She said that "we have experienced loss of land and culture, just like aboriginal people. It makes sense for us to work closely with our aboriginal brothers and sisters."

Ve'ahavta, which focuses on poverty alleviation, is strongly based on Jewish values, yet the organization is universal in nature, she said. It helps "all those who are in need, regardless of their faith because we were, too, among strangers. In our history, we would have benefitted greatly from a response from outside our community. We feel we have a duty to respond to people here in Toronto and on a national or international scale."

Ve'ahavta has provided disaster relief in Haiti, Haifa, the Philippines and Pakistan. In Mali, Ve'ahavta partners with Muso, a group that aims to eliminate preventable deaths in the world's most impoverished communities. Ve'ahavta distributes Kinder Kits, packs of school supplies, to children in Canada and to countries around the world, including in Israel.

Although Ve'ahavta's local clientele is mainly non-Jewish, Segall stressed that there are more Jews on the streets than people would like to think. Ve'ahavta holds an annual community Passover seder and operates joint programs with Jewish Family & Child.

Segall pointed out that poverty is relative to where you live. For five days recently, Ve'ahavta staff took up the challenge of trying to eat and drink on $1.75 a day, as part of Live Below the Line, a global movement that raises money to combat extreme poverty.

"[Living on] $1.75 a day is way too low for someone in Toronto," Segall said. In Toronto, one of the most expensive cities in Canada, "to be able to pay first and last month rent for an apartment, you need a good job.

"Many people in Toronto are at risk of becoming homeless. They could be couch surfing or living in a shelter. They are unable to secure stable housing. It's easy for people on that shaky line to fall economically quickly."

Avrum Rosensweig, president and CEO of Ve'ahavta and a *CJN* columnist, said that by working with the homeless and marginalized, "we live up to the Jewish value of 'love your neighbour' and we also introduce ourselves to the world, so they can understand first hand who we are."

It's a Jewish responsibility to work with the stranger, he said. "While we're doing it, it lets non-Jews know who we are and that we are good people, and we break down stereotypes through our work." ■

For more information, visit www.veahavta.org.

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IVEY Canada

JVS event looks at 'our youth, our future'

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

When Len Jillard was 16 years old, he got a job working behind the counter at a McDonald's restaurant in his hometown of London, Ont.

It proved to be a fortuitous career move. It's been a few years since then – he declined to reveal how many – but today, Jillard is a senior vice-president and "chief people officer" at McDonald's Restaurants of Canada.

His case is not unusual, Jillard explained at last week's Strictly Business lunch event, sponsored by JVS Toronto. Ninety per cent of the restaurant's managers once worked in the eateries, as did half of the company's franchise owners. Overall, 65 per cent of the company's top management, including its last three presidents, have worked at different positions inside the restaurants, he said.

Jillard presented the catalogue of statistics as part of the theme of this year's lunch event – "Our youth, our future" – attended by 345 people at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel.

Some 70 per cent of McDonald's 85,000 employees are 24 or younger, he said, and half are younger than 18.

> *I'm very excited about youth today, the next generation of Canadians.*
>
> **Len Jillard**
> McDonald's Canada

The young people employed by McDonald's fit its corporate culture and brand.

Jillard noted that during McDonald's most recent "national hiring day," held in April, more than 40,000 people applied for jobs at the restaurant chain, up from 33,000 during the company's first national hiring day four years ago. Of the 40,000, 6,200 got jobs, he added.

Nevertheless, as far as current youth employment goes, the overall national statistics are somewhat grim. Youth employment stands at more than 20 per cent, three times the national rate. For young people new to Canada, the prospects of gainful employment are even bleaker, at closer to 30 per cent unemployment, according to JVS.

Jillard rejected common stereotypes that young people today are lazier than earlier generations, are uncommunicative or have a sense of entitlement. Similar attributes were often attributed to his generation, too, he quipped. "I'm very excited about youth today, the next generation of Canadians."

Business people should believe in and invest in young workers, he suggested, while imparting another word of advice: "You're a product of your decisions, not conditions."

Lorie Shekter-Wolfson, JVS' newly installed president and CEO, said the youth unemployment rate "is way too high. It's unacceptable."

JVS, a non-profit agency that provides career and employment services, is constantly looking for new and innovative ways to support job seekers and match them up with potential employers, she said.

She discounted suggestions that today's young people are not as committed to working as previous generations. The young people she's met certainly are, and last year, JVS helped more than 6,000 of them – some underemployed, others with difficult personal issues – find work. Even JVS' other function of psychologically assessing children in schools is consistent with the organization's main mission of "helping them get a great start," she added.

JVS honoured several of its clients and corporate partners with its annual awards. Calandra Rowe, who today works as a nurse manager at Qualicare, received JVS' Youth Award. Julia Yael Alekseev, an immigrant from Israel, received the Newcomer Youth Award. She works as an administrative assistant at Dimar Canada.

Ralph Shepherd, a franchisee, and Jason Hagerman, the operations manager of a Tim Hortons restaurant in Richmond Hill, received the Inspirational Award by taking on eight JVS clients from the agency's Ability Works and Asperger's Job Readiness programs.

Sporting Life, a well-known retailer, received the Building New Relationships Award for hiring 15 young people following a job fair organized by JVS Toronto.

Georgian College was granted the Post-Secondary Educational Award. ■

IsraAID team in South Korea following ferry boat disaster

UJA Federation partner organization is "training the trainers"

By Daniel Horowitz

On April 15th, 476 passengers, mostly wide-eyed and enthusiastic teenage high school students, boarded the MV Sewol in Incheon, South Korea, for what was a highly anticipated, end-of-the-year celebratory class excursion.

Less than 12 hours later, what was supposed to have been a dream day for the youngsters turned into a nightmare of unprecedented scope, as the ferry capsized off the southwestern island of Jindo, sending more than 300 teenagers to their deaths.

In the wake of the tragic news, IsraAID, a partner organization of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, did what they do best; they came up with a strategic plan to assist the affected community and immediately sent a team of professionals to help on the ground and to "train the trainers".

During the past few weeks, members of IsraAID have been conducting intensive trauma care seminars to over 230 Korean social workers, community counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists who are part of the national and regional government task force which addresses the emotional needs of the community in both the disaster area in Jindo Island and the community in Ansan city.

An IsraAID team member trains a Korean social worker.

Looking to the future, IsraAID is also developing an intervention work plan for the next two years to properly provide professionalized tools to its government and non-government partners. The trickle affect would initially focus on the families but would expand to help the community surrounding the families and eventually would reach tens of thousands of people across Korea through IsraAID's TOT (Training of Trainers' model).

"With a tragedy such as the MV Sewol, the psychological effects are multi-layered, as the survivors try to rebuild lives that have been irrevocably shattered," said Shachar Zahavi, Founding Director, IsraAID. "Doctors who have been treating the teenage survivors say that 20 percent of them have experienced signs of post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as severe 'survivor's guilt', and could require long-term counseling and psychiatric help. This situation requires far more than merely a band-aid solution, which is why IsraAID is intervening over the next two years, to ensure that Korean professionals have all the tools necessary to assist these youngsters rebuild their lives and peace of mind."

"UJA Federation is proud to have been one of the founding supporters of IsraAid," said Ted Sokolsky, President & CEO, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "We have partnered with them in support of their efforts to be the face of the Israeli people in disaster relief around the world. Israelis have learned to turn aside tragedy and work for the good of all mankind. That's why it's particular gratifying for UJA Federation and our supporters in this great Jewish community to see IsraAID put those lessons to work for the people of Korea."

Genetic research: one thing leads to another

PAUL LUNGEN
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There's an idiom used in popular culture that appears to also have an application in science as well: one thing leads to another.

It certainly holds true in the research conducted by Dr. Karl Skorecki, director of nephrology and molecular medicine at the Technion faculty of medicine in Haifa. A fun and educational project for undergrads to study the paternal gene that distinguished kohanim, the Jewish priestly group, through the generations led to further research into the genetic disposition of various peoples to develop kidney disease. That led to further genetic research into commonalities held by Jews in disparate parts of the world.

In the end, or more specifically, as of now, the research shows that Jews and putative Jews hold genetic markers that can be traced back 2,000 to 3,000 years to the Levant, the region that includes Israel.

What's more, some people who are not Jews hold the same genetic markers. In the Iberian peninsula, where Spain and Portugal are located, about 20 per cent of the population carry Jewish genetic markers, suggesting large numbers of Conversos – Jews who converted to Christianity rather than face expulsion or death – started families there, he said.

Which makes for an irony of biblical proportions, as a recent ADL survey found that 29 per cent of the Spanish population, or about 11 million people, harbour anti-Semitic attitudes, higher than the 24 per cent found in western Europe overall.

Skorecki was in Toronto last week to deliver the University of Toronto faculty of medicine's annual Sackler Lecture, in which he discussed his work on the genetics of kidney disease.

Dr. Karl Skorecki PAUL LUNGEN PHHOTO

> *As a nephrologist, I and colleagues noticed that the people of sub-Saharan ancestry, including in the United States, have four to five times more kidney disease than the general population*

Skorecki also met local supporters of the Technion, and he promoted the student exchange program between the University of Toronto and the Haifa-based university. He also gave a public lecture on the genetics of the Jewish people.

For Skorecki, the U of T lecture was particularly meaningful. A native of Toronto who attended Associated Hebrew Schools and the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Skorecki graduated from the U of T before moving to Israel in 1995.

Skorecki said he began looking into the genetic component of kidney disease in the 1990s. His findings into the genetic markers carried by kohanim – whether in Lithuania, Morocco or Iraq – gave him the tools to further his research into kidney disease.

"As a nephrologist, I and colleagues noticed that the people of sub-Saharan ancestry, including in the United States, have four to five times more kidney disease than the general population. This bothered me," he said, noting that it's "a death sentence" in parts of Africa.

When he studied Ethiopian Jews who had moved to Israel, he did not find that same genetic predisposition to kidney ailments.

A gene was identified. "In many parts of Africa, a variant of this gene rose to be common in sub-Saharan Africa, because it conferred protection versus certain infections. For the descendants of those who survived the infections, it caused risk for kidney disease," Skorecki said.

His team at the Technion is now trying to develop drugs to neutralize that effect. So, too, is a group at Harvard University. They're in a friendly race to come up with a solution first. It's a race that has attracted the interest of a couple of major pharmaceutical companies, which are interested in commercializing their findings. He declined to name them.

"We're making a lot of progress, fast," he added. "I'm excited."

As for the genetics of the Jewish People, Skorecki said DNA markers can be used as supplementary tools to retrace the movements and shared history of Diaspora Jewish communities.

Take the Georgian Jews, for instance. Georgian Jews have an oral tradition that claims they are the oldest Diaspora community in the world, going back some 2,500 years.

As far as Skorecki's research shows, they're right.

In Mumbai, the Bene Israel demonstrate a paternal DNA marker signal linking them to the Levant.

The Bnei Menashe, a large group of people living on the Burma-India border, have also been tested, but the sample size was too small and the results are inconclusive, he said.

The Lemba people, who live in Zimbabwe, have "an oral tradition that conformed perfectly to the DNA," he said.

As the tradition has it, their ancestors left Judea long ago, travelling south to the Hadhramaut, modern Yemen. From there, they travelled down the east coast of Africa by boat, landed and moved inland, marrying local Bantu women.

Tests of the male genetic markers found a paternal link back to the Levant, Skorecki said.

All that is very interesting, he acknowledged, but it's not what makes a Jew today. Jewish identity is defined as metaphysical, religious and cultural, not biological.

After all, King David was the grandson of a Moabite woman and he was Jewish, Skorecki said. ■

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LOCATION: MaRS Centre Auditorium, Lower Concourse - 101 College Street, Toronto

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Israeli self-defence program comes to Toronto

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

A former Bathurst Jewish Community Centre martial arts instructor has developed Commando Krav Maga, or CKM, a practical hand-to-hand self-defence system that's based on Krav Maga, the Israeli military's self-defence system.

He and one of his former students have gone on to popularize CKM. It's the "most in-demand defence system worldwide," said Ilan Rosenberg.

CKM cuts out self-defence techniques that are too complex to be carried out in real-life situations, and a combatant's size and weight is irrelevant, he said.

Rosenberg enrolled in judo and jujitsu classes at the Bathurst JCC (now the Prosserman Jewish Community Centre) in 1978, at the age of 12. His teacher was Moni Aizik, a then recent immigrant from Israel.

Rosenberg, now 48, a solid, muscular man, trained with Aizik for more than a decade and won Ontario judo and jujitsu championships in 1993. "It was after that that Moni asked me to teach at his school," Rosenberg said.

That's when he began learning CKM from Aizik, who had developed the self-defence system over 20 years.

Ilan Rosenberg

Rosenberg said that Aizik fought in an Israeli special forces unit of 60 soldiers during the Yom Kippur War. Aizik's unit was ambushed by hundreds of Syrian commandos, who were larger than most Arab fighters. Only five Israelis, among them Aizik, survived. He was aware that he lived through the battle because of his large size, Rosenberg said.

"Moni realized that the Israeli martial arts system needed to be changed," Rosenberg said. The Israeli military agreed and asked Aizik to "evolve" its close-quarter combat system.

Rosenberg persuaded Aizik to take his system, a simplified version of Krav Maga in which a fighter's success isn't related to weight or size, around the world. In 2004, it was given the name Commando Krav Maga.

Currently, some 800 CKM instructors, male and female, are active worldwide, in the United States, China, Japan, Italy, Greece, Chile and other countries. Rosenberg offers instructor training in Canada through the Commando Krav Maga Academy.

He teaches traditional martial arts at his Rosenberg Centre for Defensive Sciences (www.rosenbergcentre.org) in Newmarket, Ont., and holds self-defence classes for children, but CKM is strictly for men and women who are over 15, he said.

Students have to be mature, because unlike traditional martial arts, CKM has no rules. "We go for the eyes, throat, groin. We use techniques that can do serious damage," he said. "We can break legs and arms."

However, summarizing CKM's philosophy, he added, "We look for peace while preparing for war."

Rosenberg said in cases where a fight is unavoidable, CKM students are instructed to "engage, cause maximum damage and disengage. Don't punish – they can pull out a weapon."

He said he loves traditional martial arts, but they are "sports. I realized they aren't right for street fighting with guns and knives. Today, there are multiple attackers and many of them are carrying weapons."

Rosenberg, the highest level CKM instructor in the world today, has an ongoing contract with the Canadian Forces' Joint Task Force 2, a special operations unit responsible for counterterrorism, to provide soldiers with training.

"Their hand-to-hand combat needed to be upgraded big time," he said. "The group is extremely athletic and focused. They picked it up quickly."

Along with teaching, Rosenberg has worked in dozens of movies as a fight choreographer and stuntman, including *Red, Still Seas, Nakita, Covert Affairs* and *Robocop*.

Rosenberg is teaching a 12-week introductory CKM course in North York, a "civilian version" for the Jewish community, he said. He mentioned the recent murders in Kansas City, at the JCC there and at a Jewish retirement community. "It's a very anti-Semitic world," he said, "and we have to be able to defend ourselves." ■

For more information about the CKM course, call 416-895-2749.

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General Ben Eliyahu
Keynote Speaker

Born and raised in Jerusalem, Eitan Ben-Eliahu served in the Israeli Air Force (IAF) for 38 years, and was the IAF's Commander in Chief (1996-2000). Ben-Eliahu was involved in some of the IAF's most important operations as Squadron Commander of a group of F-4 Phantoms in the Yom Kippur War and as a fighter pilot in the 1981 mission to destroy Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor. Ben-Eliahu is a leading analyst and commentator on regional and international defense and security issues.

Mahalniks

The *Mahal* Air Force volunteers provided crucial aid to the fledgling IAF in the 1948 War of Independence. From 1947 to 1949 more than 4,400 volunteers from 56 different countries, including many non-Jews, came to defend and fight for an independent State of Israel. These volunteers were recognized as a primary reason for Israel's victory over five invading Arab Armies. Therefore, CIJR is proud to be honoring the *Mahal*, and to invite *Mahal* veterans to accept the honor for those who are no longer, or who cannot be, with us.

Sarah Bernamoff

Sarah Bernamoff, a 2013 University of Calgary graduate, is one of Canada's most dynamic young student defenders of Israel. Having attended U. of C., Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and Berklee College of Music, Sarah is the founder of both *Calgary United with Israel*, and *Canadians for Human Rights*. Additionally, she is working with CIJR on the newly formed Canadian Freedom Alliance (CFA).

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Demand for cyber-security growing

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Yuval Elovici, one of Israel's leading experts in cyber-security technology, was in Toronto earlier this month to talk about the importance of investing in this developing field.

Elovici, director of Telkom Innovation Laboratories at Ben-Gurion University (BGU), and co-founder of Titanium Core, a cyber-security company, was invited by the Canadian Associates of BGU to talk about how the Be'er Sheva-area university is leading the charge in developing technologies to protect businesses, individuals and governments from cyber-attackers.

"There is a huge demand in this industry. The government decided that cyber-security is going to be one of the five growth sectors of Israel. There are many startup companies in Israel focusing on cyber-security, there are many international companies that are opening branches in Israel, like IBM," Elovici said.

He said these companies are looking to recruit hundreds of employees and BGU is looking to train them.

"We decided two years ago to start a master's degree in cyber-security and we also give them courses... to give them the proper background that any cyber- security expert should have," he said.

Elovici added that the Israeli government's National Cyber Bureau is promoting cyber-security in Israel, and along with China and Russia, Israel has the potential to be a leader in the field.

"They decided to open a cyber-security centre in each academic institute that wants it. They are opening a centre in Ben Gurion University and in Tel Aviv University. They invested 30 million NIS over three years and we need to match it. It's going to allow us to do research, not tailored to the needs of the funders of our research. Today, all of our research is funded by companies, organizations, who tell us what they need. We want to try to develop very advanced cyber-security mechanisms that are going to be relevant in the next several years, not what is relevant to the next quarter," Elovici said.

During his lecture at the Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, Elovici spoke about the latest trends on how cyber- attackers are operating, how they launch targeted attacks.

He said one of the trends is that an attacker will try to obtain a specific document from a company – for example, a financial document from IBM that is scheduled for release in three days –rather than try to spread a virus throughout the entire company.

"In three days, they have no value, but today, they have a huge value," he said.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Lag b'Omer buddies

The annual Lag b'Omer – Great Jewish Family Festival was held May 18 in Earl Bales Park. The event was organized by Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario, the Jewish Russian Community Centre (JRCC) of Ontario and Tzivos Hashem Canada, and featured music, rides, games, food and a traditional Lag b'Omer bonfire. Pictured with a guy in chicken costume are, from left, JRCC founder Rabbi Yoseph Y. Zaltzman, MP Mark Adler, Councillor James Pasternak and Rabbi Yonah Vilenkin of Tzivos Hashem Canada.

Yuval Elovici speaking about cyber-security threats at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation

'It's the perfect crime'

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"The major reason for cyber-attacks today is for financial profit... Today there is a business model behind it. On the other hand, it is the only type of crime you can imagine, where the chance that someone is going to catch you is almost zero. This is one of the biggest challenges in cyber-security – how to identify the attacker is very complicated. It's the perfect crime... They have nothing to lose."

The best defence, he said, is to create financial obstacles for the attackers to minimize the potential gain.

"In cyber-crime, there is a cost to launching an attack. And the cost depends on the security measures that the organization is going to put. If the organization is going to put many security measurements, the cost of launching the attack is going to be much higher," he explained.

"We need to create a situation in which the cost for launching the attack is higher than the benefit from obtaining the data. Eventually we will de-motivate the attacker from launching an attack."

He said small businesses often don't have the resources to install sophisticated cyber-security solutions and this can be problematic for bigger corporations.

For example, when Turkey launched a cyber-attack against Israeli Internet sites in 2011 in retaliation for Israel's interception of a Turkish ship headed for Gaza the previous year, they failed to penetrate bigger companies, but succeeded in attacking a popular pizza chain's website, obtaining customers' user names and passwords.

"What happens is that these customers usually use the same usernames and passwords in other, more advanced organizations," he said.

"The fact that attackers can obtain information from the weakest links, from small [businesses] that can't protect themselves, eventually allows them to obtain a back door to bigger companies."

Elovici warned that smartphones are also popular targets for cyber-attackers.

"The main motivation behind compromising a smartphone is that a smartphone is a device that holds three types of information," he said.

"In mobile phones, people are storing a lot of confidential information. Secondly, in many cases, the mobile phone has credentials to access corporate data. People use their phones to read [corporate] emails, to access corporate files, so once you compromise a mobile phone, you can access everything that the mobile phone can access. The third type of information is information gathered from their environment. Through the microphone, if you can manage to activate the microphone during a confidential meeting, you can collect information from that meeting."

Elovici said that best way to protect oneself from being targeted is to build a strong defence.

"I strongly recommend to everyone to install as many tools as possible that are available in the market." ■

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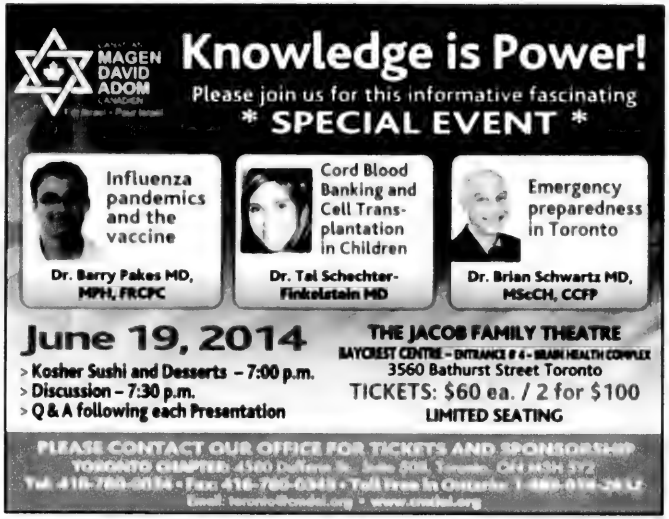
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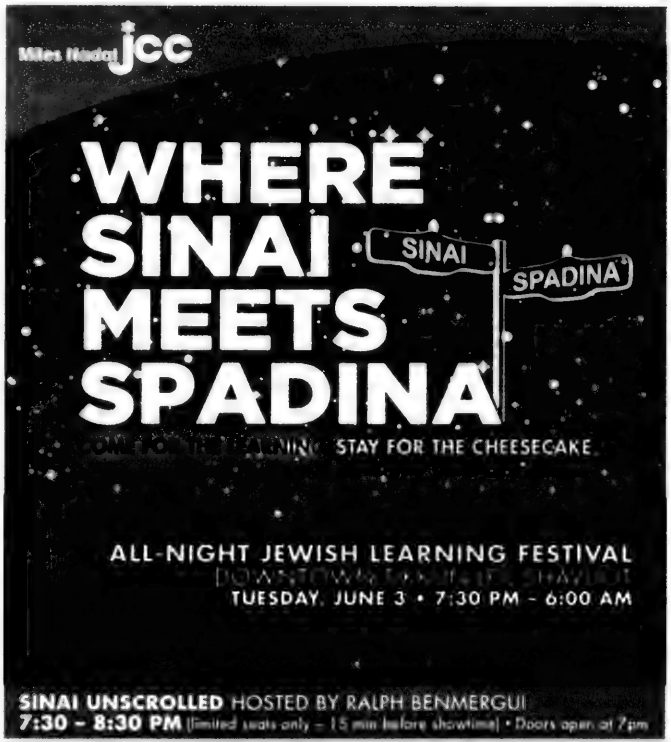
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NATIONAL

Trampoline club defends rejection of Jewish camps

JANICE ARNOLD
jarnold@cjnews.ca
MONTREAL

A recreational trampoline centre in Laval, Que. remains firm in its policy of no longer accepting Jewish camps as clients because they have had "too many problems" with them in the past, but it claims it's not being discriminatory.

Club de Trampoline Acrosport Barani, which has been at the centre of a controversy since refusing a reservation from a Jewish day camp on May 15 – explicitly because it was Jewish – posted an explanation of the incident on its Facebook page three days later.

"We do not reject the Jewish community to come to our place. We refuse camps that are not able to respect our regulations," the unsigned statement reads.

The company, which says it has been around for more than 30 years, reiterates that it is justified in refusing to do business with those groups with which it has had a bad experience due to "unpaid bills or bills paid several months late, failure to comply with the regulations (children and chaperones) and requests impossible for us to fulfill (e.g. prayer room). We can no longer accept or accommodate certain groups in our facilities. It is a question of safety first and foremost."

That response is not satisfactory for the director of the rejected camp, Rabbi Levi Raskin of Camp Ohr Menachem, which is run by Beth Chabad in Côte St. Luc. He recorded and released on the Internet an excerpt of his May 15 telephone conversation with a woman who works at Acrosport.

In the recording, he tries to make a reservation for a single visit by the campers for this summer, after a camp staff member earlier that day had tried unsuccessfully to do so.

The woman repeats that Acrosport is not making reservations. When Rabbi Raskin asks why, she asks the name of the camp, and he gives it. She replies, "because it is a Jewish camp and we have had problems before."

Acrosport's explanation is also not good enough for B'nai Brith Canada, which says Acrosport's refusal to take bookings from Jewish camps is "a serious violation of human rights" and it should apologize.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which initially felt the company might be violating the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, now accepts Acrosport's explanation.

"The owner assured us the centre is open to the Jewish community, and we consider the matter closed," said CIJA spokesperson Eta Yuding.

On May 16, François Leblanc, who identified himself as the son of the owner of the club, told *The CJN* that as a private enterprise, it can choose with whom it does business.

He did not specify which Jewish camps have not paid their bills or that do not respect the safety regulations. He also alluded to certain "accommodations" sought on religious grounds.

Rabbi Raskin told *The CJN* that he has been bringing campers to Acrosport for at least five or six years, without any incident, and denied that his camp, which serves about 80 kids, did not pay on time. "We have no choice but to pay. They demand payment in full 30 days after the reservation," he said.

However, Rabbi Raskin said he has had the sense that "they don't like us... We do feel they always had a problem with us."

As for the campers' behaviour, he said Ohr Menachem counsellors are not allowed to accompany them into the trampoline area. Acrosport staff are completely in charge of the site.

"Still, we watch from the side, and we have heard the staff using foul language with the children," said Rabbi Raskin, who said he has had no direct contact with Acrosport since May 15.

He notes that trampolining is an exuberant activity, and it's natural for kids to get a little "wild."

In the interview with *The CJN*, Leblanc cited language as a possible aggravating factor in this incident, because the woman who took Rabbi Raskin's call is francophone. He said it is "unfortunate" that she was "misunderstood" because of her lack of ease in English, but no apology is in order.

Even if Acrosport apologized, Rabbi Raskin said it's unlikely the camp would return there. "An apology is a minimum, but it resolves nothing. It does not change what is in their hearts," he said. ■

MYRON LOVE PHOTO

Vandals damage cemetery headstones in Winnipeg

MYRON LOVE
PRAIRIES CORRESPONDENT

Some time between May 9 and 11, vandals entered the Hebrew Sick Benefit Cemetery in north Winnipeg and knocked as many as 25 headstones off their bases.

Jonathan Buchwald, executive director of Congregation Etz Chayim, which operates the cemetery, said the damage was restricted to the first two sections of the walled-in old part of the 100-year-old graveyard. "It's lucky that there wasn't much real damage," Buchwald said.

Although the estimated cost to restore the headstones to their bases could be as high as $60,000, Buchwald said it won't be too difficult a task, and none of the stones were damaged.

Buchwald said police are investigating, but that there don't seem to be any anti-Semitic overtones to the attack.

"There is no graffiti anywhere or Nazi symbols anywhere," he said. "Most likely it was just kids fooling around. We don't know how they managed to knock over the headstones without damaging any of them."

He added the synagogue is in the process of contacting the families whose relatives' headstones were affected.

The same cemetery was also vandalized in August 1999, with considerably more damage inflicted on that occasion.

More than 300 headstones were overturned and dozens damaged beyond repair.

Five young adults were eventually arrested for that attack. They were given conditional sentences and ordered to pay restitution. One of the culprits had Jewish family members. ■

Holocaust remembrance in Ottawa

DIANE KOVEN
OTTAWA CORRESPONDENT

A poignant, unspoken reminder of the passage of time and the urgency of hearing first-hand accounts from Holocaust survivors was evident at the very opening of this year's National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony.

The March on the Colours by Ottawa's Jewish War Veterans, which opened the May 15 ceremony, was a procession of only three veterans.

The message from Thomas Hecht, a longtime and well-known community activist and volunteer, was a very personal illustration of the 2014 theme: Jews "on the edge" 1944: Between Annihilation and Liberation.

Students from Montreal and Toronto took part in the ceremony and they, together with students from Ottawa – both the Ottawa Jewish Community School and a local public school – presented a declaration vowing to carry on the memory of the Holocaust into the next generation.

The ceremony, held at the National War Museum, was attended by Holocaust survivors and their families, many of whom travelled from Montreal, Toronto and elsewhere, as well as by church groups, community members, politicians and diplomats, including Israel's ambassador to Canada, Rafael Barak. ■

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Important to plan financially for special needs child

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Rick Strutt with his son, Tyler

When thinking about what it takes to care for a child with special needs, you might expect that it requires a lot of love, patience and moral support.

In many cases, it can also be a major financial commitment that requires a lot of planning for the future, said Rick Strutt, a financial advisor and retirement specialist for CIBC, and a father of a child with special needs.

Strutt's 18-year-old son, Tyler, who is globally developmentally delayed and non-verbal, needs help with all his activities and his daily living, and will require financial support for his entire life, he said.

Strutt volunteers with Community Living Toronto, a social service agency that advocates for people with intellectual disabilities, and he lectures at the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital on the subject of financial planning for families with special needs children

He spoke last week at the Current Trends in Paediatric Neuro-Developmental Disabilities conference, held at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre in Vaughan, Ont., outlining some of the things parents can do to provide their children with financial security for years to come.

He told *The CJN* that when parents come to meet him seeking financial advice for their special needs children, they often talk about present-day issues, like the cost of therapy and access to government funding, but they also worry about how to plan for their child's future.

"You need to understand your present financial situation. Build a plan," Strutt said.

"Sometimes when I do seminars, people's eyes look like deer in headlights because it's about understanding the supports and services [available] when they're children. Then they transition out when they're 18 or 19. What are they going to do? What are they going to do after school [post-21] if they don't have the ability to work? And then, how will they provide for them financially? Where will they live?"

Strutt said he struggled with the same concerns when his son was growing up.

"What's going to happen to him when I'm not around?... As a parent, that is my main concern. I'm not concerned with now. He's a great kid, he's enhanced our lives in so many different ways, he's a hoot to be around, but it's like, what happens to him when we're not around? That is a big concern."

Based on his experience, most parents are intimidated by the process.

"I tell them to just start with where they are today, where they're going and chunk off things a little bit at a time," he said.

He said it's important for people to learn about their employment benefits, and their long-term disability plans.

"Then you have to build a team. Find a lawyer that understands it. If you're doing a will, find a lawyer that does wills for families that have children with special needs, who is familiar with the Henson Trust," he said.

The Henson Trust, a discretionary trust that protects the assets and inheritance of people with special needs without interfering with their right to collect government benefits, can be set up at any time, with the help of a good estate or trust lawyer, Strutt said.

"I can't give [Tyler] the money, so what I do is, I say, fine, I'm going to put it into a trust and the trustee... [will] pay out certain expenses for Tyler over the course of his life," he explained.

"I don't want to leave money directly to Tyler because he's not going to be able to manage it. You want to make sure that if you're going to set up a trust for him, set it up, ensure that you have proper people [taking care of it] and understand what you're trying to do, what the picture looks like."

When it comes to government benefits, Strutt said the most significant one available in Ontario is the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), which children become eligible for when they turn 18.

"But that has limits on income and assets, so you want to be aware of the rules," Strutt said.

"Tyler's got a bank account, but for ODSP purposes, they don't want him to have more than $5,000 in his bank account, because that could affect what he gets [from the government]... Realizing that the maximum they can get from ODSP is about $1,200 a month, you're protecting their poverty income for them."

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP), which Strutt described as "an RSP for individuals who can't really support themselves," is another savings plan parents should consider.

When it comes to estate planning and drafting wills, Strutt suggests that making it as current as possible is the best approach.

"A lot of people want to set up a will that is good for the rest of their lives. But who you associate with and who you want to have as guardians for your children when you're 30 may be different when you're 50, right?"

Strutt added that a good financial plan shouldn't be static, and should be revisited annually.

"Have there been any material changes? Have you had another child? If you've got [a plan] started, you're not reinventing the whole wheel, you're just kind of trimming it down," he said.

"Building a good team is really important also. Network with other parents. What other people do may not work for you but there may be portions of it that work."

He said the biggest mistake parents make is being paralyzed by the thought of tackling these issues.

"We're all busy. Sometimes we just look at our feet. Sometimes we don't look at the big picture for things, and there's a lot there for families with children with special needs, but really, the onus is on us to really put it together."■

People need to be tolerant

EVE SMAGALA
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

I love kids. They're so cute and I love playing with them. That's why working with kids is the perfect job for me.

I spent 14 years working at Camp Robin Hood and loved taking the kids to activities and helping them at lunchtime. Now I work five half-days a week as a teachers' assistant at Holy Blossom Temple's preschool. I also volunteer a few afternoons a week at the Columbus Centre's daycare. All of the kids are under four years old. They adore me. They're always running to me and hugging me.

Working with very young children is great for me because their behaviour is easy for me to understand. You see, I have Asperger syndrome, which is on the autism spectrum, but I am quite high-functioning.

I'm 31 years old and live in my own apartment with my roommate, Sarah, and my cat, Lucky. I take care of my place really well, and Sarah and I share the cooking.

I take the bus to work, and usually buy groceries on the way home. I go to most of my appointments on my own. I've been practising karate for more than 10 years and have my brown advanced belt. I've been skiing since I was a kid. Last year, I took up snowboarding and I really enjoy it. I like to relax, talk on the phone and go to movies with my friends.

> *The more cues I can recognize, the better I am at doing what's needed. I feel good about that, too*

Still, what I do need help with are things like balancing my life, paying my bills and doing my taxes.

I am especially good at remembering things and problem-solving – when I'm not upset. I've been told that I have difficulties with visual patterns, which makes it hard for me to read or to recognize people's body language. That sometimes makes me anxious, and when this happens, I have trouble thinking clearly, problem-solving or changing my routine.

I don't usually talk much, but when I'm anxious I get too talkative and I don't realize I should stop. When I am misunderstood, I get upset easily. There have been times when I've been told to shut up, and it really hurts.

I often had trouble at school or in interviews, and I still sometimes have trouble meeting new people, because when I respond inappropriately they think I have a poor attitude or that I'm lazy. I'm better with precise instructions. For example, when I supervise the children on playground equipment, it's helpful for my supervisor to tell me that only one child is allowed on the slide at a time. Then I know exactly what to do. But if I'm just told to "watch the children," I might let too many kids play on it, and it could become dangerous.

Fortunately, I have learned some strategies to help me succeed at work. My supervisors give me specific cues for the tasks I have trouble initiating, like a timer that vibrates when it's snack time so that I can start preparing it for the kids, or hand signals that cue me to stop talking and start listening.

I really appreciate how helpful my co-workers have been. Nobody else realizes that I'm getting cues, and that makes me feel good. It helps me to feel confident that I can do the job, instead of scared that I am misunderstanding stuff. The more cues I can recognize, the better I am at doing what's needed. I feel good about that, too.

If I could tell society one thing, it would be this: try to be more sensitive, more patient, more tolerant, more understanding. There are a lot of different kinds of people in this world. Some might be quicker or more capable than others, but everyone has something valuable to offer. Just like me. ■

Online: Ritalin is not the answer, teacher says. Go to cjnews.com

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COR responds to CJN Behind the Label series

Our fees go to provide services for community

Richard Rabkin

We appreciate this opportunity to respond to issues raised by *The Canadian Jewish News* about our organization. The Kashruth Council of Canada, commonly known as COR, provides a critical service to the community, and we welcome the chance to provide more information about our operations.

COR is a not-for-profit organization and all fees collected go towards covering our operations and growing our services to the community.

Marvin Sigler, chairman of Gold Seal Management and past COR chairman explained: "In food service (i.e. restaurants and caterers), we operate at a financial deficit – our expenses are greater than our fees. We are able to marginally compensate for this loss from our other divisions. We have not increased our food service fees in the last three years, and in some cases we subsidize certain community institutions."

We surveyed a number of restaurants and found that of their total expenses, COR fees represent approximately one per cent. "My COR fees represent less than half a per cent of my total costs," Yoram Gabay, owner of Dr. Laffa, said. "Anyone who thinks COR is responsible for the cost of kosher food doesn't know what he's talking about."

COR is extremely sensitive to the cost of kosher food. For example, this is the driving reason why we have been advocating so aggressively for an alternate kosher chicken processor in Canada.

As opposed to what was reported in *The CJN*, COR charges our caterers a standard $31 per hour for event mashgichim, which is in line with other kosher certifiers.

When we told our proprietors that we were making a video to let people hear from them directly, all who were already coming into our office to sell their chametz on the day of the shooting, participated. All 11 participants said that their COR fees were reasonable and their working relationship with COR is strong. Watch the video at www.TheTruthAboutCOR.com.

Customers choose COR because they know that we are reliable, professional, we have high standards, and our prices are modest in comparison with other major kosher certifiers. When COR certifies something as kosher, you can rely on that fact.

COR's entire operations are supervised by lay and rabbinic boards ensuring transparency and accountability. The rabbinic board is made up of 22 respected community rabbis. Lay representatives are appointed by local synagogues and include business professionals who ensure that our organization is being run in the community's best interests.

"COR's financial statements are audited annually by Grunwald and Co., an independent accounting firm and the financial data is available to the public on Canada Revenue Agency's website," said longtime COR treasurer Ronald Rutman, partner at accounting firm Zeifmans LLP. "Senior staff salaries are set by the executive board's lay volunteers and all financial operations are transparent and in full compliance with governmental regulations."

COR began and operated for many years affiliated with Canadian Jewish Congress then UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. When COR separated from federation, the accumulated surplus that COR had generated to that point was transferred to COR for start-up costs. Although COR was an incorporated not-for-profit entity at the time, it was not yet a registered charity, so there was no means to pass the funds to COR. Therefore, in accordance with CRA rules a new registered charity (the "Matan Fund") was created to facilitate the transfer of these funds.

The CJN noted our financial reporting seemed to show a drop in number of employees. Jack Feintuch, president at Runnymede Development and COR's vice-chair explained: "In 2013, CRA recorded our employees differently than had been done previously. There was no change in the actual number of employees." In fact, we have approximately 150 employees consisting of expert mashgichim who supervise our approximately 1,000 facilities in Canada and around the world, and our professional office staff who administer their work.

COR is not afraid of competition. As an active member of the Association of Kashrus Organizations (AKO), we work closely with our competitors in the kosher industry. Indeed, Rabbi Moshe Elefant, the chief operating officer at OU Kosher, remarked, "I have worked with COR closely for many years. I have found them to be highly professional and experts in the field of kosher supervision. In my opinion, kosher consumers in Toronto and Canada at large are fortunate to have an upstanding organization like COR serving them."

Ira Marder, COR's current chairman, explained, "COR is available as a free consumer resource for anything kosher: from koshering people's homes to answering kosher questions. This Passover alone, COR answered over 3,000 consumer questions. We appreciate the confidence that has been placed in us by the Jewish community and are honoured to serve you."

Everyone who works or volunteers for COR does so because we care about our community, and we are passionate about the belief that people should have access to kosher food. Every day we strive to serve you better, and if you have suggestions for how we can improve, we want to hear from you. Email us at info@cor.ca. ■

Richard Rabkin is managing director of the Kashruth Council of Canada.

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Canadian American Active Retirees in Israel
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Ottawa art exhibit slammed for glorifying terrorism

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Canada's Israeli embassy and Ottawa's Jewish Federation say that an art exhibit on display at Ottawa City Hall's Karsh-Masson Art Gallery glorifies Palestinian terrorism and have urged the city to review its policy on how exhibits are approved.

The exhibit, *Invisible* by Palestinian-born, Toronto-based artist Rehab Nazzal, includes photographs of some of the most notorious Palestinian terrorists, including Abu Iyad, who was responsible for the 1972 Munich Games massacre, and Khalid Nazzal, the artist's brother-in-law, who was the mastermind behind the Ma'alot school massacre that killed 22 children and three adults 40 years ago.

Eitan Weiss, spokesperson and head of public diplomacy for the Israeli Embassy in Canada, said the embassy was moved to contact Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson when it learned that the city was "endorsing it, and not only that, but paying for it. They are funding a lot of this with taxpayers' money."

Artists are paid about $1,800 to have their work displayed at the gallery.

> *It's a hurtful exhibit in the fact that it glorifies Palestinian terrorists, so it's highly problematic that it is funded by taxpayers' dollars and it has no place in City Hall.*
>
> **Eitan Weiss**
> Israel Embassy

"The artist is portraying these people as innocent Palestinians, authors, writers, cartoonists, politicians who were assassinated by Israel," Weiss said. "We're talking about terrorists with blood on their hands."

Jewish Federation of Ottawa president and CEO Andrea Freedman said "it's a hurtful exhibit in the fact that it glorifies Palestinian terrorists, so it's highly problematic that it is funded by taxpayers' dollars and it has no place in City Hall."

She said federation has called on the city to shut down the exhibit, which is scheduled to run until June 22.

In an email statement to *The CJN*, deputy city manager Steve Kanellakos explained that the exhibit is in line with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that it won't be taken down prematurely.

All exhibits at the gallery are selected by an independent jury and the themes of each exhibit do not represent the views of the City of Ottawa, he said.

"To exhibit a work of art is not to endorse the work or the vision, ideas, and opinions of the artist. It is to uphold the right of all to experience diverse visions and views."

However, following meetings with the federation and Israeli Ambassador Rafael Barak, the mayor agreed to review the policy governing the selection process of the gallery's artwork, which has been in place since 1993.

Nazzal, who will speak on Ottawa City Hall property on June 1 about her exhibit, told the *Ottawa Citizen* last week that the decision by the city to review the policy has her "concerned about the future of artists showing work of significance."

Although Freedman said she's disappointed the exhibit remains open, "the main thing from our perspective is that the city... will be reviewing and revising their policies so that in the future, no other community will have to experience this."

Weiss said the purpose of the meeting between the ambassador and the mayor was not to shut down the exhibit.

"We understand their constraints, because at the end of the day, they are aware of the fact that this is a problematic exhibition, and they claim that their hands are tied due to legal constraints in terms of taking it down," he said.

"We're just trying to expose reality and expose the truth and use this moment as a teaching moment and tell the Canadian audience that if you want to know why Israelis and Palestinians haven't reached a peace agreement, this is the reason why. Palestinians enshrine terrorists, they commemorate and glorify them, and this is something that is unacceptable. Imagine what people would have said if the pictures of the 9/11 terrorists would have been there," Weiss said.

"It's a good opportunity for us to showcase the Palestinian propaganda and how they tend to twist the reality and change the truth to suit their narrative, which is completely false in this case. This is our objective in this." ■

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Doreen Green, an active Technion supporter since 1986, is Chair of Technion Canada's Board of Directors; a member of Technion's International Board of Governors and was awarded an Honorary Fellowship in 2000.

After receiving her BCL from the Université de Montréal she became a practicing attorney specializing in family law, adoption, reproductive technology and civil litigation.

An ardent Zionist, Doreen supports numerous Israeli and local Jewish organizations, including the Montreal YM-YWHA, Free Hebrew for Juniors, The Friendship Circle of Montreal and The Chevra.

Her passion and commitment serve as a testament to the lessons her parents taught her, *"to look after our community and to support Israel."*

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Whaley Estate Litigation was ranked nationally by ***Canadian Lawyer*** magazine in January 2013 as one of the Top 5 Trusts and Estates boutiques in Canada. It has been recognized annually since 2012 by International Global Law Experts and received an award in Trust and Estate Law.

Michael Gordon, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Michael Gordon is a Professor of Medicine in the Division of Geriatrics at the University of Toronto, Medical Program Director of Palliative Care and former Vice President of Medical Services and Head of Geriatrics and Internal Medicine at Toronto's Baycrest Health Sciences. He is also a member of the University of Toronto's Joint Centre of Clinical Care

Dr. Gordon has served on many provincial and national advisory boards and committees across Canada.

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Belgian Jews not surprised by museum attack

CNAAN LIPHSHIZ
JTA

The cold determination with which the shooter at Belgium's Jewish museum murdered four people shocked many Belgians, but local Jewish leaders have long anticipated the possibility of such an attack on their community.

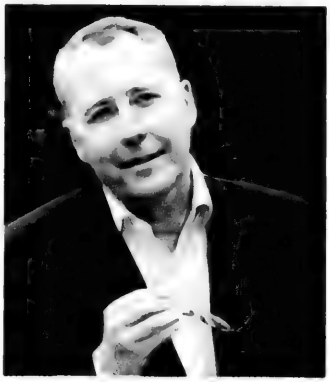
The shooter who entered the Jewish Museum of Belgium on May 24 in central Brussels "approached each victim with calm, aiming only for the head without uttering a word in manner that is shocking because of the level of training it suggests," said Mischael Modrikamen, the Jewish leader of Belgium's small, centrist Parti Populaire.

"Sadly, however, the actual attack comes as no surprise to us after years of living in an atmosphere of rampant anti-Semitism that often leads to violence," he added.

Within hours of the attack, the local Jewish community and the European Jewish Congress' Brussels-based Security and Crisis Centre were operating a crisis management room complete with a telephone hotline and – a testament to years of preparations for a terrorist attack on one of Europe's most at-risk communities.

The shooter, who fled the scene along with a driver, used what appeared to be an AK-47 to kill Israeli tourists Mira and Emanuel Riva and two of the museum's staff, a man in his 20s and a female volunteer, Belgian authorities said.

A manhunt is underway to capture the perpetrators of the deadliest anti-Semitic attack in Europe since the French Islamist Mohammed Merah killed four people at a Jewish school in Toulouse in 2012.



Mischael Modrikamen WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Indeed, the characteristics of the Brussels museum attack follow the pattern observed at Toulouse, according to Claude Moniquet, a Brussels-based counter-terrorism expert.

"It seems we are dealing with a small cell of operatives – Islamists or otherwise – with a low signature that minimizes their risk of being caught," he said.

Yet Belgium's Jews have experience with such violence that predates the Toulouse attack by more than 20 years. In 1989, a Moroccan terrorist assassinated the community's then president, Joseph Wybran.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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OPINION

Seeking answers in the Jewish Diaspora

Natalie Birnbaum

How do you identify yourself? As an American living abroad in Israel, I constantly identify myself according to my nationality. The idea of nationality as the cornerstone of our individual identities is neither a novel idea, nor one ingrained in human nature. The State of Israel can be seen as the fulfilment of the modern Zionist dream of a national Jewish state. However, in this day and age, does an Israeli nationality provide its people with a sufficient sense of identity?

The concept of modern-day nationalism did not even emerge until the 18th century. German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder coined the term nationalism as we know it today. Herder, who idealized ethnic nationalism, envisioned a world where nations are defined by a shared heritage, "wonderfully separated… not only by woods and mountains, seas and deserts, rivers and climates, but more particularly by languages, inclinations and characters." Once this ideology began to infiltrate and reframe European society, a cultural revolution began to take shape.

What did this new nationalism mean for those who didn't fit the national moulds, who didn't share the common "languages, inclinations and characters" of the land? What did this mean for 18th- and 19th-century European Jewry?

As Reut Institute founder Gidi Grinstein writes in his book *Flexigidity*, "the wave of nationalism and national movements in Europe motivated a handful of Jewish leaders to reframe their understanding of Judaism and to reawaken the ancient story of Jewish nationhood, largely suppressed since the Bar Kochba rebellion." Ultimately, this wave of European nationalism and ethnic identity magnified Jews' desire for a national home of their own, thus paving the way for modern Zionism and the State of Israel.

Now in its 66th year, the State of Israel thrives. But while its nationalism remains intact, does it also live in the souls of its inhabitants? When an Israeli is asked to identify himself, is it about his nationality that he most proudly boasts?

While Israelis express unquestionable pride in their country, they also yearn to take part in the cultural trends and customs of greater western society. It seems that a solely Israeli identity may not be enough, that Israelis seek other forms of identification, figuratively in the form of culture, but and also literally in the form of passports. In fact, in the past 10 to 15 years, there has been a remarkable upsurge in foreign passport applications from Israelis.

The high number of Israelis seeking foreign passports may simply reflect a desire to ease travel or work abroad, or provide an "exit strategy" in case of terror, but I find this desire for dual nationality to be a bit more profound.

Today's born-and-raised Israelis are more removed from their Diaspora roots than ever before. As time passes, Israel's younger generations are being born into families of parents and grandparents who are all native to the state.

Paradoxically, as these familial ties become more deeply rooted in Israel and our biblical homeland, the passing of time also creates distance from our history in the European Diaspora. The notion of the "wandering Jew" is ingrained in our Jewish cultural mindset and may not be shaken so easily.

The passport craze can be understood as a physical manifestation of the amorphous Jewish soul and our traditional longing to understand our shared history. For thousands of years, the Jewish People sought to return to our homeland, to end our wandering and rediscover our roots. Israel was our answer. Today, however, our Jewish history extends beyond biblical text, to hundreds of years spent in the European Diaspora. Perhaps the youngest generations of Israelis cannot solely look toward Jerusalem the way their ancestors did for questions about heritage. Perhaps there's a new wave of Jewish questioning that can only be answered in the Diaspora. ■

Natalie Birnbaum is working for the year at the Reut Institute on behalf of the Menachmen Begin Heritage Center Israeli Governmnet Fellowhip.

Montreal lawyer and businessman, Michael Kastner, has donated **One Million Dollars ($1,000,000.00)** to support Doctors of the World through the auspices of the Jewish Community Foundation in honour of his friend and mentor, Norton Segal, Q.C.
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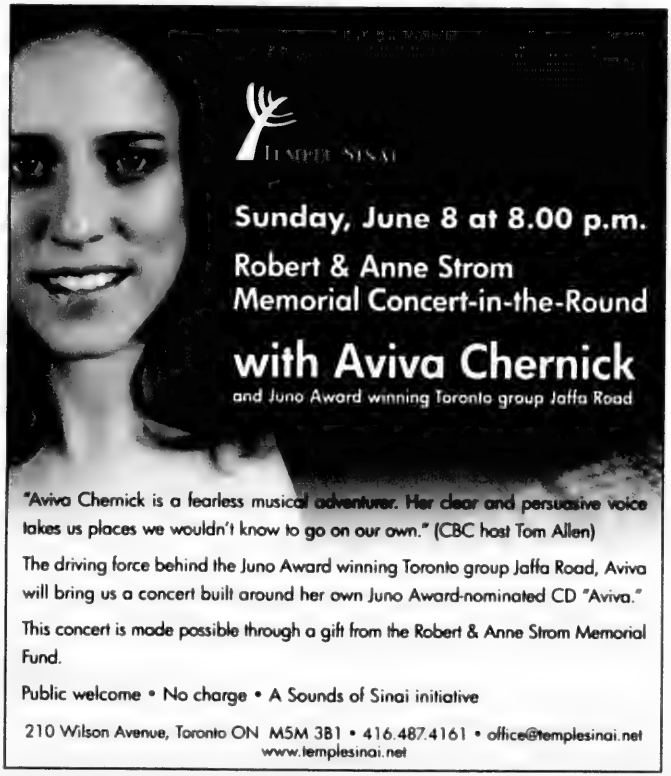
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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 29, 2014

Pope visits Western Wall, Yad Vashem

JTA

Pope Francis visited an array of religious sites and national memorials on his final day in Israel.

His itinerary included visits to the Western Wall and Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial, where he gave a speech condemning anti-Semitism and hatred. He also met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres.

The Pope began his day with a visit to the Temple Mount and the Dome of the Rock, where he met with the Grand Mufti Muhammad Ahmad Hussein of Jerusalem, the highest Muslim religious authority there.

He then went to the adjacent Western Wall, Judaism's holiest site, where he prayed and left a note. He also met with Western Wall Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz.

The Pope also visited the grave of Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, and made an unplanned stop at a memorial for victims of terror. The visits come a day after the Pope referred to the "state of Palestine" in a speech in Bethlehem and stopped to pray at Israel's security barrier there. Those gestures were widely seen as endorsements of Palestinian national aspirations.

At Yad Vashem, the Pope met with Holocaust survivors, laid a wreath and said, "Never again, Lord, never again."

Later in a speech, he said, "A great evil has befallen us, as such that has never occurred. Grant us the grace to be ashamed of what men have done, to be ashamed of this massive idolatry."

Pope Francis prays at the Kotel on May 26. ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

Pope Francis also met with Israel's chief rabbis, David Lau and Yitzhak Yosef, as well as a group of sick Christian Arab-Israelis, before travelling to Peres' official residence.

He arrived in the region May 24, which he spent in Amman, Jordan. He went the next morning to Bethlehem, where he visited the Church of the Nativity – the traditional site of Jesus' birth – and gave a speech alongside Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

The Pope arrived in Israel May 25 in the afternoon, where he gave a speech at Ben-Gurion Airport before meeting with his Eastern Orthodox counterpart, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The two leaders signed a joint declaration and called for greater Christian unity.

"I greet all the people of Israel with prayerful good wishes that their aspirations of peace and prosperity will achieve fulfilment," Pope Francis said in his speech at the airport. "We all know how urgent is the need for peace, not only for Israel but also for the entire region. May efforts and energies be increasingly directed to the pursuit of a just and lasting solution to the conflicts which have caused so much suffering."

Pope Frances was greeted at Ben-Gurion by Netanyahu and Peres, accompanied by a band playing *Jerusalem of Gold*.

"You have arrived in the State of Israel where today members of different religions and nationalities live together – Jews, Christians, Muslims, Druse and Circassians," said Peres in an address upon the Pope's arrival. "Israel is a Jewish and democratic state where coexistence in peace is implemented, and a state that aspires for peace with all its neighbours. Even if peace calls for sacrifices, the sacrifices of peace are preferable to the threat of war."

In Bethlehem, the Pope called for an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and referred to the "state of Palestine." He also called for peace in a speech upon arriving in Israel.

"All of us must become the builders and constructors of this peace," he says. "All men and women of this land, and the world at large, are asking us to work towards peace."

He also invited Peres and Abbas to the Vatican next month for a prayer summit for peace. Peres and Abbas have accepted the invitation, according to reports, despite Israel's suspension of negotiations with the Palestinian Authority last month. ■

Five wounded in attack on Brussels shul in 1982

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

An armed attack on Brussels' largest synagogue – located some 350 metres from the museum – left five wounded in 1982, three years after 13 people were wounded in a grenade attack on an El Al plane at Brussels' airport.

Some of the worst attacks on Belgian Jewry happened between 1979 and 1981, when Arab terrorists killed four people in a series of explosions, including a car bomb, and shootings directed at Jewish targets in Antwerp's Diamond Quarter.

"That track record means that no one thought this couldn't happen here," said Joel Rubinfeld, president of the Belgian League Against Anti-Semitism and former leader of French-speaking Belgian Jews. "In fact, most of us knew it could and would, especially in recent years. So I am shocked, but not in the least surprised."

The level of threat increased after the second Palestinian intifadah, when Belgium began seeing dozens of anti-Semitic attack each year for the first time since World War II.

Recent years saw another development not only because of Merah – who inspired a slew of anti-Semitic attacks across the French-speaking world – but because "of the arrival to the scene of new patrons of anti-Semitism in the French-speaking world," Rubinfeld said, a reference to Dieudonné M'bala M'bala, a French comedian whose blatant anti-Semitism has emboldened anti-Semites.

Earlier this month, Belgian authorities banned a conference organized in Brussels by several individuals with a track-record of promoting anti-Semitism, including Dieudonné, French activist Alain Soral and Belgian lawmaker Laurent Louis.

Rubinfeld said that Belgian authorities have generally had "a more lax attitude" toward anti-Semitism than their French counterparts. The banning of the conference earlier this month "was the first case of its kind in recent years where we saw a determined stance," he added.

Modrikamen noted that police maintained no permanent presence outside the Jewish Museum of Belgium. "Even when police do place protection, it means two cops in a car parked outside a building and nothing comparable to the security provided in France," he said.

But Arie Zuckerman, a European Jewish Congress executive who has spearheaded Jewish communities' preparations for crises after Toulouse, says the problem isn't local.

"When governments perceive a threat, they know how to co-operate tightly and devote enormous resources and we see this in the war on drugs, for example," he said. "Sadly, no such pan-European recognition has emerged on the need to protect Jewish institutions, which often have to carry the burden of security costs. We saw it Brussels, where the terrorists probably collected intelligence without being detected, but it could happen in many other places. The tragedy is in Belgium, but the problem is in Europe."

In an unrelated attack in France the next day, on May 25, two French Jewish men were attacked while on their way to synagogue. The men, brothers aged 18 and 21 from the Paris suburb of Creteil, were attacked from behind by two men on bicycles, according to a statement from the French Jewish organization SPCJ.

The attackers, men in their twenties, wore brass knuckles and hit the brothers in the face. The attackers fled after the brothers defended themselves.

A passing car stopped to pick the men up and drove them to the hospital. According to SPCJ, the men's faces are "heavily injured," and will need surgery, but they are expected to recover. ■

Gerontology expert raises profile of Israeli college

PAUL LUNGEN
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Ariela Lowenstein PAUL LUNGEN PHOTO

Set in the midst of verdant green farmland, with the hills of the Galilee in the background, the Max Stern Yezreel Valley College attracts young adults primarily from the surrounding area.

Moshav Tel Adashim is nearby and practically across the street – actually it's Highway 60 – is Kibbutz Mizra.

Not exactly household names, unless you live nearby, but the Yezreel Valley College can perhaps better be described by reference to better known locales. It is situated on the highway between Nazareth, to the north, and Afula, to the south.

If you haven't yet heard about the Yezreel Valley College, well, Ariela Lowenstein would like to change that. Lowenstein is president of the college and she was in Toronto last week to meet a supporter of the school as well as a potential benefactor.

Raising the profile of the school in Canada was the primary reason for her visit, but as a grandparent, social worker and professor emeritus of Haifa University, she was also interested in attending an event at the University of Toronto's Institute for Life Course and Aging.

The issue is near and dear to her heart and is one area of instruction she hopes to expand at the college, she said.

The school has 14 departments and confers two postgraduate degrees. Its nursing program is in great demand and it also offers instruction in communications, health systems managements, economics and management, and information systems management. It offers MA degrees in organizational development and consulting and in educational counselling.

Close to 5,000 students attend the college and another 1,000 are engaged in preparatory programs to get them ready for the demands of higher education.

"It has been a regional college under the auspices of Haifa University," Lowenstein said in explaining the school's origins. "About 17 years ago it became an independent college."

It is one of 20 publicly funded colleges in Israel, six of which are in the Galilee. The Yezreel Valley College was located where it is to be more accessible to the local population, though it does draw students from as far away as Haifa.

Yezreel Valley College serves the many one-time "development towns" that date back to the origins of the State of Israel. In addition, the area is home to a substantial Arab population, who take advantage of the school's educational programs. About 23 per cent of the student body is Arab, reflecting pretty closely the country's demographics, Lowenstein said.

Arab students seem to prefer health-related professions, and about 50 per cent of the school's nursing school are Arabs. The school also has students from Ethiopia and the former Soviet Union. Many of the Ethiopian students also study nursing, she said.

About 400 students live in nearby residences in Afula and commute daily to the campus. "It's a very happy campus," Lowenstein said. "We believe in multiculturalism. Good personal relations exist between students."

Her personal interest is in gerontology – a field of growing interest in Israel. The country is third in the world in average lifespans "due to our health system and very developed services for the elderly."

"Elders are resilient because of what we experience in Israel," she said. "They have to cope."

Israeli culture places great emphasis on family life. "The elders are very involved with their families" and vice versa, she said.

This impacts on quality of life in a positive way and, at 24 per cent, the elderly are not institutionalized to nearly the extent as in other advanced countries, she said.

They spend more time with their families "and that makes life more interesting, fulfilling and extends life expectancy," she said.

But there are stresses on the family, particularly as women increasingly join the work force. It is an area ripe for study and Lowenstein hopes to establish a chair in aging and intergenerational family relations – if she can raise the funds.

Perhaps another trip to Canada is in the offing. ■

IN APRIL 2014, 10,000 PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, INCLUDING 800 CANADIANS, GATHERED IN POLAND TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL MARCH OF THE LIVING PROGRAM.

RIGHTEOUS REUNION: A SURVIVOR REUNITES WITH HIS RESCUER

THE STORY OF TWO LIVES FOREVER CONNECTED

Witness this gripping documentary on Canadian Holocaust Survivor, Sidney Zoltak, as he returns to his childhood town of Siemiatycze, Poland. CBC documents his reunion with the heroic Krinsky family, who provided underground shelter to Sidney and his family for 14 months. The film revisits the hiding place that spared their lives from the Nazis.

From there Sidney joins the March of the Living with over 10,000 young people from around the world, including 800 Canadian students, survivors, and chaperones, for an emotional journey through Warsaw, Krakow and Lublin – once bustling centres of Jewish life and culture. They also visit sites of the Holocaust including the death camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau, where Sidney's family was imprisoned and Treblinka, where almost all of Sidney's entire town was murdered. On Holocaust Remembrance Day, Sidney accompanied students on a defiant march from Auschwitz-Birkenau – the largest killing field in the history of humanity – in memory of all victims of Nazi genocide and against prejudice, intolerance and hate.

THE FILM IS PART OF CBC'S INITIATIVE OF DOCUMENTING THE HISTORICAL EVENTS SURROUNDING D-DAY, JUNE 6, 1944, 70 YEARS AGO. THE FEATURE WILL AIR ON JUNE 4TH DURING CBC TELEVISION'S, "THE NATIONAL". THE DOCUMENTARY WILL BE AIRED ON OTHER DATES TO BE DETERMINED AND BE AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING ON CBC.CA FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.MARCHOFTHELIVING.ORG

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Jewish Life

Jews are in Lisbon's, and Portugal's, DNA

A plaque in Lisbon commemorates the 1506 massacre of thousands of Jews. RON CSILLAG PHOTO

RON CSILLAG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

As in so many European capitals, the Jewish experience in Lisbon mirrors the wider one. Portugal, once a powerhouse that controlled a good chunk of the world through a mighty military and brisk trade, is today mired in debt, thanks to heavy borrowing needed to save the country from red ink (though it is stressed repeatedly that the country is recovering and nowhere near as poor as Greece).

Once home to a thriving Jewish community whose members were seconded to the royal court to serve in a variety of professions, Portugal now has just 700 affiliated Jews, though that number could be as much as 6,000 and even higher if certain genetic traits are factored in (more on that later).

Lisbon's Jewish history is fascinating, violent and passionate – with all those aspects brought into sharp focus by our guide, Paolo Scheffer, a U.S.-educated art historian whose enthusiasm is infectious and depth of knowledge amazing. He speaks quickly and wastes no words, so pay attention.

We begin in the Praça do Comércio (Commerce Square), a large central plaza that abuts the harbour and is ringed by official-looking buildings. It was here that ships from around the world docked with their exotic cargoes of spices, fabrics and gold.

One of the first things to get out of the way is the word "Marrano," sometimes used to describe Iberian Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity during the Inquisition. It's pejorative, Scheffer stressed, and means "pig." Noted.

Better, in the case of Portugal, to use the term "Cristão Novo," or "New Christian." Why?

"Because in Spain, it was 'convert or leave,'" explains Scheffer, whose mother's family descended from so-called crypto-Jews. "In Portugal, it was 'convert or die.' There was no expulsion."

Judaism was outlawed in 1498, when Jews comprised as much as a quarter of the whole population, including many Spanish Jews who had arrived under the Edict of Expulsion six years earlier (the faith was not formally legalized until 1822). Very few Jews opted to die but many thousands did flee to places such as Amsterdam, Brazil and the Caribbean, leaving behind all property and, in many cases, even their children, who were left with the church to be raised as Christians (and leaving the king desperate for professionals).

Our next stop is St. Dominic's church, its blackened interior a vestige of Inquisition processions that began and ended with charred corpses. It was here that in April 1506, a New Christian muttered something sarcastic about a religious relic and was pummelled to death. Spurred by fanatical Dominican monks, the result was a frenzy of blood that overlapped with Passover. The eight-day pogrom killed an unknown number of converted Jews. "It was 4,000 in the first three days," Scheffer said. "After that, they stopped counting."

Outside in Rossio Square, a Star of David-shaped plaque, unveiled on the 500th anniversary of the massacre, pays tribute to the "Jewish victims of intolerance and religious fanaticism." Also in 2006, the Church apologized and asked for forgiveness.

The Inquisition in Portugal was formally established in 1536. Last summer, Portugal's parliament passed a law granting automatic nationality to descendants of the estimated 400,000 Jews killed, forced to convert or who fled during those dark days.

Sliding effortlessly into the World War II era, Scheffer dismissed suggestions that Portugal had been neutral. "Officially only," he scoffed. The country, he said, did big business with Nazi Germany, supplying the Third Reich with precious tungsten and being paid in 129 tonnes of untraceable gold. The country never fully addressed the issue. "Portugal still holds Nazi gold," Scheffer said pointedly.

But Portugal produced two Righteous Among the Nations, the better known being Aristides de Sousa Mendes, who served as the country's war-time consul-general in Bordeaux, France, and defied orders by issuing 30,000 protective visas to refugees fleeing Germany. As many as 20,000 were given to Jews. Punished by his fascist government and relieved of his duties, he died in poverty in 1954.

Scheffer noted that there is no public monument in the country to Mendes (if you don't count a small metal medallion dedicated to him in the Parque Metro station, which, Scheffer noted, is about the diameter of grapefruit). For that matter, Lisbon has no Jewish museum, though Scheffer operates a virtual one, at mpjh.org.

There are three synagogues in the country. The Kadoorie Mekor Haim in Porto bills itself as the largest shul in the Iberian peninsula. There's a 200-member Sephardi congregation in Belmonte, and for the 300 declared Jews of Lisbon, there's Sinagoga Shaaré Tikvá, which requires notice before visits by foreigners. Scheffer credits Chabad with uniting the community.

Try to get to Lisbon's Alfama quarter, where a large Jewish community flourished in the Middle Ages. Known as the Judiaria Grande, its labyrinth of narrow cobblestone streets included the Rua da Judiaria. One local church was built atop a synagogue. At the Carmo church in the Chiado quarter, routine digging a few years unearthed several centuries-old Jewish tombstones now on display.

The tales gush from Scheffer about famous Jewish doctors, merchants, navigators and masons. The country's Islamic flavour, still redolent from 500 years of Moorish rule, is clearly spiced with a Jewish one. While Jewish numbers could be as high as 6,000, he cited modern studies showing that up to 20 per cent of all Portuguese – or two million people – have Jewish genetic markers. Between that finding and the food, music and myriad Jewish contributions to society, Judaism "is in our DNA," he said. ■

Raising awareness, one scarf at a time

RITA POLIAKOV
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

When fashion designer Laura Siegel first heard about last year's Rana Plaza garment factory collapse in Bangladesh, she was upset. But not shocked.

"I've never worked in Bangladesh, but I spent a lot of time in India," she said. "To be honest, I wasn't so surprised that something like that could happen, mainly because I've witnessed first hand what some of the factory conditions can be like."

As a designer based in Toronto and New York, Siegel likes to research factories before beginning a line of clothing. She works with artisans internationally and has toured factories in both China and India.

And she wasn't always impressed with what she saw.

"It's OK to walk into a building where there are no signs and it's dirty. To be honest with you, that's something that isn't so bad," she said. "But when you walk into an environment where there's X amount of sewing machines per square footage and X amount of people per square footage... it's just work, make mistakes, get yelled at – those are the worst scenarios I've witnessed."

Which is why Siegel, 26, decided to act.

"I was talking with my parents about what we could do, what do you do after something like this? Because you can't just do nothing," she said of the collapse, which killed 1,127 workers.

"We decided it'd be a good idea to do something that would raise awareness, that would get people thinking about who made [their clothes] and what their lives are like."

Eventually, project Eleven27 was born. Siegel decided to work with local artisans in India who would hand-weave 1,127 scarves – made from reused saris – to honour each person who died in the tragedy.

"We wanted to do something in honour of individuals who lost their lives. What happened was a very big wake-up call," she said.

Proceeds from the sale of the scarves will go directly to the affected families in Savar, Bangladesh. For her initiative, Siegel partnered with Sreepur Village Organization, a group that's working with the victims' children to make sure they're taken care of. The organization is also helping the victims' families manage any money they received after the tragedy by setting up bank accounts.

Eleven27 launched on April 24, exactly a year after the factory – which was constructed illegally – collapsed.

"[Community support] has been unbelievable. So many people came out to the launch," Siegel said, adding that Holt Renfrew supports the campaign and is selling some of the scarves at its stores.

For Siegel, it was important that the scarves were made by Indian artisans in a safe work environment.

"[I wanted] for each scarf to be handmade, for each scarf to have thought that went into it, and whoever was making these scarves, whether it was an individual or a family, that they were able to do so in a nice work environment," she said.

Siegel decided to work with a family in Kutch district in western India.

"The father is a master weaver and the son also weaves. He brought in weavers from the community to hand-make all the scarves and the wife also helps him," she said.

Aside from Holt Renfrew, scarves can be purchased online at laurasiegelcollection.com. ■

Laura Siegel

Even divas get the blues: Fern Lindzon releases new CD

KATHRYN KATES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Like a Circle in a Spiral, the new CD by Juno Award nominee Fern Lindzon, offers an array of standards as well as two original songs, *Carrie* and *Even Divas get the Blues*.

Carrie was written about a longtime friend who lived in Massachusetts and died of cancer.

"I saw her a year before she died, and she managed to really hold on for quite a while, but I didn't manage to see her at the end, so the song is a lot about just not being there and that screeching silence," says the jazz singer and piano player.

"She was a big Joni Mitchell fan, so I was thinking of Joni Mitchell when I was writing it."

Even Divas Get the Blues is based on a poem her friend Myna Wallin wrote for Lindzon as a spoken word piece to be performed over music. When it came time to record it, Lindzon reduced the eight-page poem to a three-verse song. She describes it as an abstract telling of a world-weary diva and her encounter with a guy.

The album was produced by bassist George Koller and also features David French on soprano and tenor sax, Michael Davidson on vibes and Nick Fraser on drums. Flutist Bill McBirnie can be heard on the Cole Porter standard, *Night and Day* and on *Shashado/Loro*, a scat composition written by Lindzon based on Egberto Gismonti's chord changes (shashado is a northern Brazilian rhythm).

Fern Lindzon

Jazz at the Bookstore was born out of a chance meeting with singer/songwriter Ron Sexsmith aboard a chartered train full of Canadian recording artists on their way to the 2012 Juno Awards in Ottawa from Toronto.

"I told him that I'd love to arrange a piece of his, but not something that everyone else has done. He said that would be great, so I did some research when I got home and listened to his records. Then I found this one and it was so appropriate. I loved the lyrics and the music. I changed the chords a bit to give it a more swing feel."

Like a Circle in a Spiral takes its title from the opening line of Michel Legrand's wonderful song, *The Windmills of Your Mind*. "Long ago I made the decision that if I was going to record any standards, I had to do it in my own way, because most of those songs have already been recorded by great people.

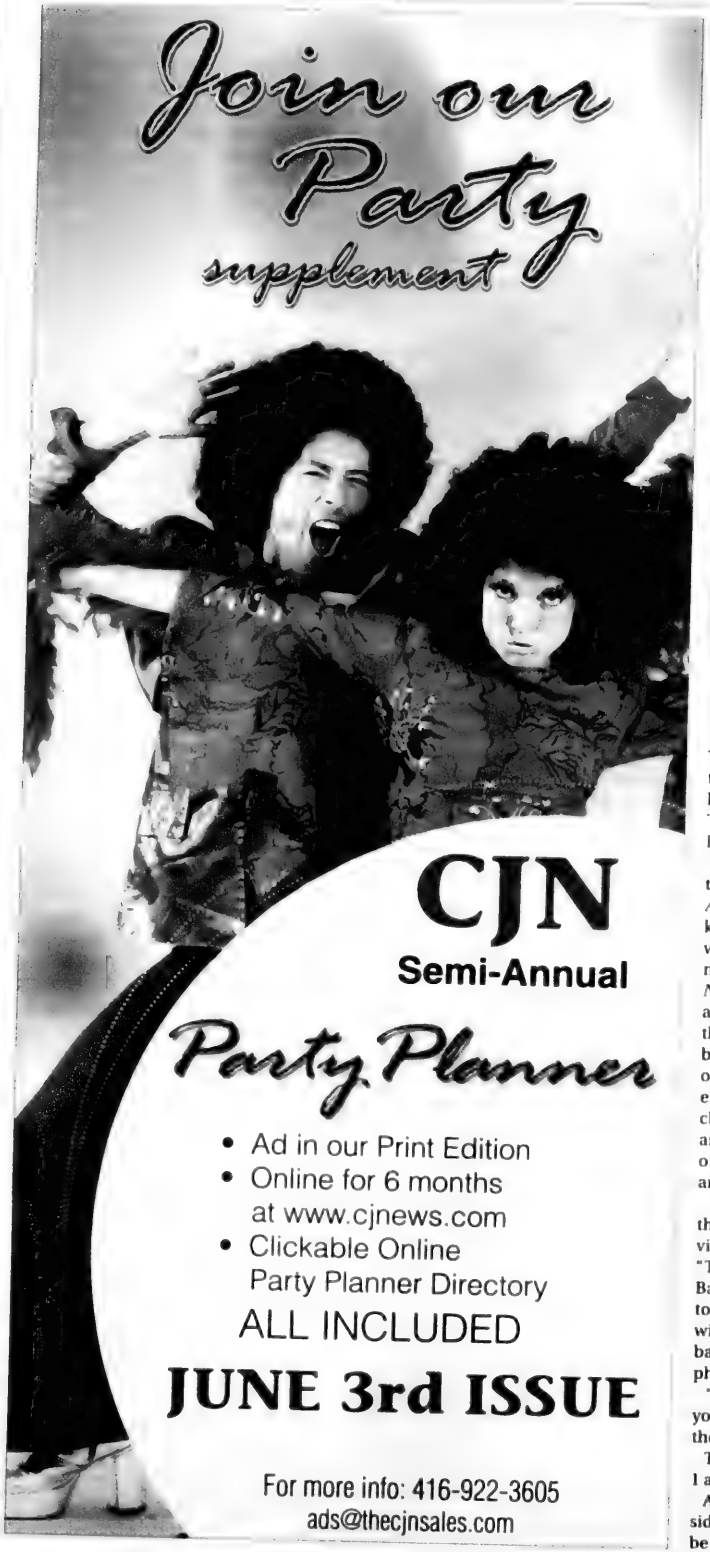
"So I came up with this arrangement for *The Windmills of Your Mind*, really thinking about the notions of circles and spirals, just sort of the wheels of life and our crazy thought processes. I set it up so it feels like the melody is floating on top of these wheels that are emotional. I'm a huge fan of Alan and Marilyn Bergman, who wrote the words, which I think are amazing. I'm a big lyric nut, when I hear great lyrics."

The singer says she loves to take standards and rearrange the rhythms and harmonies around the lyrics, which is where most of her arranging ideas come. A prime example comes from her interpretation of *Night and Day*, which she morphed into what she calls a "jungle salsa."

Also on the CD is Lindzon's rendition of the Hebrew song *Mishaela*, by Israeli pop star Noa. While working on the arrangement with Koller, he came up with a Southeast Asian-sounding rhythm on the bass. There are also two songs in Yiddish on the album, *A Malekh Veynt* (*An Angel Weeps*) and *Wishing/Papir Is Dokh Vays (Paper is Still White)*.

"I am always trying to introduce Yiddish or Hebrew music into a jazz context, because there are a lot of people singing in French and Portuguese, but not a lot of people doing things in Hebrew and Yiddish... it's not world music, it's really jazz." ■

Fern Lindzon performs June 7 at Chalkers Pub in Toronto. For more information on Fern Lindzon visit fernlindzon.com.



Israeli-born conductor takes TSO reins for Artist's in the Spotlight series

Shalom Bard

KATHRYN KATES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The Israeli-born resident conductor with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra takes hold of the baton later this week at Roy Thomson Hall in a program that includes Brahms, Mendelssohn, Liszt and Ravel.

Shalom Bard says these are masterworks that he really loves. "I first heard Brahms' *Academic Overture* when I was a young kid. I fell in love with this piece and always wanted to conduct it. We are doing the last movement of Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 3*, which is exciting and full of energy and somewhat dramatic. I look forward to the challenge of performing *Bolero* [Ravel] because it can easily ... speed up too fast or get loud too soon and ruin the experience, so I look forward to that kind of the challenge. And, Liszt [*Les Préludes*] is an amazing piece with all the different sides of being human – love, struggle, doubt and self-acceptance."

The concert is part of the TSO Artists in the Spotlight series. The soloists will be violist Teng Li and oboist Sarah Jeffrey. "They are both incredible musicians," Bard says. "It is an amazing thing for me to work with them and accompany them, with Sarah in particular, because we go back 20 years. We met at the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra.

"As somebody who came through the youth orchestra to be standing in front of the TSO today is a real dream come true."

The concerts take place May 31 and June 1 at Roy Thomson Hall.

Also, on June 15 at 7 p.m., Bard, alongside TSO conductor Peter Oundjian, will be part of the Luminato outdoor concert at David Pecaut Square, 215 King St. W. Also on the bill is soprano Simone Osborne. Bard will be conducting John Williams' *Star Wars* theme and José Pablo Moncayo's *Huapango*.

"All human beings have desires, doubts and unfulfilled feelings and I think that seeps directly into the artist's life," explains Bard, who moved to Toronto from Israel when he was 17.

"In music it is hard to avoid those yearnings, it is a great mirror for wanting something very badly and it has a way of describing it in a span of time perhaps better than experiencing it. As a Jewish person, and an Israeli/Canadian I have desires, struggles and appreciation of what I do have and where I come from and what it takes to get there."

Bard, who was resident conductor of Symphony Nova Scotia in 2011, made his TSO conducting debut in October 2012, with Maxim Vengerov performing Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto*.

A career highlight was an invitation by Zubin Mehta to be acting principal clarinetist with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra for the 2001–2002 season. Over the last 15 years, he has performed as a soloist with many orchestras including the TSO, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, and Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Orchestra.

The 2014–2015 season will see him conducting the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra while continuing his post as conductor of the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra. ■

For tickets to TSO Artists in the Spotlight, May 31 and June 1 visit www.roythomson.com

Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

NOVELIST DOES FOR BIBLICAL PROPHECY WHAT J.K. ROWLING DID FOR WIZARDRY

Rabbi Dave Mason of the Jerusalem neighbourhood of Nachlaot is being honoured this week at the 18th annual IPPY (Independent Publishers) Awards ceremony in Manhattan for his acclaimed novel *The Lamp of Darkness*, the first book in his "Age of Prophecy" series (co-written with Mike Feuer). Chosen from more than 5,500 entries, the book focuses on the classic Biblical battle between Eliyahu and Ahab, and is deeply rooted in Jewish oral and mystical traditions.

Born in Connecticut, Mason studied law at New York University and worked as an attorney in Los Angeles before making aliyah in 2003. A self-professed *Harry Potter* junkie who specialized in two of the divisions of the Tanach, the Prophets and the Writings, the Ohr Sameach yeshiva graduate spent six years working on *The Lamp of Darkness*, focusing on the workings of prophecy just as Harry Potter author J. K. Rowling focused on wizardry.

"In comparison to J. K. Rowling, I have both an advantage and a disadvantage," Mason recently told the *Connecticut Jewish Ledger*. "She can make up whatever she wants, but I feel a responsibility to be faithful to the Jewish texts, so I can't make things up. At the same time, that gives me a story structure to work with. . . . The whole setting for the book is the battle between Eliyahu and Ahav, so I don't have to make a choice of where it's going." www.theageofprophecy.com

• • •

Stealing Time Book Launch: Toronto children's author **Anne Dublin's** newest book is *Stealing Time*, a historical novel for ages 10 and up in which brothers Jonah and Toby steal an antique pocket watch and find themselves hurled back in time to Egypt, China, France and other places. The launch takes place at Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St., June 8, 1:30 p.m. Free admission, everyone welcome.

• • •

Silent Film with Live Music: Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two screenings of *Breaking Home Ties*, a 1922 restored silent film protesting the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States. With live musical accompaniment by **Jordan Klapman** on piano and **Rebekah Wolkstein** on violin. $15, $10. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, June 1, 4 and 7:30 p.m.

• • •

Yiddish Writings: *Les Voix Yiddish de Montreal (The Yiddish Voices of Montreal)* is a new French-language anthology of Canadian Jewish writers by Quebec scholar-poet-translator **Chantal Ringuet**, with an introduction by **Lazer Lederhendler**. The duo provide background to the milieu of Yiddish writers in Quebec and offer readings in English, French and Yiddish as part of the Toronto Jewish Literary Festival. Beth David Synagogue, June 1, 1 p.m. Free admission.

Hana's Suitcase Honoured: Karen Levine said she was "humbled and thrilled" to learn her best-selling *Hana's Suitcase* won the Ultimate Silver Birch Book award after Ontario school kids voted the book their favourite. She is pictured receiving the award with George Brady, Hana's brother.
BRIAN PUDDEN PHOTO

• • •

Names in the News: **Mara Bowman**, a former Bialik Hebrew Day School student now in Grade 11, has been singing with the Canadian Children's Opera Company for two years. She performs the lead role of **Rose** in the opera *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*. Enwave Theatre, Harbourfront, May 31 at 7:30 p.m. and June 1 at 2 p.m.

Arts in Brief

• Kensington Market Historical Society hosts the "downtown" book launch of *A Basket of Apples: Stories by Shirley Faessler*, about a coterie of Jewish immigrants in Kensington Market in the 1920s and 1930s. With a talk by publisher **Bill Gladstone** and readings by actor **Karen Hines**, the author's granddaughter. Lillian H. Smith branch of Toronto Public Library, 239 College St. at Huron. June 2, reception 6:30 p.m., program 7 p.m.

• Critic **Adam Nayman** continues his series on filmmaker **David Lynch** with a look at the films *Wild at Heart* and *Lost Highway*. $12 drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday June 2, 7 to 9 p.m.

• Gala concert by **Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir**, directed by **Beny Maissner**, with cantors **Charles Osborne, David Rosen, Klara Bagley** and **Judy Gershon**. Special honouree, **Ben Steinberg**. Suggested donation $20. Holy Blossom Temple, June 2, 7:30 p.m.

At the Galleries

• Walnut Contemporary Gallery presents *Edea*, an exhibition of recent works by Toronto artist **Judy Singer**, 201 Niagara St., June 5 to 28. Opening reception June 5, 6 to 9 p.m. Artist talk, "How to Look at Paintings," Wednesday June 18, 7 p.m.

• *Refresh*, a group exhibition, is on view June 4 to July 10, with opening reception on June 5, 5 to 8 p.m. (June 4 is "sneak preview day", 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Marcia Rafelman Fine Arts, 10 Clarendon Ave. After June 5, visiting is by appointment only. 416-920-4468, www.mrfinearts.com

• *The Parallel Practice of Editing*, art exhibit featuring Toronto artists **Blanka Guna** and **Irina Litinsky**. Propeller Centre for the Arts, 984 Queen St. W., June 4 to 15. Opening reception June 5, 7 to 9 p.m. ■

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Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 29, 2014

What's on the modern menu for Shavuot?

NORENE GILLETZ
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Kim Kushner, author of *The Modern Menu* (Gefen Publishing House), is formerly from Montreal and now lives in New York City with her husband and three children. Passionate about food, Kushner teaches cooking classes, writes a food blog, collects cookbooks and is currently working on her second cookbook, focusing on family-style meals.

Her first book, *The Modern Menu: Simple, Beautiful, Kosher*, was published a year ago. It just went into its third printing, with 18,000 books in print, and is also available as an e-book. The photography by Andrew Zuckerman is breathtaking.

Kim organized her tried-and-true recipes into menus, named for the way the dishes make her feel. Her "vibrant" menu is filled with colour and flavour, her "crisp" menu is loaded with pleasing crunch. The menu arrangements are simply suggestions – readers are encouraged to mix and match.

Kushner is a graduate of the Institute of Culinary Education of Manhattan. She loves to try new ingredients, flavours, and techniques, and her recipes are innovative, foolproof and beautiful. Her healthy, seasonal and hearty salads, made from locally grown produce, are stellar in her culinary repertoire. Her love of cooking and eating began when she was a child and a member of a large, extended food-loving family. Her Moroccan-born mother was a huge inspiration in Kushner's style of cooking. Both mother and daughter work quickly in the kitchen, and both are extremely creative. They love Middle Eastern dishes, as reflected in many of Kim's recipes.

Cooking and baking are actually a family affair – Kim's sister, Jordana Levy, was one of the editors for the beautiful kosher dessert cookbook *And Then There was Cake*, a fundraising project of the Hebrew Academy in Montreal.

I asked Kushner to provide a "modern menu" including some of her favourite recipes for Shavuot, which begins on Tuesday evening, June 3. The following recipes would be equally welcome as healthier, lighter options for summertime entertaining. Enjoy! ■

Grilled Eggplant, Sun-Dried Tomato and Bocconcini Salad

Do it once and you will see the wisdom of grilling sliced eggplant in batches, allowing them to cool completely, and then freezing them in single layers in large freezer bags. When you have them on hand, you can make this salad in just minutes. The combination of flavours in this vibrant salad is delicious and unusual. Bocconcini ("small mouthfuls") are small mozzarella balls packed in water or olive oil; they can be found in most supermarkets.

- ❑ 1 large eggplant, cut into 1/4-in.-thick rounds
- ❑ olive oil, for brushing the grill pan
- ❑ 1 cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, plus 2 tbsp. of their oil
- ❑ 1/2 cup bocconcini packed in oil
- ❑ 6 fresh basil leaves, torn into small pieces
- ❑ 3 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- ❑ kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 350. Place the eggplant slices in a colander and sprinkle with salt. Set aside for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare a grill or heat a grill pan over high heat. Brush the pan with olive oil.

Pat the eggplant slices dry and grill until translucent and charred, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer the eggplant to a baking sheet and bake until soft, about 10 minutes. (At this point, the cooked eggplant can be stored in resealable plastic bags and frozen for up to 3 months. To use, thaw at room temperature until softened.)

Place the eggplant slices on a serving plate. Scatter the sun-dried tomatoes over, then drizzle the tomato oil on top. Scatter the bocconcini and basil on top. Drizzle with the balsamic vinegar and season with salt and pepper before serving. The dish can be made a day in advance, covered and refrigerated. Bring to room temperature before serving. Serves 6 to 8.

Mediterranean-Style Sea Bass

The assertive flavours of capers, garlic and sun-dried tomatoes make this 15-minute dish an ideal choice if you're craving the sunny flavours of the Mediterranean. If you want to add a little heat, sprinkle a few crushed red pepper flakes into the food processor before blending the ingredients together.

- ❑ 3 tbsp. capers, drained
- ❑ 8 oil-packed sun-dried tomato slices, plus 3 tbsp. of the oil
- ❑ 4 scallions, white parts only
- ❑ 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- ❑ kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- ❑ 6 sea bass fillets, about 6 oz. each, skin removed

Combine the capers, sun-dried tomatoes and their oil, the scallions, and garlic in the bowl of a food processor and process until a paste forms, about 1 minute. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Place the fillets in a single layer in a baking dish. Using the back of a spoon, rub the paste all over the tops of the fillets. The fish can be covered and refrigerated at this point for a few hours.

Preheat the oven to 400. Cover the dish with aluminum foil and bake for about 12 minutes, until the fish flakes apart when pricked with a fork. Serves 6.

Cinnamon Hazelnut Pavlova with Raspberries

Nigella Lawson, one of Kim Kushner's absolute favourite celeb chefs, got her hooked on pavlova. She made it so many times that she began to adapt it as she went along. The recipe below is a reflection of all this toying around. This dessert is like a work of art and has all the essentials a great dessert should have: the glossy meringue shell is crisp and rich, the whipped cream topping is soft and delectable, and the raspberries add the perfect dose of tartness.

- ❑ 6 large egg whites
- ❑ 2 cups granulated sugar
- ❑ 1/4 cup skinned hazelnuts, ground
- ❑ 1 tbsp. cinnamon
- ❑ 1 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- ❑ 2 cups heavy cream
- ❑ 1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar
- pinch of kosher salt
- ❑ 4 cups raspberries

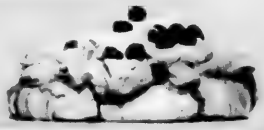
Preheat the oven to 350. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In the large bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the egg whites on medium speed until satiny peaks form. Add the sugar, 1/4 cup at a time, and continue beating until the mixture becomes stiff and very shiny. Using a spatula, fold in the hazelnuts, cinnamon and balsamic vinegar. Spoon the mixture onto the parchment-lined baking sheet, forming a 10-inch circle that is about 2 inches thick. Place in the oven, and immediately turn the oven down to 300. Bake for about 1 hour and 15 minutes, until the meringue looks and feel dry. Let cool in a dry place overnight.

Invert the pavlova onto a serving dish, peel away the parchment and flip over onto the dish.

Combine the cream and brown sugar in a large bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Whisk on medium speed until soft peaks form.

Spoon the whipped cream into the centre of the pavlova, leaving a 1-inch border. Sprinkle the raspberries over the cream and serve. Serves 10.



Novel lowers reader into the cauldron of anti-Semitism on campus

BILL GLADSTONE
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Judith, a 30-ish Canadian who has been in Israel for 10 years, returns to Toronto because her father is dying, and promises to stay long enough to earn a degree in social work.

Enrolled in a fictitious college outside Toronto, she becomes immersed in the inescapable political culture of modern academia – a simmering pot of Marxist grievance, anti-colonization, the celebration of victimhood, and the demonization of enemies.

Fields of Exile, a new novel from Toronto writer Nora Gold, lowers the reader into this ideological cauldron from the perspective of her idealistic protagonist. Judith is a friendly, left-leaning feminist student who at first seems engaged and fascinated by the agenda of her leftist contemporaries.

All her classes – especially Introduction to Social Justice – seem infused with the same fashionable cocktail of values. She is somewhat naïve, however, for not realizing that her love of Israel will make her an outcast in this crowd.

Bright and knowledgeable about her chosen fields, she soon becomes bored by one of her professors who repeatedly denigrates "the white, Christian, male elite of Canada" for oppressing the masses. At such times she passes the time in class by daydreaming of making love with her former Israeli boyfriend, Moishe, symbolizing her beloved Israel. She can't wait for the school year to end so she can return from her temporary galut or exile.

Judith reacts as if she has been punched in the gut, too stunned to speak, when students in her social justice class spout anti-Israel hatred even while others plead for indulgence and cross-cultural understanding towards Afghan practices that would be regarded as backward and inhumane in the West.

This is not an isolated incident but the front of a wave of anti-Zionism that Judith correctly recognizes as ill-disguised anti-Semitism. Unused to ideological confrontations, she and her friends at first cannot find their tongues; like a rattlesnake, the hateful rhetoric, charms them into silence.

This is the Ariel Sharon era after the Rabin assassination. There's been a spate of suicide bombings and the Israelis retaliate with raids on Gaza, Ramallah and Jenin. Keeping in constant touch with her Israeli friends, Judith hears about each new development as it happens.

"If Israelis don't want any more of their children to get blown up, then they should give back what isn't theirs," one of her campus colleagues asserts. "All of it. Not just the West Bank or Gaza, but Jaffa, Akko, Jerusalem."

Judith enthusiastically accepts when Suzy, her most friendly professor, invites her to co-chair SWAC, the Social Work Anti-oppression Committee, which co-ordinates all of the school's anti-oppression activities. But the experience becomes a nightmare as the committee votes to invite a prominent anti-Israel activist, Michael Brier, to speak on Anti-Oppression Day. Brier calls himself a "soul brother" to the Martyrs of Vengeance, a terrorist group that has been sending suicide bombers into Israel.

Except for Judith, nobody on the committee seems bothered by this, and Judith, who has found her voice, cannot convince them that Israel and the Jewish people have a right to exist. The campus has become a hotbed of Orwellian doublespeak and mob conformism, a place where having or expressing a minority opinion could be dangerous.

Gold is too skilled a writer to allow this rich novel of ideas to descend into pure polemics. She allows Judith to expose the Israel-apartheid falsehood, for example, with ideas expressed in interior monologue and in conversation with her Canadian boyfriend, Bobby, and others. And she adeptly explores the notions of subjective and objective realities, and absolute versus relative cultural values, all without seeming to remove the narrative from the realm of the immediate story. Judith remains a well-rounded, passionate woman, much more than anyone's political mouthpiece; and she will be changed by the events of the story.

Caught in a nightmarish scenario in which justice has been overturned, Judith ends up feeling that : "Someone's crazy here – and I don't think it's me." This is precisely the feeling of any protagonist of a dystopian novel or film noir: isolated, betrayed, mistrusting of people around her, perhaps even on the run.

The story builds up to a campus rally on Anti-Oppression Day, which resembles one of the organized group-hate sessions in George Orwell's *1984*. Otherwise nice folks energetically disseminate the despicable mantra, "End Zionist Imperialist Aggression and the Apartheid Jewish State," and even that perennial demon known as the blood libel raises its ugly little head. The climax and ending seem fitting, dramatic and, yes, surprising.

Fields of Exile begs comparisons to Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery*. It also reminds me of a few deeply-felt novels focusing on social wrongs involving the Jewish community such as Gwethalyn Graham's *Earth and High Heaven* (1944) and Laura Z. Hobson's *Gentleman's Agreement* (1947), both of which exposed variations of the polite country-clubbish anti-Semitism of their day. Sadly, the current brew seems a lot more virulent and toxic.

The author of a previous well-received collection of stories titled *Marrow*, Gold is a highly competent writer and reportedly the first to focus on the shocking anti-Israel climate now prevalent on many Canadian and American campuses. Disturbing and threatening incidents against Jewish and pro-Israel students have been reported on many campuses, so the issue is certainly current.

Gold, the editor of the online literary journal *Jewish Fiction.net*, has long worked on campuses in Toronto and southern Ontario. *Fields of Exile* has such a ring of truth and veracity about it that, sadly, one suspects she was writing from life. ■

Fields of Exile,
Nora Gold
Dundurn Press

The book launch for Fields of Exile, *hosted by the Toronto Jewish Literary Festival, will feature Nora Gold giving a short reading and in conversation with Antanas Sileika. Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw Street. Thursday May 29, 7:30 p.m.*

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What's New

MAY 29 - JUNE 3

by Lila Sarick

Thursday 29	Friday 30	Saturday 31	Sunday 1	Monday 2	Tuesday 3	Wednesday 4
Art Tours or Girls Gone Glam tonight.			Say 'cheese' at Aish Thornhill Community Shul's pre-Shavuot bake sale	Lachan Chamber Choir celebrates 20 years		Shavuot

Thursday, May 29

ART TOURS
Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation invites young professionals to an art tour of the collection held by Torys. Tour starts at 6:30 p.m. To register, call 416-781-3584, or visit youngheartsarttour.ca. $18. Other tours scheduled for June 9 and June 25.

GIRLS GONE GLAM
Yasmin Chapter of Canadian Hadassah-WIZO holds its Girls Gone Glam event featuring speakers, shopping, music and more. For tickets, email yasminchapter@rogers.com.

JEWISH LEARNING
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Mashiach Ben Yosef: Another Missionary Dead End," 8:30 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation.

Saturday, May 31

NARAYEVER HISTORY
Randall Schnoor discusses "Celebrating 100 years of the First Narayever Congregation: Reflections on Jewish Life in Canada – Past, Present and Future," 1:30 p.m., 187 Brunswick Ave.

Sunday, June 1

SAY CHEESE!
Aish Thornhill Community Shul Sisterhood holds a Shavuot bake auction with guest speaker **Tehilla Berglas**, 11:30 a.m., 949 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill.

JEWS OF SHANGHAI
Ian Leventhal discusses "The Jews of Shanghai – A Journey of Hope," with the Shaar Shalom Singles, 7:30 p.m. 905-889-4975, ext. 72. $10.

Deadline Reminder:
Due to Shavuot, the deadline for the issue of June 12 has changed to May 30. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Shavuot Bake Sales

Buy delicious kosher baked goods before Shavuot this week to help a good cause.

EXPERIENCE ISRAEL
Associated Hebrew Schools presents Experience Israel, a program of songs, drama and crafts for children aged 3 to 6, 3-4:30 p.m., Kamin Education Centre, 300 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill. Registration recommended. Call **Pearl Greenspan** 905-889-3993, ext. 337 or email pgreenspan@ahschools.com.

LEMONADE STAND
A bake sale with snow cones, candy floss and DJ will be held at 102 Mountbatten Rd., Thornhill, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. All proceeds benefit sarcoma cancer research at SickKids. Rain date June 7.

A BASKET OF APPLES
Book launch for *A Basket of Apples*, stories by **Shirley Faessler** read by the author's granddaughter, **Karen Hines.** Today at Beth David Synagogue, 3:30 p.m. June 2, program sponsored by Kensington Market Historical Society, Lillian H. Smith Branch, Toronto Public Library, 239 College St. Reception at 6:30 p.m., program at 7 p.m.

BOOK CLUB
Temple Har Zion's book club discusses *Once We Were Brothers*, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, June 2

LACHAN CONCERT
The Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir celebrates 20 years of singing Jewish music with a gala concert, Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m. With special guests **Ben Steinberg, cantors Charles Osborne and David Rosen.** Suggested donation at the door, $20. www.lachan.org.

DINNER AND DRAW
Beth Sholom Synagogue holds its annual dinner and draw featuring comedian **Adrianne Tolsch**, 6:30 p.m. For tickets, call 416-783-6103.

SHAVUOT BAKE SALE
Small Wonders, which helps Canadian Jewish couples experiencing infertility, holds a sale of kosher baked goods and floral centrepieces, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at 14 Chater Court and 7-9 p.m. at 124 Esther Cres., Thornhill. www.smallwonders.ca.

MEMORY AND AGING
Dr. Nicole Anderson, neuropsychologist at Baycrest, discusses "Memory and Aging: What's Normal and What's Not," noon at Temple Sinai. Includes a light lunch. $15. June 9, the topic is "Healthy Mind: Eating for Optimal Brain Health." Call 416-487-3281.

PLAZA SUITE
Medinah Theatre Ensemble presents a staged reading performance of *Plaza Suite* by **Neil Simon**, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai. $10.

Tuesday, June 3

LUNCH AND LEARN
Norene Gilletz discusses "The Menus in My Life," Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 12:15 p.m. $20.

COMING EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
Reena is looking for volunteers to work as "Rec Buddies" at Camp Reena this summer. No experience needed. Call **Mille Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112.

- Volunteers needed for Zareinu Move-athon Festival at Downsview Park, June 8. Call **Ilanit** 416-661-1800, ext. 226 or email ilanit@zareinu.org.
- Men and women who have a background in fundraising and development, or legal and programming experience are invited to join the board of directors of Act to End Violence Against Women. Email penny@acttoendvaw.org or call **Penny Krowitz** 905-695-5372.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP
Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 4-week bereavement group for adults

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

who have recently lost a parent, starting June 12. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

CAMP AND SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Registration is now open for Chabad of Markham's Kindercamp, Hebrew School and Torah Tots programs. Call 905-886-0420.

TIKKUN OLAM GARAGE SALE
Temple Kol Ami holds a garage sale to benefit orphans in Zimbabwe. Bring items to sell to 36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill June 8, 8-9 a.m. Sale begins at 10 a.m.

CONCERT-IN-THE-ROUND
Aviva Chernick and members of Jaffa Road perform music from her Juno Award-nominated CD *Aviva*, June 8 at Temple Sinai, 8 p.m.

WALK IN THE PARK
Singles in the Park (for single, divorced and widowed Jewish men and women over 50) enjoys a walk through Edwards Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. E., June 8 at 11 a.m. Meet in front of the Botanical Building Centre. Free but RSVP to mail@deannasamuels.com or debbygo@yahoo.com or call 905-883-2963.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS
Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **It's Never Too Late to Date:** A 1-session workshop for men and women over 50. June 1, at 7 p.m., Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. Call 905-303-1821, ext. 3025 to register.
- **When You're About to Separate, What To Tell the Kids:** A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. June 12, 9:30 a.m.
- **Stop the Roller-coaster:** A workshop for parents and professionals about how to deal with the changes in adolescent behaviour and attitude. June 18, 7 p.m.
- **High-Conflict Divorce:** A workshop for parents who want to develop strategies to deal with a high-conflict situation. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. June 18, 6:30 p.m.
- **Dating in Midlife:** A workshop for men and women over 40 who have been single for more than 2 years. June 24, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES
Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors club meeting three times a week. Call 416-256-1892.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC.** Art appreciation with **Osnat Lippa.** A discussion on painter Francis Bacon and sculptor Henry Moore, June 10 and June 17, 1 p.m. $10/$12. To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.
  Specialty fitness classes in osteofit, posture perfect and tai chi are offered at the Miles Nadal JCC. Call 416-924-6211, ext. 526 or email colinb@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. June 3, **Rabbi Eli Courante** discusses "A Brief Theory of Everything," 10 a.m.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Lunch and Song, June 19, noon. Dance with live music, June 22. Casino Woodbine, June 25. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise 10 a.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

- **Kevin Courrier** discusses Marlon Brando, Wednesdays June 11-July 2, 1 p.m. Pre registration required, call ext. 4235.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of Francis Bacon and Henry Moore, June 3, 1 p.m.
- The book club discusses *Americanah* by **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** June 2, 1 p.m. Pre-registration required. Call ext. 4235.
- **Daniel Aronchik** reviews the latest in electronics, Mondays June 2-16 at 1 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

- Annual community choir concert with conductor **Harriet Wichin** May 29 at 8 p.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.
- Drawings submitted to the Bogoroch Art Contest for Jewish Music Week on display in the gallery until June 5.
- Critic **Adam Nayman** analyzes the work of **David Lynch** Mondays until June 23, 7-9 p.m. June 2: *Wild at Heart and Lost Highway.*
- Downtown Jewish Community Council hosts a tent at the Annex Festival on Bloor, June 8, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. Call ext. 250.
- Tikkun Leil Shavuot, June 3. All-night Jewish learning festival. *Sinai Unscrolled* hosted by **Ralph Benmergui** 7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Reservations required for 7:30 p.m. program, drop-ins after 8:30. Call ext. 154.
- Toronto Jewish Film Society presents the silent film *Breaking Home Ties*, with live accompaniment by **Jordan Klapman** and **Rebekah Wolkstein**, June 1, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Box office opens one hour before screening time. $10/$15.
- Fitness programs: MELT Method-full body, Tuesdays to June 17, 7 p.m.; Wednesdays to June 18, 11 a.m. Gentle techniques for joint pain and injury management.
  Toronto loves MELT, a 90-minute workshop with **Sue Hitzmann** June 6, 11 a.m. One day MELT hand and foot, June 8, 11 a.m. For all fitness programs email joolip@mnjcc.org or call ext. 574.
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

- Supervised bridge meets Thursdays July 10-Aug. 28, 10 a.m.
- Red Cross babysitting course for children 11 and up, will be offered June 6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

To register for programs, call **Jennifer Appleby** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275. ■

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

MARRIED WITH CHILDREN

I'd love to slow down, but I'm too busy being busy

Lauren Kramer

There are times when I find myself making a mental list at day's end, for no reason other than to wonder in amazement at what I've accomplished. Most of the items on the list are invisible to, and unnoticed by, the rest of the family, so part of my tabulation is about pure recognition. When my legs are weary and my mind irritable from the strain of rushing from one task to the next, I need that congratulatory pat on the back, even if I have to deliver it myself.

My list is likely not that different from yours, with a few substitutions here or there. On an average day, it might contain: researched and wrote stories, returned phone calls, tidied house, two loads of laundry washed-folded-put-away, picked up groceries, moved kids from A to B and back to A while cleaning up residues of food-homework-general mess en route, cut the grass, baked cookies and challah buns, made dinner, kitchen gleaming, pulled weeds, went for a run, comforted crying children, mitigated fights, and flopped into bed to review a book before sleeping so I can repeat the list again the next day.

I'm a busy gal, and when my friends and I exchange notes on how our days and weeks are going, the conversation often turns to busyness. "Look how crazy busy things are in my family," we tell each other. There's always so much on the go – no time for getting together, deep conversation or sheer fun. We're running frantically to keep up on the treadmill of our lives, our cellphones buzzing, beeping and whistling at us along the way, reminding us of the ceaseless cycle of appointments, emails, texts and to-do lists awaiting our attention.

I can't help but notice that our busyness has become both a source of pride and irritation. The pride stems from how much we do, and the suspicion that we're likely doing, accomplishing and ticking off way more than our friends and neighbours. "Look at how productive I am," we congratulate ourselves as we text, email and call even as little hands tug on our sleeves hoping for a smidgen of attention. "Mom's too busy to talk right now," we say, as we add another inane tweet to the twittersphere, a "like" on Facebook, or a quick email executed in the 30 seconds before the traffic light changes. The irritation comes from a recognition that there's no end to this busyness, and that no matter how much we do, there's always more. Lots more.

Really, what's the point of being so dreadfully busy?

I interviewed an author on the subject many years ago, a man who advocated daily naps and a slower pace of life. "You'll never guess what my grandfather's final words were in the seconds before he died," he told me. "He turned to his wife and said, 'Don't forget to pay the gardener.'" Even in his dying breath, this man was mentally ticking items off his to-do list. Is this where I'm headed, too?

It's stressful living life at this pace, and there's no finish line in sight. What's more, the cycle is self-perpetuating. The moment we slow down, we remember how much more there is to do.

The mental list is a pointless exercise, I realize on clear-headed days. There are no extra points earned for brilliant levels of busyness, just more busy around the next corner. The point is to slow down on that treadmill and remember to carefully disembark so we can heed those tugging little hands, spend more time in warm embraces and be fully attentive to the precious moments of our lives long before we're carried off in a casket. ■

Family Moments

Mazel tov to Kayla Weinberg & John Rose on their engagement. Love and best wishes from their parents, Barb & Kenny Weinberg, Lynn & John Rose.

Happy birthday to our two sons, Sam, March 2, and Ephram, April 27. We are so proud! Love, David & Michelle Winter.

Mazel tov Amy & Ryan on your engagement. Love, parents Risa & Isaac Oziel, Penni & Howie Levman, grandmother Molly Silverstein, siblings, families and friends.

Congratulations Faina Sitzer on her 90th birthday. Love, Max Sitzer, Leon & William Sitzer, Devonne, Kerry, Stefanie, Fallon & Gregory Sitzer and Demi Jordyn Shear

Happy 105th birthday to Miriam Karmen-Zysman who resides at the Baycrest Apotex.You look great in a hat! Mazel tov and best wishes from family and friends.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on **"Family Moments"**

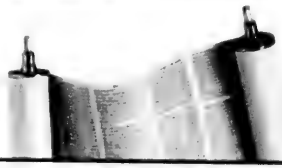
Mazel Tov!

מזל טוב!

Happy 90th birthday Florence Solomon! You are looking great! Mazel tov and best wishes from family and friends at "Aqua Babes".

Parshah

Naso | Numbers 4:21 – 7:89



Maharat Abby Brown Scheier says peace at home is essential for communal well-being
Rabbi Denise Handlarski argues Jewish feminists should pay close attention to Naso
Rabbi Yirmi Cohen recalls the utter joy of issuing the priestly blessings with his family

Maharat Abby Brown Scheier

Recently, I participated in a mission to Israel with almost 600 other members of our Montreal Jewish community. In addition to the experience of visiting Israel, there was another aspect of our trip that seemed, at times, miraculous: the logistics of moving so many people on such a tight schedule from place to place, day after day. I thought of this in a biblical context: imagine moving a whole nation in the desert for 40 years!

The first chapters of the book of Bamidbar (Numbers) are concerned with these logistics. Once the logistics are taken care of, and once the nation is positioned to move, one would think that it would be time to get moving. Instead, we have laws about stealing, the suspected adulteress and the Nazirite. What are these laws doing here?

These situations reflect possible breakdowns in our society: theft occurs when there's a breakdown of mutual respect. Suspected marital infidelity can occur when there's a distance between husband and wife. The situation of the Nazirite – one who separates himself or herself from society – can occur when the status quo doesn't provide room for personal growth.

Ralbag, the 14th-century biblical commentator and philosopher, explains how the laws of stealing, the suspected adulteress and the Nazirite are connected. He writes that the Torah is concerned with eradicating those elements that lead to contention and strife. In a more positive vein, these laws remind us how important personal peace and tranquility in the home are to our personal and communal well-being.

We invest so much time and effort in the logistics of our daily life. The message of our parshah is that keeping ourselves and our families strong are even more important. ■

Maharat Abby Brown Scheier is a Judaic Studies teacher in Montreal, where she lives with her husband and four daughters.

Rabbi Denise Handlarski

Naso contains a description of the trial by ordeal for a suspected adulteress. Any man who suspects his wife to have been with another man brings her before the priest, where she's given water laden with written curses and dirt from the Tabernacle. These were thought not to harm the innocent but to create a distended belly (implying a lack of ability to carry children to term) in the guilty.

The Torah is often read as a book of laws, but in this case, it's the narrative of the ordeal that seems to be more important than the prescriptions for its practice. Comfortingly, there's no evidence this ordeal was ever carried out. So why would its ritual be described so fully? Perhaps as a caution: women must be tightly regulated to maintain the "purity" of the birth line.

This fits with the rest of Naso, which includes commandments for the ill and defiled to be excised and for purifications of, and dedications to, the Temple. The parshah as a whole centres on the idea of cleanliness, purification and sacred space. We learn from this how to create separate and special space and time, such as the rituals and rest of Shabbat and home preparation for Pesach.

The depiction of the trial by ordeal reflects an effort to create a sense of distinct nationhood among the people. Adultery on the part of women, seen as threatening the "cleanliness" of the bloodline, had to be discouraged. The word nation comes from the Latin *natio* – to be born. Nationhood has virtually universally relied on the control of women for its creation and perpetuation. While the ritual as described is undoubtedly misogynist, I find this parshah is actually a perfect text for Jewish feminists to study and contemplate.

As a new mother, I've been thinking of the power of women to give new life. It's this power that the trial of the suspected adulteress tries, but fails, to contain. ■

Rabbi Denise Handlarski is assistant rabbi with Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism in Toronto.

Rabbi Yirmi Cohen

In this week's parshah, Naso, we read about the commandment to the kohanim to bless the people on behalf of God.

There is the three-fold blessing of "*yevarecha*," "*yaer*" and "*yisa*." It's no coincidence that we read these blessings very close to Shavuot, when we received the Torah at Mount Sinai. It teaches us that by keeping the holy Torah and strengthening our commitment to keeping mitzvot, we receive God's blessings.

Yevarechecha: God blesses and protects us.

Yaer: he makes us favourable in the eyes of other nations.

Yisa: God forgives us and brings us peace.

A Jew needs to always remember it's God's blessing that gives him the riches he has, and he should use his wealth wisely.

One of my favourite moments is when on the holidays, my father, my son and I turn around, face the congregation and recite the priestly blessings, singing the beautiful melody together.

We will soon mark the 20th year of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's yahrzeit, may his merit protect us. On Sundays, the Rebbe would stand outside his office and greet and give a blessing to all who came. He would often stand for hours, as thousands came for a blessing or advice.

He was once asked how he had the strength to stand all day, for eight hours, non-stop?

With a smile, he replied, "When I see all these people, it's like counting diamonds. One doesn't grow weary when counting a beautiful diamond."

May we always see the positive and good in each other, bless each other for good, as did our forefather and patriach, Abraham. Let us increase goodness and kindness with another mitzvah, and in being united, may we merit the coming of the Mashiach, with the priestly blessings, in our holy Temple, in Jerusalem, speedily in our days! ■

Rabbi Yirmi Cohen is rabbi of Ohalei Yoseph Yitzchak Congregation in Toronto.

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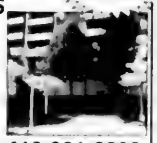

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
MAY 29, 2014

Marc Dunec: Torontonian seeks seat in U.S. Congress

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Mark Dunec is a native Torontonian who attended Associated Hebrew Schools as well as the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT). Today, however, his ties are to the Garden State, New Jersey. Married, with U.S.-born children, Dunec, 38, is contesting the Democratic party nomination as a Congressional candidate for New Jersey's 11th District. The party's candidate will be chosen on June 3. The mid-term elections take place on Nov. 4. Dunec spoke to *The CJN* during a recent visit to Toronto.

Why and when did you move to the United States, and why are you running for Congress?

I moved in 1999 for business school at Pace University, in New York City. I basically moved to the United States for business opportunities. I met a very nice New Jersey girl on the Upper West Side. You marry a New Jersey girl, you move to New Jersey. That's just how it works.

For the last 7-1/2 years, I've been working at FTI Consulting, a publicly traded global management consulting company. I'm the managing director in the real estate solutions practice and I'm based in New York City.

I'm running for Congress for many reasons. It's all about the economy, getting people back to work, encouraging investment. It's not often you hear Democrats talking about that. Our national debt is north of $17.2 trillion. That's a concern for me and many people, not just because I'm fiscally responsible, but that's huge if we're running on deficits every single year and accumulating and adding to the debt. Somebody has to focus on that, and it might as well be me.

You say this is an issue Democrats don't talk about, so why are you running as a Democrat?

For my three pillars. I'm a Democrat for three primary reasons: women's rights, gay rights, minority rights.

Did you have any political experience in Canada?

No, and I have no political experience in the United States, either. I never ran for mayor, or on the municipal, county or state levels.

I'm not a career politician. I'm not going into this for money. I'd be taking a pay cut if I get into Congress. This is not about financial gain. This is all about trying to move the country forward.

Marc Dunec

> *I'm running for Congress for many reasons. It's all about the economy, getting people back to work, encouraging investment. It's not often you hear Democrats talking about that. Our national debt is north of $17.2 trillion. That's a concern for me and many people, not just because I'm fiscally responsible, but that's huge if we're running on deficits every single year and accumulating and adding to the debt. Somebody has to focus on that, and it might as well be me.*

I don't believe in partisan politics. I'm a professional problem solver. For me, it's all about creative solutions to move our country forward.

When you say you want to tackle the deficit and the debt, it almost sound like you're running as an opposition figure.

Am I running as an opposition figure? Paul Ryan, who is chair of the House Budget committee, is a Republican. He just put out a budget. I don't agree with it. The Democratic Party needs a counterbalance to Paul Ryan. I'm it. I'm a numbers guy, I can speak his language, and I can speak to the country, not just within the 11th District. I want to tackle federal problems.

My goal is to work in the House Budget Committee. I'm hoping they would look at my education and experience and say, of all the 435 members in the House, this guy has an MBA in finance. He has an interest in working in the House Budget Committee, let's put him in there. Kind of silly to put him somewhere else.

Does the fact you're from Canada help or hurt you in seeking the Democratic nomination, or is it not a factor at all?

I have a primary June 3 where two individuals are running against me. I have received the endorsements of the party from all four counties that make up my district. So the party is behind me.

This is my first election, so I don't know what to expect. Anything can happen on primary day.

Have you incorporated any Canadian political ideas in your campaign?

Yes. I don't want to call it a Canadian idea, although some people say, "Ah, now we understand. You're from Toronto." The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is very polarizing in the United States. I'm in favour of the ACA, because I believe health is a right, not a privilege. Period.

There have been technological bloopers taking place, but no big program that rolls out is going work 100 per cent right off the bat. The ACA, just like any major program, is experiencing hitches. I'm speaking with voters everywhere, from both sides of the aisle. And they're questioning how I can support this.

I go on the offence. I say what this country needs is universal health care, single payer system. I would say the number 1 issue I'm running on is universal health care. And I'm championing it for three reasons. Number 1, it's a right, not a privilege. Number 2, I know right off the top we'll save 20 per cent minimum in administrative costs. And I know it will stimulate the economy through entrepreneurship and innovation.

You've said you want to grow the economy through spending. Hasn't that been tried and found wanting? And how can you do that while reducing the deficit?

We all know the economy has to grow through spending. You can have infrastructure spending. In New Jersey, the infrastructure is crumbling and it has to be done now.

When I say spending, I believe in public-private partnership in almost everything, including my universal health care system. In my mind, it means the government pays for it, but it's being run by the private sector.

Also I believe, the way we get the economy to grow [is through] my corporate tax plan. What really hit me when I reviewed the numbers [is that] corporate taxes comprise less than 10 per cent [of government tax revenue]. There's something fundamentally wrong with that if the corporate tax rate is 35 per cent, one of the highest in the world.

Your answer?

Complex tax code, loopholes, special interest influence. You will always find a loophole. So it's a problem. I want to greatly reduce that problem. I would eliminate the corporate tax. I would mandate minimum earnings distributions and that would be taxed at 40 per cent.

There's $2 trillion in U.S. corporate profits sitting abroad and it's not coming home. If you no longer have the corporate tax, the money could come home, it would be distributed and the people will spend it. The government will get its tax, and the people will spend it and it will go through the economy.

Are you happy with your government's policies vis-a-vis Israel?

Big picture, the way we solve conflict not just in the Middle East but around the world is by encouraging my three pillars of why I am a Democrat. Once we have around the world and the Middle East women's rights, gay rights, minority rights, everything is solved.

Are you happy with the policy your government is pursuing vis-a-vis Iran?

Let me take this a step back. America does not have an issue with England, or France having nuclear weapons. The reason is because we share the same values. I do not believe that I share the same values, not necessarily with the Iranian people but with the Iranian government, because of their repeated calls to wipe Israel off the map. That's not normal talk. So in my mind, Iran can never have a nuclear capability.

Twilight of a Jewish dynasty

Backstory

EROL ARAF

Seventy years ago this spring, the last scion of one of the greatest European and Oriental Jewish banking dynasties, 21-year-old Bertrand Camondo Reinach, was brutally murdered in the Monowitz-Buma concentration camp.

The Camondo saga unfolded on a vast historical canvas starting with the Spanish Inquisition and culminating in the Nazi genocide. A family of sages and rabbis, the Camondos, after the Expulsion from Spain, found themselves in the Venetian Ghetto and eventually landed on the shores of the Sublime Porte, becoming financiers of sultans in Constantinople. But, Paris, the capital of the 19th century, drew the family to France in 1869, where, in a few decades, they built one of the greatest banking fortunes in the world.

Throughout the years of fame and wealth, they displayed a sense of gratitude for countries that welcomed them, and they expressed it with boundless generosity. So profound was their contribution to the unification of Italy that they were honoured by King Victor Emmanuel II with titles. In Turkey, they donated palaces, sumptuous residences and prime parcels of land in the heart of Istanbul to the state while making signal contributions to the emancipation of Turkish Jewry.

When patriarch Abraham Solomon de Camondo passed away in Paris in 1873, in accordance with his last wishes, his remains were brought to Turkey. In an unprecedented gesture, Sultan Abdulaziz accorded him the rare honour of a state funeral attended by all faith communities. In France, too, they demonstrated their love for their newly adopted country by gifting the single largest collection of priceless works of art to the Louvre and donating their belle époque residences to various foundations.

Life in Paris was redolent with celebrities gliding from the pages of Marcel Proust into the salons of the aristocracy in the leafy suburbs of Saint-Germain, Saint Honoré and Park Monceau. At the fabled Camondo residences, it was always possible to encounter the Rothschilds, the Pereires, the Foulds, the Cahens d'Anvers, Emile Zola, as well as Cezanne, Degas or Renoir.

But the Dreyfus Affair cast a long shadow, and, unbeknown to the Camondos, it was a prelude to calamity.

World War I brought the Gilded Age to an abrupt end. The last direct male descendant, Nissim de Camondo, was killed during aerial combat in 1917. His sister,

> *World War I brought the gilded age to an end*

Beatrice de Camondo, her husband Leon Reinach, the noted composer and their two children, Fanny and Bertrand, thus became the last of the Camondos.

The final chapter in this tragic tale opened with Nazi boots trampling on the ancient cobblestones of the City of Light in 1940.

By then, Beatrice had already separated from her husband, converted to Catholicism and lived with her daughter, Fanny, while indulging her lifelong equestrian passion. Leon, who lived with Bertrand in Neuilly sur Seine during the Nazi occupation, was also deeply involved in his compositions and philanthropic work. The idea that they might be in danger did not cross their minds. They had gifted most of their fortune to France. Leon had fought for his country and Nissim, Beatrice's brother, was a national hero.

Indeed, thanks to their highly placed connections, the Reinachs were able to evade the noose of the Gestapo for a while. Warned of impending arrest, Leon and Bertrand tried to escape to Spain, but were betrayed by an acquaintance, arrested, taken to Drancy and then deported to Auschwitz together with Fanny on Convoy 62, in November 1943. Beatrice was deported on Convoy 69 in March 1944.

As fate would have it, Madeline Dreyfus Levy, Alfred Dreyfus' granddaughter, was also on Convoy 62.

While Leon, Beatrice and Fanny perished soon after their arrival in Auschwitz, Bertrand's end was as prolonged as it was horrendous. He was severely beaten before the eyes of his father and sister for refusing to board the train in Drancy, but he miraculously survived and worked in labour camps and salt mines until the spring of 1944. There were unconfirmed reports describing his demise: apparently, he collapsed from exhaustion and was unable to stand up, despite repeated warnings. Finally, a guard kicked him viciously and then bashed the base of his skull with a shovel.

As Proust might have said, what remains is merely the chagrin, the pity and the dust of remembrance. ■

OBITUARIES AND RELATED NOTICES

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Baum, Larry	May 15/14	319 Betty Ann Dr
Farber, Esther	May 15/14	784 Centre St
Kaminetzky, Alicia	May 2/14	59 Vinci Cres
Indictor, Atia	May 5/14	Private
Gutman, Elena	May 5/14	Private
Abergel, Rachel	May 7/14	12 Richbell St
Mudryk, Alvin	May 8/14	214 Mullen Dr
Bychutsky, Leonid	May 8/14	485 Patricia Ave
Saiger, Lillian	May 9/14	2 Covington Rd
Diamond, Rose	May 9/14	217 Arnold Ave
Ezerzer, Albert	May 9/14	28 Maple Sugar Lane
Schwartz, Laurell	May/12/14	22 Shallmar Blvd
Tenenbaum, Tatiana	May 12/14	Private
Myers, Ethel	May 12/14	1168 Bay St.
Rafael, Eivon	May 13/14	25 Chip Court
Waxman, Hy Haim	May 14/14	
Sereny, Edith	May 15/14	447 Walmer Rd
Daichik, Basya	May 15/14	3036 Bathurst St
Werner, Felix	May 15/14	800 Sheppard Ave. W
Nador, Katalin	May 15/14	
Glass, Morris	May 14/14	

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Tillie Luft	May 10/14	20 North Park Road
Claire Palmer	May 9/14	1 Benvenuto Place
Olga Schwab	May 10/14	410 Snowy Owl Lane
Frances Forman	May 12/14	155 St. Clair Ave. West
Bertha Simon	May 12/14	10 Shallmar Blvd.
Albert Wortzman	May 13/14	333 Clark Avnue West
Joseph Israel	May 13/14	35 Meadowbrook Road
Ruby Bronsten	May 15/14	3560 Bathurst Street
Albert Latowsky	May 12/14	484 Steeles Ave., West
Janet Applebaum	May 14/14	12 Rean Drive
George Silverman	May 14/14	1131 Steeles Ave. W.
Grace Shapransky	May 14/14	4300 Bathurst Street
Andrew Boas	May 16/14	1 Concord Place

HEDREW DASIC

Irene Landau	May 7/14	35 Canyon Avenue

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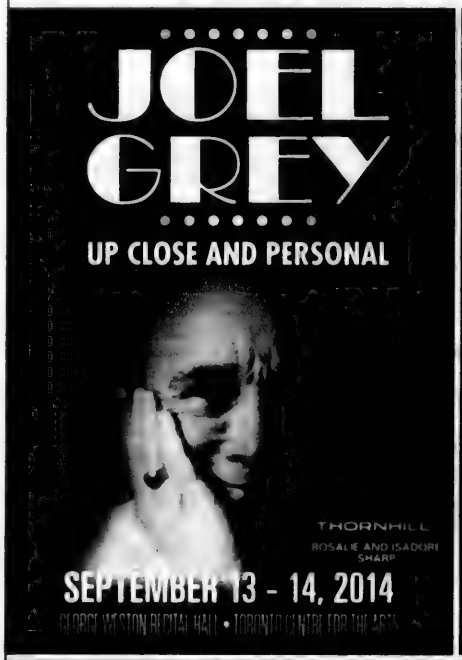

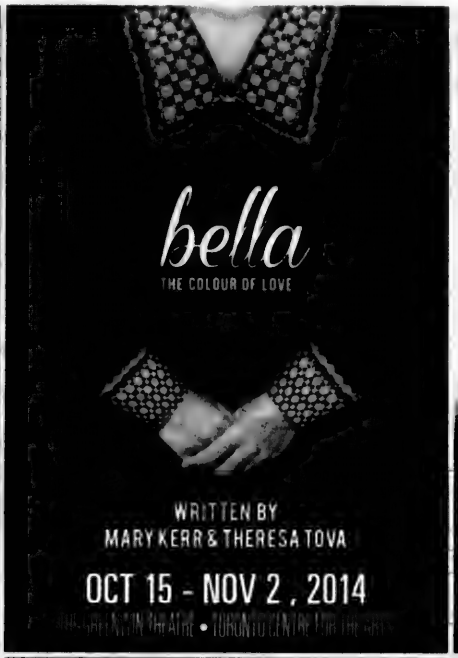

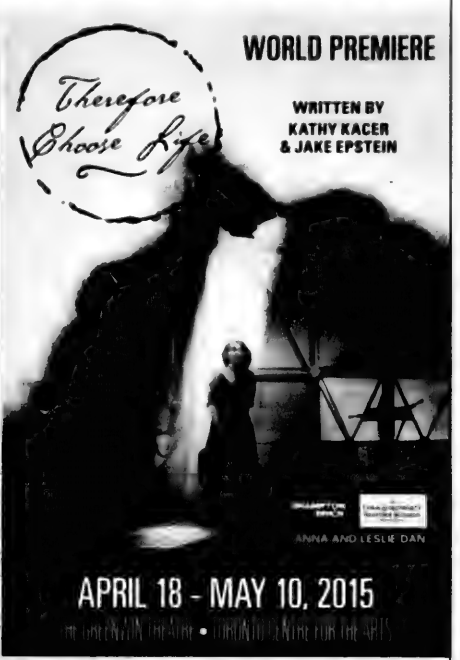

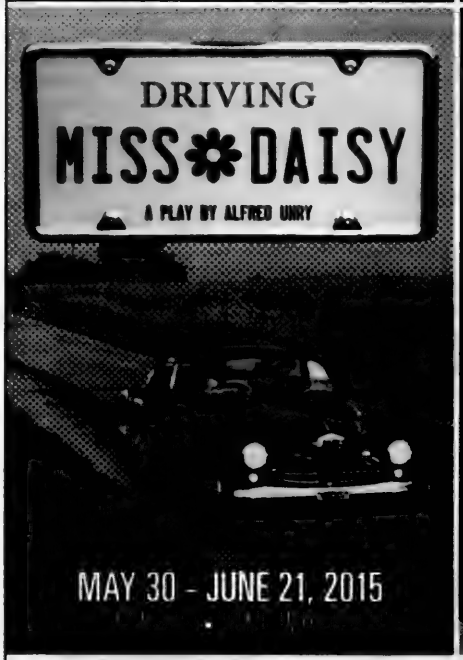

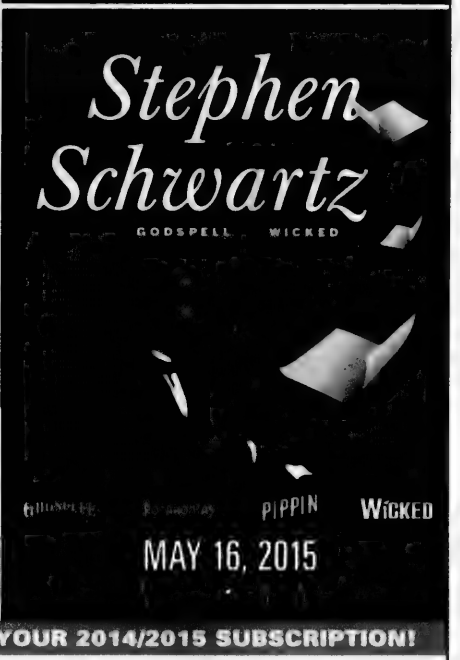

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A Salute to Our Community and its Volunteers

UJA Federation

UJA.is
Recognizing Our Community Volunteers

Volunteers: the engine that drives UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Friends,

There's a popular quote that sums up our feelings about the extraordinary individuals who, year after year, give of themselves as volunteers on behalf of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

"Volunteers are not paid - not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless," goes the old adage, and, as the Chairs of UJA's Annual Campaign 2015, we couldn't agree more. Whether it is lending their skills to UJA telethons, the Walk with Israel, or for one of UJA Federation's 100-plus community agencies, it is our cadre of volunteers that helps make Jewish Toronto so remarkable. It is also thanks to the commitment of these individuals that the programs and agencies funded by UJA dollars are able to continue their transformative work and improve the lives of Jews in Toronto, Israel and across the globe.

A UJA Campaign succeeds because of the hard work of a team of more than 700 volunteers. Our entire team will work hard for only one reason: to help people. The more successful the Campaign is, the more people that can be helped.

And, if you're still on the sidelines, debating whether or not you, too, could play a hands-on role in the success of the UJA Annual 2015 Campaign, and by extension, our Jewish community as a volunteer, think no more! To get involved, call Shira Lester Cohen at 416.631.5684 or at slester-cohen@ujafed.org and find a volunteer role you find personally satisfying. You'll be amazed at how much you get back, simply by giving your time.

On behalf of the many people who are helped by the UJA, thank you.

Andrea Cohen and David Matlow,
Chairs,
United Jewish Appeal Campaign 2015

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Richard Venn
Chair of the Board

Morris Perlis
Senior Vice-Chair of the Board

Ted Sokolsky
President & CEO

As Jewish Toronto continues to grow and flourish, it is so important that we acknowledge the vital efforts of the volunteers who contribute each and every day to our remarkable community.

In the pages that follow, you will learn about some of our community's most altruistic and passionate members, all of whom give of their time and use their unique talents to help UJA Federation in supporting our most vulnerable, advocating for Israel, and promoting Jewish education and identity.

A community as wonderful and united as Jewish Toronto doesn't simply "happen". It is through the efforts of these unique individuals who work to ensure that our community maintains its position as one of the strongest in the Diaspora, providing our children – the future leaders of our community – with the necessary tools to live full and proud Jewish lives.

We hope that you enjoy this volunteer supplement and that by reading its stories you too will be inspired to join the ranks of the volunteers who day after day, year after year, add so much to the fabric of our wonderful community. You will be surprised just how much you get by giving back.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Richard Venn,
Chair of the Board

Ted Sokolsky,
President and CEO

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Volunteers' selfless work is G-d's work

Rabbi Deborah Landsberg

It was a personal religious crisis and I needed a rabbi, so I turned to Rabbi Ilan Feldman of Congregation Beth Jacob. I trusted his wisdom and kindness and knew I could speak openly. I was at that time a young assistant rabbi at The Temple in Atlanta and had begun to find myself distracted during services, focussed more on page numbers and announcements than on praying. I was disturbed by this; maybe I couldn't serve the community as a rabbi and still be a good Jew.

At best I recall that conversation in his study, Rabbi Feldman did not give me advice but a story. It went something like this: when he was a young rabbi leading services he found himself distracted, focussed on page numbers rather than prayer. So he had turned to his father-in-law, Rabbi Yaakov Weinberg (z"l), Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisrael in Baltimore, to lay out his fears and concerns. And his father-in-law did not give him advice but a question. "Why do you think God wants your prayers? Maybe He wants you to announce page numbers."

We are living in an age of "spirituality" - a time in which our culture and literature and public discourse extol the quest for a soulfulness which puts personal fulfillment and individual contentment at the core of its concern. And that is good. But it is only part of any good Jewish story. We are, through this supplement, honouring those whose understanding of obligation is equally rooted in the commitment to communal service as much as the pursuit of spiritual discipline. We know that communal needs are not always evidently "uplifting." Samson Raphael Hirsch noted that this sacred work demands self-denial and sustained faithfulness and devotion. And those who diligently give of themselves because their people need them often do so quietly, without fanfare or renumeration, simply because they know in their deepest beings that their work is G-d's work.

For all those we honour today - for the volunteers throughout these pages and throughout the household of Israel - bind the people of Israel together. We recall Rabban Gamliel the son of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi's teaching in Pirke Avot 2:2 and declare: may their work be L'shem Shamayim, for the sake of Heaven, and their righteousness will stand forever.

Toronto community steps up to help ice storm victims

UJA volunteers offer warmth, despite frigid temperatures

UJA Federation set up a warming centre to help those in need during December's ice storm that struck the GTA in late December.

By Daniel Horowitz

Toronto community steps up to help ice storm victims. In response to the ice storm that struck the GTA in late December, a warming station was opened Dec. 22 at the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, Ont. Overnight shelter for those in need was provided, as well as light snacks, beverages, hot coffee and water.

From Dec 22 to 24, a total of about 10 guests were there each day, including a young family of five and a senior woman.

The overnight shelter stopped receiving guests by about 8 p.m. Dec. 24, when the service was deemed no longer necessary.

Volunteers also helped deliver water and snacks to seniors trapped in their apartments along the Bathurst Street corridor from Finch to Steeles avenues – to people who had no power, no heat and no water, as the apartment pumps were down.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto received a call Monday night from Circle of Care about these seniors. By the next morning, the agency had determined which buildings needed help most, and it sent out the call for volunteers. By the afternoon, the necessary supplies were in the Lipa Green Building lobby. More than 150 volunteers lined up to collect the supplies and learn which buildings they were to cover. Most had to walk up the stairs (up to 16 floors), and they delivered the packages to 225 seniors in nine buildings.

"Within hours of the storm taking hold, and despite the fact our central offices were shut down due to the power failure, UJA Federation's senior professional team convened regularly by conference call to assess the situation and provide leadership and support in whatever way we could," said Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

"Fortunately, our offsite computer and phone backup systems met their biggest challenge ever, working as planned for such emergencies, and we were able to remain in contact with each other, our partner agencies and the community. And wow did the community respond!"

IsraAID trains Philippine locals in post-trauma treatment

UJA Emergency Relief Fund has raised more than $184,000 to support organization's efforts

By Daniel Horowitz

The death toll from Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines has increased to 5,500, with more than 26,000 injured, close to 1,800 people reported missing, and more than a million homes destroyed.

Authorities fear the death toll will climb since emergency workers continue to retrieve more bodies as they clear debris.

More than 3.5 million people were displaced by the typhoon, which slammed into the eastern Philippines with record winds of more than 300km/h on November eighth.

Upon news of the tragedy, United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto quickly launched its Philippines Typhoon Relief Fund, which has already raised more than $184,000, all of which will go towards supporting the life-saving work of IsraAID, UJA's partner agency, which has had a team of professionals on the ground since the typhoon struck.

IsraAID team members are sharing their post-trauma knowledge with Philippino professionals.

After tending to the humanitarian needs of those victimized by the typhoon, the IsraAID team this week began a psychosocial program in Ormoc, Philippines, with 50 local professionals, among them daycare teachers, social workers, government employees and community leaders.

"This program enables our local counterparts to learn from Israel's decades of experience in post trauma treatment," explains Shachar Zahavi, the Founding Director of IsraAID. "The psychosocial program will complement our medical work which would become a holistic health program. Our hosts in the Philippines are constantly expressing their admiration and gratitude to the Israeli (government and non government) aid efforts by treating our teams as if we were part of their family. Their willingness to learn from Israel's experience in disaster intervention is admirable especially as the Philippines are affected by natural disasters on a yearly basis."

UJA Day raises $7,000 for UJA Annual Campaign 2015

Future community leaders shine at TanenbaumCHAT

By Daniel Horowitz

Whoever coined the phrase "youth is wasted on the young" obviously never met the students at the Anne and Max TanenbaumCHAT Wilmington Avenue Campus.

The philanthropic-minded teens recently held their annual UJA Day fundraiser and awareness program, and thanks to their creativity, energy, and collective desire to make a difference in the Jewish world, an impressive $7,000 was raised for UJA's Annual Campaign 2015.

Led by Student Chairs Ya'ara Avitzur, Aviva Levman, Yael Matlow, Talya Shulman and Carly Sugar, the students used a number of initiatives to raise funds including selling coffee, donuts, ice cream sundaes, cotton candy, snow cones and hamburgers.

"It's always exciting to see our school community rally behind an important organization such as UJA," said Josh Sable, Director of Student Activities, TanenbaumCHAT Wilmington Avenue Campus. "Our student leaders ran an outstanding program that was creative, educational and inspirational. It's important for the Jewish youth at our school to continue to find ways to connect with the larger Jewish community. Ultimately, today's Jewish teens are the future leaders of our Jewish community and we're fortunate to have an amazing core of future leaders here at TanenbaumCHAT."

(l to r) Chair of UJA Women's Philanthropy, Alison Himel, Talya Shulman, UJA Campaign Director Steven Shulman, Carly Sugar, Aviva Levman, Yael Matlow, UJA Campaign 2015 Co-Chair UJA David Matlow, Ya'ara Avitzur and UJA Campaign Co-Chair Andrea Cohen

"It was a really great experience being heads of the UJA day committee at CHAT this year," enthused Yael Matlow. "Being on the organizing side of a fundraising event was hard work however the planning part was fun and the results were extremely rewarding."

"We feel that it's very important for people our age to begin to make a contribution in our community and are so glad that we had this opportunity," said Talya Shulman.

Raffle tickets were also sold to students and school staff with winners landing great prizes including tickets to a Toronto Maple Leaf game, an iPad, Lulu Lemon gift cards and much more.

At lunchtime, students purchased Bingo cards to play for a chance to win Maple Leaf playoff tickets.

The Student Chairs also created a creative and informative video and display for the student body featuring educational material about UJA and the more than 100 partner agencies and schools the organization supports.

"So many of our fellow Jews are helped by programs funded by the UJA Campaign," said Yael's proud father, David, who is Co-Chairing the 2015 UJA Annual Campaign with Andrea Cohen. "In our own city, 12 percent of Jews live below the poverty line. All of us who can should do our part to help Jewish people in need. It is a proud moment when our children realize they too share this responsibility."

Talya Shulman's father Steven Shulman, who is also UJA's Campaign Director and Counsel, expressed his pride in the students' leadership and the school. "I know that these TanenbaumCHAT students made independent decisions to take on this responsibility. Their leadership is a result of the wonderful Jewish values reinforced by a school which UJA's Campaign proudly supports."

Three-Year-Old learns tzedakah, volunteerism, via UJA's Walk with Israel

By Daniel Horowitz

When UJA professionals showed up at Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns Campus recently, little did long-time UJA and community volunteer Tina Erlich think it would start her three-year-old daughter's philanthropic and volunteer career.

But, apparently, that's exactly what transpired.

The UJA folks were at Associated as part of their annual Walk with Israel presentations, letting the young students know about the Walk which takes to the streets of downtown Toronto on Sunday, May 25th.

When Tina was going through daughter Isabelle's school bag later that day, she came across a Walk with Israel white board that was given out to the students.

Later, as little Isabelle was drawing on the board, she told her mom repeatedly, "I'm doing tzedakah, mommy!"

Beaming with pride, Tina, who had been fundraising for the Walk with Israel on behalf of her daughter since Isabelle was six months old, quickly seized the opportunity to explain the heady concept of giving back to one's community to the new Walk enthusiast.

"For some reason that Walk with Israel white board really resonated with Isabelle, and I was able to use that connection to explain to my daughter why it's so important to raise money for the Walk, and how it helps people in Israel," says Tina. "And, as someone who has always taken part in the Walk, I couldn't be prouder that this important community event was her entry point into tzedakah."

Tina, whose parents moved from Montreal to Toronto in 1983 when Tina was a year younger than Isabelle is today, recently began her third year as Co-Chair of UJA's Young Leaders, and before that she Co-Chaired Programming and Young Business for UJA Young Leaders. She also sat on the Walk with Israel Committee for two years where she was in charge of young recruitment. And, just in case that philanthropic resume isn't impressive enough, Tina also volunteered at UJA telethons throughout her high school years, and was a chaperone on the 2008 March of the Living.

Tina Erlich with daughter Isabelle

"Both my parents became volunteers immediately and took us with them because there was no one to watch me and my brothers," says Tina. "My parents chaired the Walk and the Festival when I was 9 years old. We had participated in the walk before but never at this level. As we walked, I remember feeling this enormous sense of pride, not because my parents were Chairs, but because we were a part of this amazing community, that came together for one day and that was raising money that would help Israelis in need. Because of my parents' UJA involvement, I have many memories of that sense of pride and knew when my daughter - and subsequently - my son was born, that I wanted to share that with them. This year will be her third Walk with Israel and my son's second. I hope that as they grow, they will feel the same amount of pride and maybe one day gratitude, like I do for my parents because they taught me the importance of tzedakah and allowed me to be a part of UJA and the amazing Jewish community of Toronto."

Fortunately, based on Tina's philanthropic pedigree and the fact that tzedakah is in her DNA, it's safe to say that these apples will not fall far from the tree.

Volunteer Excellence: The Community Honours Its Own

The men and women on pages B5-B7 have made tzedakah, tikkun olam and community involvement constant priorities in their lives. Their unrelenting commitment to Jewish values helps enrich the lives of so many. They will receive their awards on May 27th at UJA Federation's Awards Night.

Ben Sadowski Award of Merit

UJA Federation created this award in 1960, the single most prestigious acknowledgement the Jewish community bestows upon a volunteer with outstanding leadership qualities and years of involvement in the Jewish and general communities
With his unwavering commitment to people, Ben Sadowski z"l, the first President of the United Jewish Welfare Fund (predecessor to UJA Federation), embodied the definition of a natural leader. This award is his legacy to the Jewish community.

DAVID ENGEL

A native Montrealer, David Engel has held numerous positions across this country's Jewish community, beginning in 1978 with Federation CJA of Montreal as Chair of the Young Leadership Division. After moving to Toronto in 1983, David was introduced to UJA through Young Leadership and worked his way up through UJA Federation, volunteering for roles including Chair of the Annual Walk with Israel, Vice-Chair and Chair of Campaign 2000, and then UJA Federation Treasurer. He became UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Chair in June 2005, and President of Federations Canada in 2008. Currently he is the Chair of the Past Campaign Chair Committee, the Treasurer of CIJA and the incoming Chair of the Birthright Foundation. David has won a number of prestigious communal awards including the Leadership Development Award, the Phil Granovsky Award for Campaign Leadership, both from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, and the Julie Koschitzky Award for Young Leadership from UIA Federations Canada. David credits his love for community to his parents Anna and Issie z"l, both of whom were respected community leaders in Montreal. Engel owns a Marketing services company, Innovative Graphics, which helps North American direct marketers increase their response rates by making their marketing efforts more effective, and sits on the board of the Canadian Marketing Association. He is married to Judy and has three children, Tina, Paul and Daniel.

"Volunteerism has shaped and enriched my life beyond measure. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this community in many leadership capacities. Former recipients of the Ben Sadowski Award have been my mentors and my friends. My hope is that I have inspired future leaders in the way that they have inspired me."

Community Israel Engagement Award

The Community Israel Engagement Award recognizes a program or an organization whose leadership is committed to making Israel Engagement a core part of its mission and vision, and to integrating Israel into all areas of institutional life. It honours excellence in cultivating deep, real, and multi-faceted relationships between its stakeholders and Israel.

JULIA GLUCK, FCMC

Born in Ottawa, Julia has lived in Toronto for most of her life. She is married and has one son who recently made aliyah. Julia's family has belonged to the First Narayever Congregation since 1987. Julia was a management consultant for over 30 years, and had over 40 years of business experience when she retired. Julia provided her clients with workplace learning programs to increase knowledge, build skills and change attitudes. Her Honours BA in Judaic Studies was granted jointly by the University of Toronto and Hebrew University. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Certified Management Consultants of Ontario, where she volunteers. She served on the First Narayever's Board of Governors for six years as Vice President, President and Past President, and has served as the Site Supervisor for our ShinShinim program for over two years. Julia and her husband have spent a month or two of the winter in Israel for several years now, and will be spending more time now that their son has made aliyah.

"My experience with the ShinShinim program has been extremely rewarding personally; my relationship with the ShinShinim and their families is very special for me, my husband and son. The program has also enabled me to get to know my community much better, and to work with UJA Federation for the first time."

Phil Granovsky Award for Campaign Excellence

This award honours individuals who exemplify the best in United Jewish Appeal campaigning When it came to the welfare of world Jewry, few were more committed than Phil Granovsky z"l, who saw Israel and the Diaspora as an extension of his family. Phil's selfless legacy continues to help countless people in the community every single year

LAURIE SHEFF

Laurie Sheff has been a volunteer leader and role model at UJA Federation for many years. Over the years, Laurie has held numerous positions including Co-Chair of the ATID Next Gen education and leadership program, Co-Chair, with her husband Jonny, of the 2011 UJA Walk with Israel, Chair of UJA's Women's Philanthropy Campaign 2013 and Co-Chair of Campaign Operations, Campaign 2014. This year Laurie will serve as Co-Chair of UJA'S Major Gifts Division. Laurie is a past board member of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Hillel of Greater Toronto and is currently a board member of the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto. Laurie and Jonny live in Toronto and have three boys; Matthew, Thomas & Ezra.

"My involvement with UJA has allowed me to be an active participant in our community I have had the privilege of working with many professionals and volunteers, all of who lead by example every day, and I have seen the direct impact of this collective effort across the globe. Phil Granovsky was one of our community's greatest leaders and I am honoured to be this year's recipient of the award that bears his name."

Harold Lederman Award for Philanthropic Leadership

This award, named for Harold Lederman z"l, is presented by UJA's Past Chairs Council to an outstanding philanthropic leader and volunteer who has demonstrated exceptional commitment and achievement of innovative approaches to challenges in the community. Harold, driven by a keen social conscience and strong support for Jewish communal life, believed in the importance of continuity. His message to future generations was to be responsible, a legacy of a real philanthropic leader.

HARRY GORMAN

Harry Gorman has been an active community volunteer for more than 50 years. Growing up, he was inspired by his parents, Moshe and Reva Gorman who, in spite of very modest means, had always exemplified tzedakah and the importance of helping those in need.

Over the years, Harry made sure his parents' values lived on through his steadfast volunteer and philanthropic commitments. His community involvement includes Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation, of which Harry is a founding member. Harry also chaired a successful UJA Annual Campaign and remains a dedicated canvasser to this day. In 1991, the Jewish National Fund honoured Harry at their annual Negev Dinner. Together with Hy and Bertha Shore, Harry established the Gorman Shore Awards – professional development scholarships that are presented annually to exemplary employees at the Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care. Harry is also the recipient of the UJA Federation Ben Sadowski Award of Merit.

Harry is President and Board Member of Wycliffe International. Last year, he and his wife, Sara, celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary. They are the proud parents of four children and have 11 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

"I feel blessed and privileged that my own success has enabled me to give back to others and make a difference. This award is especially meaningful to me because of the longstanding relationship I shared with my good friend, Harold Lederman z"l. I consider my years of volunteering to have been a priceless experience and just as I've been taught, I hope that I too have been a mentor for the next generation. It hasn't been about what I have given, rather it has been about what I have gained."

Volunteer Excellence:
Leadership Development Awards

These awards, established to encourage young men and women to assume community leadership roles, are presented to those individuals who demonstrate extraordinary commitment and service.

MICKI MIZRAHI

Micki was born and raised in Ottawa in a family committed to the Jewish community. Upon moving to Toronto Micki worked with various committees with Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center as Co-Chair of Spirit of Hope, 2014, Mount Sinai Hospital, Canadian Friends of Israel Museum, Holy Blossom Pre-School and UJA. Most recently, within UJA, Micki was Co-Chair of the Lion of Judah division for two years, Co-Chair of Atarah division, Co-Chair of the 2012 and 2013 Walk with Israel, and is an active member on the Israel Engagement Committee (focus: CHAT) She is on the Board of Directors of the JCC's, Leo Baeck Day School, the Koffler Centre of the Arts and Toronto and Ontario region of Canadian Friends of Hebrew University. She is the incoming Vice-Chair of the Board of Hillel of Greater Toronto. Micki and her husband participated on the Fisher Flight program through JFNA. Micki is married to Sam and they have two children, Eden (7)and Ethan (5).

"I grew up in a family deeply connected and committed to our Jewish community. I am so grateful to have been taught that our responsibility to take care and strengthen our community is also a privilege, especially as a Canadian living in these times. I feel that the more involved I get in UJA Federation, the more involved I want to be. It has been incredible working with, learning from, and being inspired by the lay leaders and professionals who make UJA's work, holy work. Receiving this award is something very special to me, however I really share it with all of my friends with whom I work with to help make the vision we all want for our community come to life."

DARREN SUKONICK

"Start local and go global" has been one of Darren's mottos as his community and philanthropic endeavours developed over the years. Darren started on his community leadership journey canvassing on behalf of United Jewish Appeal. That led him to be Co-Chair of UJA's Ben Gurion Society in 2008-2009 and Co-Chair of the Vanguard Division in 2013-2014 and Chair of the Cabinet 2011-2013. Outside of UJA, Darren has been a board member of the Canadian Friends of the Israel Museum and one of three Toronto Co-Chairs, involved with raising funds and awareness for the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

"Kol Yisrael arevim zehla-zeh". All Jews are responsible for one another. From the earliest chapters of the Bible we learn that we are, in fact, the keepers of our brothers and sisters. The notion of volunteering or donating suggests a transaction where the volunteer or donor gives to others. In my experience, the reverse actually occurs. When working within the community, I am the recipient of the greatest gift imaginable: the opportunity to perform mitzvot, to improve the world (even a little) and to share the amazing luck I have in being born at this time, in this place and in circumstances that allow me to give of my 'time, talent and treasure'. Fulfilling my responsibility to others enables me to feel not only closer to God but also a vibrant part of the dynamic tapestry of the Jewish people."

Gordy Wolfe Award for Jewish Communal Professional Leadership

This award honours the memory of Gordy Wolfe z"l, the consummate professional who served as Executive Director of Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS) for 22 years. The award recognizes a visionary professional communal leader who, like Gordy, has made a substantive difference in the life of Jewish Toronto

JANIS ROTH

Janis Roth is the Executive Director of JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto. She earned both her Bachelor and Master of Social Work from McGill University and has been working in the social service field within the Jewish community for over 33 years. Janis has received several awards for her academic achievements and work innovations. A native of Montreal, Janis moved to Toronto in 1997 with her husband and two daughters. She has been with JIAS Toronto for 10 years leading the agency through reorganization, change and growth. Janis developed the framework for JPAG and 1 Open Door, and her values of belonging, inclusion and a just society are embedded in all she does.

"I have been privileged at JIAS Toronto and throughout my career to build a life's work that reflects my personal values and brings meaning to others. Along the way, I have been most fortunate to work with creative, bright and caring professionals and volunteers; Gordy Wolfe z"l among them. To be recognized for work that I love to do and receive an award in Gordy's name for it is a gift I will always hold close."

Professional Advisory Committee Award of Excellence

This award, from the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, recognizes the outstanding contribution made to the Foundation by professionals in our community. It recognizes the long-term impact of the contributions made by lawyers, accountants, estate planners and to the charitable organizations that reap the benefit of their efforts.

JORDAN CAPLAN

Jordan Caplan is an incorporated partner at Crowe Soberman LLP and serves as the firm's international liaison partner. Jordan has been a member of the Professional Advisory Committee for the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto for over five years, serving on several sub-committees during his tenure. He is a past speaker at PAC events, delivering presentations and case studies on topics like succession planning, estate administration and legacy gifting. He assists clients with their philanthropic endeavours by helping to structure their gifting to existing charities and non-profit groups or creating private charitable foundations and donor advised funds. Jordan served as Treasurer for the Canadian Association of Family Enterprise (CAFÉ) and currently sits on the Finance Committee and the Audit Committee at Oakdale Golf and Country Club.

"Serving the community is an integral factor of my professional career. I believe if you are fortunate to be in a position to do so, it is incumbent on you to help those in need. Giving back is the responsibility of each person who is capable of contributing his or her resources, talent or time. Knowing that I am striving to do my part in making my contributions to society, I am deeply humbled and honoured to be recognized by the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto and to receive the 2014 PAC Award of Excellence."

Community Inclusion Award of Excellence

This award recognizes an outstanding volunteer within Toronto's Jewish community whose exceptional efforts has resulted in a more inclusive Jewish community for people with special needs. The award has been designed to bring the importance of physical and social inclusion to the attention of the entire Jewish community. The aim is to honour and recognize an outstanding individual who has embraced inclusion and had an impact on the lives of people with special needs.

KATHY LASZIO is the mother of a 27 year old son, who has autism. She is the Co-Founder and director of D.A.N.I. (Developing and Nurturing Independence) The goal of the organization is to create opportunities for Jewish young adults with physical and/or cognitive challenges to participate fully as valued members of the community and to enjoy a meaningful and dignified quality of Jewish life. D.A.N.I. provides vocational/social/academic programs within the Jewish community. Kathy currently is the Director of Finance at DANI. She lives in Thornhill with her three children, Danny, Mikey and Sarah.

"It is a privilege to be part of a supportive community and make a difference in the lives of young adults, who have special needs. I am humbled by receiving UJA Federation's 2014 Community Inclusion Award of Excellence."

SUSIE SOKOL is a parent of five children, including two with challenges. She has been involved in the world of special needs for 30 years as a nurse, social worker, educator, an editor of a unique magazine, B'YADEINU, as well as created support circles around families, and designed mothers' encouragement groups. Strengthening professional and personal connections to Israel, Susie has researched and had involvement with programs and individuals there and other international organizations. She is also the Co-Founder of D.A.N.I., developing and nurturing independence, of adults with special needs, that now features a business and social enterprise and growing recreational programs.

"Our children are profoundly ordinary people sharing the same need to feel included, recognized and loved." (Adolf Ratzka)

"I feel privileged to have the opportunity to support and nurture these essential life lessons in our community."

Volunteer Excellence: Shem Tov Honourees

Shem Tov Awards are presented, in partnership with agencies, to leaders representing the highest level of excellence in volunteer service in Toronto's Jewish community.

RUTH ABRAHAMSON
JVS Toronto

Ruth Abrahamson is the CEO of Base Consulting and Management Inc., a consulting company in the association management sector. She is married to Lee Abrahamson; together they have three grown children. Ruth is immediate Past Chair of the Board of JVS Toronto. She served as the Vice-Chair of the Board and became the Chair of the Board in 2010 to 2012. Ruth served on Strategic Planning, Marketing, Jewish Community Initiative, Search, Governance, Nominating, Fundraising and Strictly Business Committees. JVS has been very fortunate to have a leader of her caliber who is never shy to roll up her sleeves to deliver on deadlines, do research, leverage her contacts and support JVS. Ruth is an advocate for JVS's staff, our clients and the community. This became evident in her role as Co-Chair of Strictly Business, JVS Toronto's annual fundraising event. Ruth has also served on the Board of the Toronto Convention and Visitor's Association, Meeting Professionals International Toronto Chapter, and Canadian Centre for Diversity.

"First introduced to JVS in the late 1990's, I felt an immediate connection with the practicality of the work of the agency in helping people to find employment and build careers and a similar connection to the staff and the leadership. I am still dazzled by the all-out dedication, innovation and creativity of the professional team at JVS. They and my fellow hard-working Board Members are my motivation for wanting to help and to do more. I have sat on many JVS committee and will continue to do so, but the most rewarding has been my time on the Board, helping to think strategically and plan for the future. The Shem Tov Award is a great honour, because it originates from my JVS colleagues. It is a true representation of collegiality and shared endeavours. My sincere thanks to JVS and to UJA for this recognition."

JULIE SCHWARTZ
Reena

Julie Schwartz holds an Honors Bachelor of Arts in American Civilization and a Masters degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Since marrying Larry and moving to Canada in 1977, her professional activities have focused on marketing and advertising research. Currently semi-retired, Julie's career included running her own qualitative consumer research consultancy, as well as senior management positions with McCann Erickson and Ogilvy and Mather Advertising. As a proud dual citizen of both Canada and the United States, no matter the outcome, Julie can always claim victory when the Leafs play the Flyers. Julie's volunteer commitments include: board and executive member with OneFamily Fund Canada, as well as participation on each Cross Israel Hike in support of victims of terror in Israel, board member with REENA and REENA Foundation, as well as activities around the Joel Schwartz Memorial Hockey Tournament in support of people with developmental challenges, Holy Blossom Temple Bikur Cholim and Special Education committee member, social enterprise pro bono business development advisor with Common Ground Co-op and A-WAY Courier Express. Julie loves to hike, swim, bike, write; and expand her horizons courtesy of participating in the U of T School of Continuing Studies.

"I am honored to be considered a SHEM TOV, and proud to share this award with all of the truly wonderful good names of those at REENA."

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Recognizing Our Community Volunteers

DAVID SPIRO
Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)

A dedicated UJA Federation volunteer for the last fifteen years, David is a past recipient of UJA Federation's Leadership Development Award as well as a National Young Leadership Award from Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA. He has received a Face to Face Canvasser Award and a Canvasser "Closer" Award from UJA Federation in recognition of his exemplary leadership in recent annual campaigns. David became the first Canadian to chair the National Young Leadership Cabinet of the Jewish Federations of North America and has served on the JFNA Board. He chaired the Committee on Public Affairs at UJA Federation before becoming the first chair of the GTA Local Partnership Council of CIJA. David currently serves on CIJA's Board of Directors and is a member of its Governance Committee. He was a Vice-Chair of the canvassing team for the 2013 JNF Negev Dinner honouring Prime Minister Harper.

"We are privileged to live in a city that leads the Jewish world in so many profound ways. Our community is incredibly strong, committed and inspired. If each of us does our part to provide for the future, together we will ensure the continued growth, success and leadership of our entire community."

LAWRENCE WILDER
Miles Nadal JCC

Lawrence Wilder is a partner at Cassels Brock and Blackwell LLP and has a securities practice that spans all manner of corporate finance, from private equity to initial public offerings to follow-on equity and debt financings. Lawrence Wilder was the Chair of the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Board of Directors from 2010-2012. He has served on the Board of the Miles Nadal JCC since 2005 and is part of the new guard that brought the Miles Nadal JCC forward to its position of strength and commitment to the community today. He worked very closely with the emerging JCCs at the north campuses and participated in two JCCA biennial leadership conferences in 2010 and 2012. Through his leadership the Miles Nadal JCC has brought a greater focus to the Active 55+ group of Members and he set up and funded the Helen and Seymour Wilder Seniors Wellness Program honouring his parents. He is a genuine role model to other donors and Board Members, and the Miles Nadal JCC is the stronger for it.

"We are fortunate to live in Toronto, with its vibrant Jewish community. We truly have a 'Jewish Ecosystem', with excellent facilities and resources for every one of all walks of life and all ages. I volunteer to give back to the community that has given me and my family so much. I do this by volunteering my time with the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre for these past few years and seeing the wonderful work that it does to enhance the lives of our community members of all ages in the downtown Toronto area."

JUDY WINBERG
Jewish Family & Child

Judy Winberg, Immediate Past President of the Board of Directors of Jewish Family & Child has been an active volunteer and community leader for more than 39 years. Bringing a strong interest and commitment to Governance, Judy succeeded in strategically reconstituting the Agency's Board and committee structure to reflect more outcome-oriented, integrated thinking about service delivery. She enlivened Board meetings by inviting social workers to share client stories that brought great richness to discussions and deliberations. Judy actively participated in the opening of two Agency branches and played an important role as a sponsor and a member of the planning committee for JF&CS' first community wide fundraising event, Jewish Folks Telling Jokes. Judy is married to Jack Winberg and together they have three adult children, all of whom are active volunteer leaders in the Toronto Jewish community.

"Within our diverse community are fellow Jews who battle mental illness, live in assisted housing, receive financial support, suffer with substance abuse and experience domestic violence, child abuse and neglect. Jewish Family & Child is the agency that provides direct counselling services, social and educational programs, financial assistance, and when needed, child protection services. To serve as the President of the Board of Directors of Jewish Family & Child has been the highlight of my community leadership and a truly humbling experience."

UJA.is Recognizing Our

Global Seder Telethons

Generosity

It's almost impossible for most of us to even imagine a Jewish holiday that did not include great food.

But the truth is, there are many Jews living in Toronto, Israel, Cuba and the Former Soviet Union (FSU) who simply can't afford even the most basic food staples for the holidays, especially Passover. With that thought in mind, UJA's annual Global Seder to Fight Hunger raises money to send kosher for Pesach food to Jews in need. And, as usual, Jewish Toronto's incredible cadre of volunteers rose to the occasion when UJA needed individuals to make calls during Sunday, March 30th Global Seder Telethon at the Lipa Green Centre on Sherman Campus. More than 220 enthusiastic individuals took to the phones and raised over $280,000.

Caring

More than 1,200 participate in Yom Hashoah

On Sunday, April 27th, 2014, more than 1200 people from across the GTA came together to remember the victims; honour the survivors, rescuers, and liberators; and pledge to never forget.

On Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, we commemorate the 6 million Jewish victims of National Socialism. Since 2003, Canada has recognized Yom Hashoah on a national level, and the ten Canadian provinces passed legislation making Holocaust Remembrance Day an official day on their provincial calendars.

Compassion

Community Volunteers

Our Community Walks the Walk

As it has for more than four decades, United Jewish Appeal's annual Walk with Israel turned the streets of Toronto into a veritable sea of blue and white on Sunday, May 26th, as more than 16,000 individuals publically showed their love and support for the Jewish state. Chaired by Jamie and Lauren Wise, Micki and Sam Mizrahi, the Walk began with a kick-off party at Coronation Park, before walkers took to the streets.

Afterwards, participants made their way to the Direct Energy Centre on the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition for the Renee & Irwin Nadal Festival for great games, rides, and much more. Thanks to all those who came out and to our incredible volunteers. We simply couldn't have done it without you!

Enjoying Purim across the GTA!

On Sunday, March 16, 2013 more than 2,500 men, women and children celebrated Purim in style at the party of the year at York Region's Schwartz/Reisman Centre on UJA Federation's Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus. With great music, balloons, face painting, a magic show, arts & crafts, and much, much, more, children – of all ages - had plenty of entertainment options. And, of course, what would Purim be without delicious hamentashen, served to all, along with other tasty treats.

But, fear not, as, if you were looking for another option, UJA Federation's other Jewish Community Centres – the Prosserman JCC on Sherman Campus at Bathurst and Sheppard, as well as the Miles Nadal JCC at Bloor and Spadina, offered families living in central Toronto and downtown equally festive and exciting Purim parties. So, no matter where you live, you could share the spirit of this fun and festive holiday with like-minded members of the community.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

UJA.is
Recognizing Our Community Volunteers

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto expresses profound appreciation to the countless individuals who selflessly volunteer their time and talents through our many community agencies, schools, congregations and organizations. Through their efforts these dedicated men, women and young adults help build a more cohesive Jewish community which, in turn, preserves and strengthens the quality of Jewish life in Toronto, Canada and Israel. The willingness of Toronto's Jewish community to volunteer and help one another makes it a model community – one emulated throughout North America.

Act to End Violence Against Women
Act to End Violence Against Women is committed to ending violence against women through education, advocacy and action. www.acttoendvaw.org

NIKI BLEDIN
"Act to End Violence Against Women is an organization which has offered me a unique opportunity to reach out and directly help women who are bravely navigating their lives through very difficult and turbulent times."

Adath Israel Congregation
Our mission is to effect a positive transformation in the lives of the people touched by the congregation's work, which is to perpetuate and promote Judaism and the Jewish way of life for current and future generations. www.adathisrael.com

KERRY WASSERMAN
"Giving back to the community has always been an important aspect of my life. My parents joined the Adath Israel in 1958 and I was raised in this synagogue and all of my major lifecycle events occurred here. Therefore it was only logical that when I chose to volunteer my services it would be at this synagogue."

Ashkenaz Foundation*
A community based non-profit organization dedicated to fostering an increased awareness of new Yiddish and Jewish culture. Through its biennial festival and an expanding slate of year-round programming, Ashkenaz showcases the work of leading contemporary artists from Canada and around the world in music, film, theatre, dance, literature, craft, and visual arts. www.ashkenazfestival.com

MARTY STARKMAN
"The Ashkenaz Foundation inspires my love of music and Jewish culture. Volunteering for Ashkenaz has captured my imagination through its presentation of the band from around the corner to bands from around the world."

"Do not separate yourself from the Community."

- Pirke Avot

* Denotes 2013-2014 partner agencies of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto*
Associated provides an outstanding academic program, rich in traditional Jewish values and experiences, from pre Nursery to Grade 8. Graduates gain an excellent foundation in general and Judaic studies and are superbly prepared for high school and beyond. With four campuses across the GTA we offer before and after care, busing and financial assistance. www.associatedhebrewschools.com

JODI PASOFF
"For me volunteering is more than serving pizza or working with administration, it provides an opportunity to both help make Associated a great school and teach our children the importance of giving back to the community."

Association for the Soldiers of Israel – Canada
ASI-Canada is a not-for-profit organization committed to improving the welfare and well-being of Israel's soldiers on active duty, as they stand guard and protect Israel and the Jewish people around the world. www.asicanada.org

JUDY NAIBERG & BARB SMUSKOWITZ
"It is our privilege each year to introduce dedicated members of the IDF to our community in Toronto. We are proud of the work performed by ASI and honoured to be involved in this organization."

Association of Jewish Seniors
Founded in 1970, the Association unites seniors groups and members-at-large within the Jewish community. With approximately 5,000 members, it is a collective voice to address issues concerning seniors. ajs@circleofcare.com

DOREEN BENOU
"As a younger senior I think it is important to be part of an organization that advocates for continued and improved community health care services that supports my independence as I age."

BBYO Ontario
BBYO offers teens the opportunity to connect with one another, volunteer in the community, celebrate their Jewish heritage and travel the world together, all within a Jewish context. www.bbyo.ca

"We would like to thank our network of chapter advisors – Rochelle, Edan, Joanne, Elaine and Michael– who serve as the heart of BBYO as mentors and role models while stewarding our teens through their BBYO experience."

Baycrest Health Sciences
Baycrest is an academic health science centre that provides an exemplary care experience for older adults across a variety of institutional and community based settings. We are devoted to improving the quality of life of older adults everywhere through the integration and application of exceptional healthcare, wellness, promotion, research, and educational activities. www.baycrest.org

HELEN KUTTNER
"For 17 years, Baycrest's Palliative Care Unit has been my University of Life. Extraordinary patients, families, staff and fellow volunteers have enriched my world by providing an unparalleled opportunity for personal growth through thought-provoking lessons."

Beit Halochem Canada
Beit Halochem Canada is devoted to helping over 51,000 Israeli disabled war veterans and hundreds of victims of terror and their families. The five Beit Halochem Centre's offer state-of-the-art sports, social and rehabilitation services including: physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, therapeutic devices, specialized sports equipment, coaching and cultural activities. www.beithalochem.ca

STEVEN GOLDENBERG
"Israel has always held a special place in my heart, so volunteering for the wonderful organization of Beit Halochem and helping disabled veterans who have served their country is my small way of giving back."

Beit Rayim Synagogue
A young congregation with a huge heart that will be forever praised for a warm, "hamishe" atmosphere and participatory services. Women and men daven side by side, and with the help of clergy and volunteers, we read Torah, Haftorah, prepare d'vrei Torah, and help lead services. www.beitrayim.org

CHERYL CEPLER
"A volunteer since the age of 15, volunteering at Beit Rayim Synagogue gives me the opportunity to help my Synagogue develop into a strong and lively 'kehilla' giving a conservative Jewish voice in York Region."

Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living*
A non-profit community centre empowering seniors to lead active, creative and healthy lifestyles in a Jewish environment. www.betelcentre.org

RON BERMAN
"After I retired, I chose Betel because it enabled me to work with people from diverse backgrounds and skill levels. I have benefited from this placement because I've discovered talents I never knew I had and it has helped to reduce stress in my own life."

Beth Avraham Yoseph Synagogue of Toronto (BAYT)
A family synagogue that emphasizes the warmth of Torah tradition. www.bayt.ca

ELIE KOCHMAN
"I believe that everyone can contribute to their community in some way. My community is the BAYT, and my contribution is time and expertise."

Beth Chabad Israeli Community Centre
To address the needs of Israeli immigrants by providing programs, seminars, networking resources and a warm and welcoming community for newcomers to develop a sense of belonging in Canada. We are committed to support, guide and facilitate their successful integration into the larger Canadian Jewish community. wwwchabadisraeli.com

ABIGAIL BRAND
"I volunteer at Chabad Israeli Community Centre to be involved in the community, to help and contribute. I am a big believer in giving. Seeing people happy and enjoying from what I do for them."

Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation

Develops and preserves Jewish traditions from generation to generation by addressing the spiritual, social and educational needs of our members and non-members and others in the Greater Toronto Jewish community. www.bethdavid.com

BERNARD SCHIMMER

"As Continuing Education Chair, I have experienced unique opportunities for Judaic Studies, forged close friendships, and gained a deeper understanding of ritual and prayer I thank our Clergy, Board, my Committee members and my wife Elly for their support."

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue

Fosters a full and joyous way of life proudly rooted in a heritage of traditional Conservative Judaism, and committed to Jewish values, education, spiritual well-being and community. www.beby.org

RANDI LANDY

"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve." Albert Schweitzer - *"I want to ensure that this philosophy is followed by current and future generations of my family so that we better appreciate the privileges that we are afforded. Volunteerism helps fulfill my life."*

Beth Sholom Synagogue

Seeks to enrich the lives of our congregants and community through the ideals of Torah, Gemillut Hasidim (Social Action) and Achdut (Jewish Unity). www.bethsholom.net

BRENDA BERGER

"I volunteer because I feel it is important to contribute to my community and it gives me great pleasure to be able to make a difference in the lives of others."

"The Jewish people, ever since David slew Goliath, have never considered youth as a barrier to leadership."

- President John F. Kennedy

Beth Tikvah Synagogue

A vibrant forward-looking Conservative Synagogue dedicated to fostering spiritual and Judaic growth and fulfillment through meaningful rituals, activities and exciting educational programs. We are sensitive and caring, attractive to all ages and responsive to the individual needs of our members. Our dynamic leadership, effective lay-professional partnership and prudent financial planning provide a strong foundation for the future. bethtikvahtoronto.org

ROBERT FELDGAIER

"Volunteers are vital to the strength of synagogues, the Jewish people and the community at large. The opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives can bring tremendous joy and fulfillment."

Beth Tzedec Congregation

Canada's landmark Conservative Synagogue is a dynamic community destination for Jewish living, committed to preserving, practicing and transmitting Jewish tradition. Beth Tzedec offers a rich and varied calendar of programs and services designed to translate our heritage into vital, relevant and meaningful Jewish thought and action, and serves the evolving needs of members and the larger community through Hesed and Tikkun Olam initiatives. www.beth-tzedec.org

MAUREEN TANZ

"It is so gratifying to know that through my volunteer work with Out of the Cold and Beth Tzedec's Hesed Committee, I am able to make a difference in other peoples' lives. Knowing that I have made a positive impact on others is an emotionally uplifting experience."

Bialik Hebrew Day School PTA - Viewmount

Committed to providing an exemplary Jewish and general education to children in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 from diverse Jewish backgrounds. Bialik fosters a strong Jewish identity that embraces the values of our Labour Zionist roots in a warm and nurturing environment. Hebrew fluency, Yiddish language and culture and a strong connection to Israel and the Jewish people are paramount. www.bialik.ca

FRANCES ALTOW

"Volunteering at Bialik allowed me to connect with teachers, administrators and families, all of whom touched the lives of our children every day. After 16 years, I feel good knowing that my contributions have added value to our children's experience and to that of others at the school."

Bnei Akiva

Bnei Akiva inspires and empowers young Jews with a sense of commitment to the Jewish people, the Land of Israel and the Torah. www.bneiakivatoronto.com

AVISHAI GASNER

"What I appreciate the most about volunteering for Bnei Akiva is the positive influence I can have on my chanichim, instilling in them the positive values of Torah va'Avodah in a comfortable environment."

Bnei Akiva Schools

The mission of Yeshivat Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot is to inculcate within our students an appreciation for and a commitment to Torah observances and values. Yeshivat Or Chaim (founded 1973) and Ulpanat Orot (founded 1975) were established in Toronto with several specific goals in mind. www.bneiakivaschools.org

HOWARD WASSERMAN

"Bnei Akiva Schools holds a special place in our community. It is the only modern orthodox high school in the city. I think it's important to do everything we can to ensure it grows and succeeds."

Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev plays a vital role in sustaining David Ben-Gurion's vision of creating a world-class institution of education and research in the Israeli desert, nurturing the Negev community and sharing the University's expertise locally and around the globe. www.bengurion.ca

MITCHELL OELBAUM

"Besides cutting edge research, first-class education and great campus atmosphere, Ben-Gurion University plays an intrinsic part in the development of southern Israel. I am proud that my family has been involved with BGU since its inception."

"...the greatest reward for doing is the opportunity to do more."

- Dr. Jonas Salk

Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro

The vision of Beit Issie Shapiro is of an inclusive society, which assures the rights and opportunities for maximum growth and development of children and adults with diverse abilities. The mission is to partner with people with disabilities, families and allies from different sectors in order to provide state-of-the-art services and changes to social structures so that people are able to live, learn and pursue their desired quality of life in the communities of their choice. www.en.beitissie.org.il/international/canada

BARBARA ABRAMS

"Where we help improve the lives of others less fortunate than ourselves, we somehow gain more than we give. It has been a privilege to be associated with this most compassionate, innovative and forward thinking organization."

Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn

Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn is a straight forward, dynamic and interactive organization that helps children in Israel who are challenged with intellectual disabilities. CFIE@IsraelElwyn.org.il

KAREN GOLDENBERG

"I am proud to be a director of Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn. Israel Elwyn is a world leader serving people with disabilities with excellence and innovation. I joined the Board while I was CEO of JVS Toronto and JVS became the administrative office. We developed a wonderful relationship with Elwyn and often shared practices and program models."

Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University

CFTAU provides direct funding support for the educational and research goals of Tel Aviv University, Israel's largest and most comprehensive institution of higher learning, facilitated by enhanced public awareness of the University's achievements. www.cftau.org

JEANNIE TANENBAUM

"I volunteer because of a sense of pride and ownership for CFTAU which was founded in my home 35 years ago. I believe strongly in the University's mission and quality of research that inspires the students."

* Denotes 2013-2014 partner agencies of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University

Promotes awareness, leadership and financial support. CFHU facilitates academic and research partnerships between Canada and Israel while establishing scholarships, supporting research, cultivating student/faculty exchanges and recruiting Canadian students to attend the Rothberg International School at The Hebrew University. www.cfhu.org

KAREN SIMPSON RADOMSKI

"When I walked through Hebrew University and saw the brain trust that was there and the energy, knowledge, excitement and research that's going on, I wanted to be part of it! It's inspiring."

Canadian Society for Yad Vashem

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, raises financial resources for Yad Vashem's global initiatives and implements Yad Vashem's vision in Canada by disseminating the facts and universal lessons of the Shoah through significant commemorative and educational activities. www.yadvashem.ca

FRAN SONSHINE

"Volunteering with the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem as its National Chair has allowed me to help educate Canadians and keep the memory of the Holocaust alive so that such an epic tragedy never recurs."

Canadian Young Judaea

Canadian Young Judaea is an inclusive, pluralistic movement whose educational framework allows members to thrive through the nurturing of their Jewish identity and their love for Israel. We seek to empower members within the community while inspiring values of Tikkun Olam, leadership, and respect. www.keepingkidsjewish.com

SINDI KACHUCK

"CYJ gave me best friends, confidence, my love of Israel, and kept me engaged in the Jewish community. I volunteer to give back – for my kids and yours, for our future."

Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CJA)

CIJA is a non-partisan organization creating and implementing strategies to improve the quality of Jewish life in Canada and abroad, increase support for Israel, and strengthen the Canada-Israel relationship. www.cija.ca

KAREN GOLDENBERG

"Volunteering for CIJA's Toronto Local Partnership is an important part of my Israel connection and Jewish identity. The issues brought to us are relevant and timely and the opportunity to discuss and debate provides a varied and broad perspective. As a strong community advocate I look at situations through the lens of an agency/service provider which provides a distinct outlook that reflects my experience and values."

Chabad of Markham

Chabad's philosophy is non-judgmental and friendly. We believe that regardless of educational background or affiliation it is the inalienable right of every Jewish person to learn and participate in our heritage which belongs to us all equally. www.chabadmarkham.org

LORRAINE FRANKLIN

"We have come a long way thanks to our great Rabbis and Rebbetzins, staff and all the other volunteers, who are constantly giving to our community. I have always felt that OUR Chabad is all embracing – a family, so to speak. That's why I volunteer."

Chai Lifeline Canada

A not-for-profit organization, dedicated to helping Canadian children suffering from serious illness as well as their family members. We are passionately devoted to alleviating the burden of those facing medical challenge. From the moment of diagnosis through months and years, in good and bad times, Canadian families have discovered that Chai Lifeline Canada is a friend for life. www.chailifelinecanada.org

MALKA LIPOVENKO

"The inspiration that comes from spending time with my little sister and so many families battling illness while finding joy in their everyday lives is so beautiful. Life is a gift and by helping others we create miracles."

" One glorious chain of life, of giving and receiving, unites all creatures."

- Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch

* Denotes 2013-2014 partner agencies of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Chai -Tikvah Foundation / Life and Hope Foundation*

To provide Jewish supportive residential options, programs, public education and advocacy, which will enhance the quality of life for individuals and families affected by mental health issues. www.chaitikvah.org

STEPHEN ADLER

"1 in 5 Canadians are touched by mental illness – this silent ailment. When mental illness touched my family, I found support and strength from this dedicated Jewish community agency. Now it's my turn to give back."

CHW Toronto Centre

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO, (CHW), is Canada's leading Jewish women's organization. Founded in 1917 CHW is non-political, volunteer driven and funds a multitude of programs and projects for Children, Healthcare and Women in Israel and Canada. www.chw.ca

JUDY ZELIKOVITZ

"Helping women and children in Israel create better tomorrows for themselves, their families and country has been extremely rewarding. Combined with the friendships developed volunteering with this international, philanthropic sisterhood – CHW continues to be my passion."

Circle of Care*

To support individual independence and to sustain and enhance quality of life in the community. www.circleofcare.com

CLAUDIA KUGELMASS

"Volunteering with Kosher Meals on Wheels is an easy Mitzvah! It's rewarding to stop by the homes of our members' of our community on a regular basis to deliver kosher meals while checking to see if they're doing okay."

Congregation Darchei Noam

Congregation Darchei Noam, Toronto's only Reconstructionist Synagogue, blends Jewish practice with innovative forms of Jewish expression: a place where love of tradition meets appreciation of change. Inclusive, egalitarian and welcoming, we aspire to create a sacred space that encourages all who enter to experience Jewish life as a source of joy. www.darcheinoam.ca

HELEN DAVIS

"Volunteering in the shul whenever I can is a great pleasure. Knowing I am relieving some stress helping someone in the office or on a committee, making people happy, means a great deal to me."

D.A.N.I.*

To create opportunities for Jewish young adults with physical and/or cognitive challenges so that they can participate fully as valued members of the community and enjoy a meaningful and dignified quality of Jewish life. www.dani-toronto.com

PETER RONA

"Volunteering for DANI is pure joy, a sense of achievement knowing that in my small way I have helped make a difference to the lives of those less fortunate than myself."

Downtown Jewish Community School* (DJCS)

Aims to provide a basis for Jewish identity in a pluralistic community. Students are taught the concepts and skills necessary to live a Jewish life and to feel comfortable within a Jewish setting. Traditional Jewish concepts and practices are presented with explanations and alternatives, indicating that there are many ways to be a Jew. www.djcs.org

ANN KOMAROMI

"The DJCS means a lot to my family. It connects us to a vibrant and diverse downtown Jewish community. Everyone pitches in to create an excellent supplementary school. I am glad to do my part."

Emunah Toronto

Emunah is a social service agency which provides sustenance, education and family counseling to needy and at-risk children and families in Israel, regardless of their religious affiliation. www.emunahcanada.org

KAREN MEYER

"Emunah combines two of my greatest passions, my love for family together with pride in the State of Israel. I feel grateful for the opportunity to help children who find themselves in difficult situations overcome these challenges and go on to lead healthy and productive lives."

First Narayever Congregation

The Narayever Congregation is a warm, welcoming community dedicating to serving Jews from the downtown core and beyond by developing and sustaining a love of Torah and Jewish learning, combining traditional liturgy with an egalitarian ethos, committing to Tikkun Olam & social responsibility, and encouraging a thoughtful and committed connection to the State of Israel. www.narayever.ca

PETER GOLD

"It was at the Narayever where I became of age as a Jewish person and which provided so many opportunities for my family to live a Jewish life. My volunteer work greatly enriched the entire experience!"

Friends of Yiddish

Keeps Yiddish alive through our programs, musical events and conversation groups.
yiddish18@yahoo.ca

ROSALINE LOFSKY
"It has been a pleasure working to preserve the Yiddish language and culture for this hemish group. The warmth of the members of Friends of Yiddish takes me back to the close family and community of my childhood."

Friendship Circle

The Friendship Circle provides assistance and support to the families of children with special needs. The Friendship Circle empowers and enriches its network of teenage volunteers, by enabling them to reap the vast reward of giving of themselves. Through a wide range of services, and projects the Friendship Circle is able to touch the lives of many people each year.
www.FCToronto.org

TAMAR GERBER
"I love volunteering at Friendship Circle with its incredible warmth. The highlight of my week is seeing the smiling and excited faces. I've learnt so much from my buddy with his enthusiastic and positive approach to life."

Hillel of Greater Toronto*

Hillel of Greater Toronto is the address for Jewish student life. Through exciting and creative programming and events, Hillel promotes Jewish identity, student leadership and religious and political diversity in a dynamic and inclusive environment for all Jewish students.
www.hilleltoronto.org

RUCHIE SHAINHOUSE HILLEL @ RYERSON
"I feel it's important to help strengthen Jewish identities, especially on campus when it is often forgotten and hard to maintain. Hillel's environment provides a safe place for students, which I support, and is why I volunteer for Hillel."

BAILEY FOX AND STEPH LULKA HILLEL @ U OF T
"We volunteer with Hillel in order to create a Jewish community on campus, to create a warm atmosphere for our peers to engage with other Jewish students, and enhance their experience through learning and other activities."

BECKY ZELIKSON HILLEL@ U OF T
"I volunteered because I would be engaging in critical discussion about Israel. Regardless, the Hillel internship would give me the resources, skills, and expertise to make my efforts more effective."

EDEN ZIV HILLEL @YORK
"I never thought I would meet such a passionate and ambitious group of individuals who strive to make a better society and change people's lives. I am looking forward to meeting the next strong leaders in our Jewish-Israeli community."

ZEV GASNER HILLEL @ YORK
"I volunteer for Hillel so that I can contribute to the fostering of a comforting and accepting base for all Jewish students on campus."

Holy Blossom Temple

Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto's first synagogue, is a Canadian Reform Jewish congregation with a rich history of responding to both tradition and modernity in our religious and spiritual expression. We pursue meaningful opportunities for personal growth and family fulfillment at every stage of life through belonging, learning, prayer and ritual, and acts of service for our congregation and community, our city and country, the Reform Movement, Israel and all the world.
www.holyblossom.org

SHEILA SMOLKIN
"Volunteering has given me a life of satisfaction and provided me with opportunities to meet and work with wonderful people many of whom have become dear friends."

Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF)

Israel Cancer Research Funds' mission is to continue to find treatments and cures for all forms of cancer, utilizing the unique benefits Israel and its scientists have to offer. The results of the research have a significant impact in Toronto, across Canada and throughout the world. www.icrf.ca

RICHARD FLOMEN
"Unfortunately cancer has hit my family on a very deep level, so I do whatever I can to help eradicate this terrible disease. Israeli scientists are doing cutting edge research and I can witness first-hand results of their tireless work and how the fundraising dollars is yielding to longer and better lives for cancer patients."

JACS Toronto*

JACS is a community based resource centre. It is dedicated to 1. Assisting addicts, their families and associates to explore and pursue recovery in a nurturing environment, 2. Promoting knowledge and understanding by educating the community about addiction, its impact on one's family and professional life, and resources available to deal with it.
www.jacstoronto.org

KELLY SALTZMAN
"I love being a part of JACS since it is such a meaningful place that brings hope to so many individuals and families."

Jewish Family & Child*

Since 1969 Jewish Family & Child has supported the healthy development of individuals, families, and communities in the GTA through prevention, protection, counseling, education and advocacy. jfandcs.com

SIMON A. KAPLANSKY
"Although I began volunteering simply to help another person, 'Little Brother' quickly became an important part of my life. I enjoy spending time with him and feel that I am making a positive impact."

Jewish Family & Child – Chaplaincy Services*

Since 1969 Jewish Family & Child has supported the healthy development of individuals, families, and communities in the GTA through prevention, protection, counseling, education and advocacy.
www.jfandcs.com

NORMAN SHELSON
"My reason for volunteering derives from the example of my parents, and by following the advice do not separate yourself from the community" (Pirke Avot). The religious services I bring to Jews in retirement and long term care homes tell them they are still remembered by their community."

Jewish Free Loan Toronto*

We offer interest free loans to members of the Toronto Jewish community who need financial assistance, but are unable to access traditional sources of funding. Our interest free loan provides self sufficiency with dignity; helping people help themselves.
www.jewishfreeloan.ca

WARREN M. RUDICK
"JFLT helps Jews in need with loans for emergencies, many personal needs, education, small business startup, and now for fertility and adoption. It's a privilege to support an organization that so meaningfully supports our community."

Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto

To collect, reference, research and reserve historical data and materials, that relate to Jewish Genealogy and History, and make the information available to the general public; and to assist members develop skills in genealogical research.
www.jgstoronto.ca

ALLEN HALBERSTADT z"l
"We enthusiastically salute Allen for his dedicated work, as the information that he gathered is invaluable to researchers and families who are seeking the whereabouts of their deceased relatives in the Toronto area."

JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto*

We welcome, support and integrate new immigrants today to build a strong Canada and a strong Jewish community of tomorrow.
www.jiastoronto.org

ANNE STILMAN
"If I found myself starting over in a new country, needing to learn a new language and to figure out a new culture, I would be glad to find this type of program for myself."

Jewish National Fund – Toronto

Jewish National has been the sole agency responsible for the development and infrastructure of land in Israel. Our many programs include land reclamation, reforestation, and road building. From the Negev Desert to the Galilee, lush green spaces, rich farmland and cities pulsating with life have blossomed out of swamp and mountain rock.
www.jnftoronto.ca

NATHAN DISENHOUSE
"My commitment to JNF began as a young boy when I learnt about the Blue Box and its commitment to Israel. As a longtime volunteer I have gotten great satisfaction knowing that the impact of one's contributions are going to improving the environment, building security roads, advancing Research and Development in Water Conservation and Agriculture, or just building parks and trails for all Israelis and visitors to enjoy."

* Denotes 2013-2014 partner agencies of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

JVS Toronto*

JVS Toronto helps people succeed by providing outstanding employment, social, and educational services which meet the changing needs of the diverse communities we serve, building on our experience serving the Jewish community. www.jvstoronto.org

GLENYS LINDENBERG

"JVS Toronto, originally founded by the Jewish community, today helps people of all backgrounds meet their employment and counseling needs. It is an honour to volunteer for an organization which fulfills the mitzvah of Tikkun Olam."

Jewish War Veterans of Canada – Toronto Post

We, as Jewish War Veterans of Canada or one of its Allies, Partisans, or Freedom fighters of Jewish Origin, undertake to provide an organization dedicated to the improvement and betterment of Jewish Veterans in our society. Our mission is to uphold the dignity, and to provide support to those veterans and their families. jwc@ujafed.org

KEN STEWART

"As much as Veterans and their families have already given, they need additional support, and a voice in the community. I am honoured to assist JWVC-Toronto Post in projects that further these missions."

Jews for Judaism*

Dedicated to counteracting effects of missionaries, cults, other religions, intermarriage and assimilation in the Jewish community by connecting Jews to the spiritual depth and wisdom of Judaism through free educational programs and counseling services that keep Jews Jewish. jewsforjudaism.ca

DAVID KLEIMAN

"By playing benefit concerts in 'The Shul of Rock', a Rock 'n Roll band with a Jewish Twist, I'm passionate about helping Jews for Judaism strengthen and preserve Jewish identity, combat the threat of deceptive Christian missionary and cult groups and save Jewish lives."

Kehilla Residential Programme*

Identifies and champions affordable housing in the GTA and implements housing initiatives for the Jewish community. The Agency's mandate is fulfilled through community capacity building, research and education, project sponsorship and development consultation. www.kehilla.ca

MARILYN LAZAR

"Providing a safe harbor from which people can sail forth and be productive resonates with me. As a single mother, I learned how important that security is. Affordable housing – 2 small words, one big concept."

Koffler Centre of the Arts*

The Koffler's mission is to explore and celebrate contemporary Jewish and world culture within the context of the larger multicultural community. The institution brings people together through arts and culture to create a more civil global society. The unique mix of programs and exhibitions examines the arts across different disciplines and cultures in a way that strengthens identity while encouraging an appreciation of difference. www.Kofflerarts.org

BRIAN D. SEGAL

"Some organizations feed the body; the Koffler Centre of the Arts feeds the soul! I am delighted to be a part of an organization that is at the forefront of bringing contemporary culture to the Jewish community, and beyond."

L'Chaim Cancer Support Group for Jewish Women

Offers confidential peer support to Jewish women undergoing cancer treatment, with an understanding of both the cancer experience and issues specific to Jewish women. In addition, L'Chaim is committed to raising cancer awareness through educational programs for both its members and the community. A project of National Council of Jewish Women of Canada-Toronto Section. l'chaim@ncjwc-ts.org

SUSAN AUSTIN

"Someone who has been recently diagnosed may be having all sorts of fears about survival. What an impact talking to a cancer survivor like myself can do. It's a truly positive encounter!"

Limmud Toronto

Limmud, through its learning, diversity and volunteerism brings Jews together, of all backgrounds and ages, to create an annual festival of Jewish Learning and Culture in the GTA. It is not only a learning opportunity; it is also a tool of community creation. volunteer@limmud.ca

DANNY RICHMOND

"I'm so excited to see Limmud back on track to have a festival in early 2015 as it celebrates that everyone can be a teacher and everyone should be a learner. This is your community - Get involved at volunteer@limmud.ca and make your change"

Maccabi Canada

Promoting Jewish identity and cultivating future leadership and support for Israel through the passion of sport. www.maccabicanada.com

ALEX BRAINIS

"I volunteer because it allows me to mentor and impart my experiences and lessons learned to young adults with a view to more closely connect them to Israel and to sports and impart a sense of pride in relation to Judaism. I volunteer to set an example to my kids who I hope will also be a part of this wonderful organization. It feeds my heart and my soul."

MAON NOAM Jewish Cultural and Educational Network

Maon Noam works to ensure the successful integration of immigrant families into the community, particularly Russian-speaking Jews from the former Soviet Union, helping them embrace Judaism and gain a better understanding of their Jewish heritage. www.maonnoam.ca

YOSSEF TEBEKA & TOVIA SLABODNIK

"Each one of us has our unique mission & purpose in the world, every single individual can contribute to the community in his own way."

MAZON Canada

Raises funds and distributes those funds for Canadian hunger-relief organizations on a non-denominational basis. www.mazoncanada.ca

ESTHER GLAZER

"Since I love to cook and feed my children and grandchildren, knowing that my time at MAZON helps feed the hungry, especially children, warms my heart."

MERCAZ – Canada

Is the Zionist Voice of Masorti/Conservative Judaism in Canada. Our objectives are: to promote and support Israel education and programs in Canada; to foster the development of Masorti/Conservative Judiasm in Israel; to reaffirm commitment to pluralism in Jewish religious life. www.mercaz.ca

TRUDY SASSOON

"Volunteering gives me continued opportunity to learn and to grow while giving back to our community. I enjoy connecting with others who share my passion for the Jewish Community in Canada and in Israel."

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre*

A dynamic hub in downtown Toronto. We provide opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to be active, to learn, to connect and to participate in a wide range of cultural experiences. Rooted in Jewish values, the Miles Nadal JCC is open to all. mnjcc.org

YUANFAN (CHRISTINA) JIANG

"I like to volunteer because of its friendly and organized environment. Everyone should be a contributor and volunteer as much as our time and ability allows. There is no contribution too small."

Mosaic Outdoor Club of Ontario

Fosters and enriches Jewish identity a Mosaic Outdoor Club of Ontario (MOCO) is a volunteer-run, non-profit Jewish organization that offers a diverse range of physical activities, emphasizing the outdoors, enjoyment of nature and respect for the environment. Events are held in group settings with a focus on fun and social interaction. www.mosaicontario.org

LORNE SEVERS

"Being part of Mosaic is a way I feel connected with our Jewish community. Helping to lead events and introduce our new web and social media sites has been a great way to be involved and contribute."

Mount Sinai Hospital

Discover and deliver the best patient care, research and education with the heart and values true to our heritage. www.mtsinai.on.ca

PAULINE ROSS

" When my children were in school, it was time to give back. I chose Mount Sinai and learned of its' wonderful volunteer-training program. I began in Emergency, moved to the operating suite and am now in the out-patient lab. I have logged almost 5,000 hours and cannot overstress the satisfaction I have derived."

Na'amat Canada Toronto

Enhancing the lives of women and children in Canada and Israel since 1925. www.naamat.com

RACHELLE GREEN

"Volunteering for Na'amat has allowed me to feel part of a family, a special sisterhood, and enjoy unique and lasting friendships while at the same time making life a little more bearable for others."

* Denotes 2013-2014 partner agencies of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

NCSY Canada

Dedicated to ensuring the future of the Jewish people, we secure that future through building relationships with Jewish teens; increasing Jewish literacy by teaching them about their heritage and traditions; establishing lifelong connections to Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael; and enhancing Jewish teens' growth in Judaism. www.ncsy.ca

BENJAMIN SIGLER

"NCSY reaches out, day after day, to unaffiliated Jewish teens in innovative ways. The opportunities I have to learn with these teens and welcome them into my home is a source of both pride and satisfaction as I personally witness their growth. My efforts today help NCSY to inspire the Jewish future."

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada – Toronto Section

A non-profit organization committed to enhancing the lives of individuals within our own community and in the broader multi-cultural community through education, service and social action. www.ncjwc-ts.org

GLENDA COOPER

"Volunteering is part of who I am. I believe that giving is more important than receiving. I am thankful that I can volunteer and, perhaps, make that little bit of a difference."

One Family Fund Canada

Provides direct financial, legal and emotional support to the thousands of victims of terror in Israel on a daily basis. It is at the forefront in providing long-term support for physical and emotional health, education, housing, income and other needs. www.onefamilyfund.ca

BERNIE LITTLE

"It is rewarding to see the bridge that has developed between the One Family and Israeli kids affected by terror, who come to Camp Timberlane and meets their new friends. These new friendships continue on Facebook."

Or Hadash*

Or Hadash Synagogue is a welcoming, vibrant community bringing together Jews in northern York Region to worship, learn, serve, and actively engage in the sacred traditions of our shared heritage. www.orhadash.org

JAY & MARY BALABAN

"We volunteer because we enjoy being part of the community, helping those in need and providing assistance. Planning meals, taking people for appointments, or helping in their homes, seeing their smiles and appreciation is incredibly rewarding."

ORT Toronto

Our mission is "Educating for Life". We believe that education is the foundation for personal dignity, economic self-sufficiency, productive contribution to community, and equity as a global citizen. www.ort-toronto.org

JULIANNA GREENSPAN

"I think there is nothing better to devote my philanthropic efforts to than an organization that creates an empowered and enabled society. I continue to be wowed by what ORT accomplishes worldwide."

Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles, Toronto

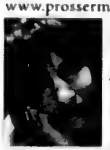
The Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles, Toronto promotes Jewish knowledge and culture through the making, study and teaching of the textile arts. www.pomegranateguild.ca

RIKKI BLITT

"I volunteer for the Guild to give back to an organization that allows me to participate in very cherished activities; creating Jewish themed ritual objects for home and community while learning new skills."

Prosserman Jewish Community Centre*

The Prosserman JCC fosters and enriches Jewish identity and builds community through Health and Wellness, recreation, education and culture, social experiences, and a strong connection to Israel. We welcome everyone and share the richness and traditions of Jewish culture with the community-at-large. www.prossermanjcc.com



EVIE WALTON

"I really have grown to feel a part of the Centre as I have come to feel a part of the programs that I help with. I have met really lovely, warm people here. Prosserman JCC is a really special place where I feel at home and valued."

REENA*

Enables people with developmental handicaps to realize their full potential by forming life-long partnerships with individuals and their families within a framework of Jewish culture and values. www.reena.org

BEN AND FRANCINE FISHBEIN

"Participating with Reena has been exciting and rewarding. Reena has enabled us to help others, and make new, meaningful friendships. Although we won't be able to volunteer next year, we will miss it very much."

Rishon Le Zion Congregation

To provide a welcoming and warm "open door" institution for Sephardic learning and prayer for the needs of the community.

MATTHEW MOYAL

"Volunteering for me is for self gratification & Lihem Shamayim with the ultimate goal of b"h in the construction of a community Sephardic centre for learning & prayer."

Robbins Hebrew Academy*

Through an integrated General and Judaic Studies Program, students at our Academy engage in meaningful relationships with educators, parents, peers and the community, as they acquire critical thinking skills to open their minds to: a future of lifelong learning; academic excellence; global responsibility; respect for themselves and others; creative and healthy lifestyles. www.rhacademy.ca

CINDY GERTIN

"I feel passionate about RHA. It is a pleasure to work for a cause that's important to me with an administration and teaching staff who are equally committed & dedicated to their school."

Schwartz/Reisman Centre (SRC)

Developing and serving York Region community and the Jewish Community of Greater Toronto and committed to Israel and Jewish values, SRC enriches lives by providing opportunities for social, cultural, spiritual, educational and physical activities. Kachol-Lavan, a program of Schwartz/Reisman Centre, keeps and strengthens Hebrew language and Jewish heritage through program excellence and leadership.

DAVID ZALTZMAN

"What inspires me to volunteer is the opportunity to execute a vision I believe in: Creating a community that embraces Israeli culture, Hebrew language and Jewish heritage. Kachol Lavan brings all of this to life."

Shaar Shalom Synagogue

Devoted to religious, spiritual, educational and social enrichment, we are committed to strengthening our Jewish identities, our connections to Israel and to one another based on the tenets of traditional Conservative values. We sustain the Jewish people, inspire people to more meaningful lives and encourage them to make the world a better place. shaarshalom.ca

MICHAEL MARMUR

"Volunteering has provided me the opportunity to give back to the community. At the same time, it has been a fulfilling and enriching experience working alongside a team of talented and dedicated men and women."

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation

A modern orthodox centre of Jewish life which provides the means for the fulfillment of religious, educational and social needs and which seeks to inspire the community to greater commitments to Torah, the Jewish people and the State of Israel. www.shomayim.org

MICHAEL GOLDRICH AND DAVID MANSELL

"Shaarei Shomayim is our home. It is where we pray, gather and celebrate with our extended family and the greater Jewish community. It was our communal obligation to renew our building so that Shaarei Shomayim can maintain its warm, welcoming and inclusive environment for generations to come."

State of Israel Bonds

State of Israel Bonds Canada exists to help our clients become direct investors in the State of Israel by purchasing Israel Bonds. We emphasize the message that Israel's economy is stable, dynamic, and filled with ground-breaking entrepreneurship. www.israelbonds.ca

JULES KRONIS, Q.C.

"Israel Bonds helps fund both traditional infrastructure like roads, bridges and buildings as well as new, cutting edge digital networks. This is a dynamic partnership with our brothers and sisters in Israel. A nation needs economic development and innovation to ensure a better quality of life. This why I volunteer at Israel Bonds."

TanenbaumCHAT

The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto- aims to offer the best and most inspired teaching by outstanding faculty, and to characterize the school by its care for individual student. TanenbaumCHAT educates its students to be committed Jews and concerned, active citizens. www.tanenbaumchat.org

MARCY ABRAMSKY

"Volunteering at TanenbaumCHAT allows me to give back to an incredible institution. It has helped shape our daughters' into the mensch's they have become. The educational advantages, extracurricular activities, life-skills, the embodiment of their Jewish identity and values, create opportunities for enrichment in themselves and in the world they will soon lead."

* Denotes 2013-2014 partner agencies of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

TEATRON Toronto Jewish Theatre Produces Jewish-themed plays from Canada and the world, unveiling the treasures of Jewish tradition, leading to better understanding and harmony, while maintaining Jewish values. www.teatrontheatre.com
HELEN SKLARZ *"After a life-changing event, I looked for a creative environment to utilize by expertise and interest in theater and visual arts. Doing properties and set decoration, helping others achieve their goals, made my life richer and more meaningful."*

Technion Canada Provides significant financial assistance for a wide range of buildings, faculties, institutions, programs and scholarships at Technion in Haifa. www.technioncanada.org **EDWARD NAGEL** *"Technion Canada is one of many global societies that support the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology. Technion sets the global standard for innovation in science and technology. It is rewarding to be part of an organization that makes such a huge contribution to our society and is directly responsible for improving the quality of life for people around the world."*

Temple Emanu-El A Reform congregation committed to perpetuating Judaism through worship and study. We emphasize the celebration of Shabbat, Jewish Holy Days, and life-cycle events through innovative and diverse programming. www.templeemanuel.ca
RON NEFSKY *"Volunteering has given me opportunity to participate in many Temple activities. I have had the personal satisfaction of knowing that I am making a meaningful contribution to the life of the Temple and its members."*

Temple Kol Ami Kol Ami is a reform Jewish community with a dynamic approach to Judaism, blending the traditional and the contemporary. We value life-long learning, music and prayer, Tikkun Olam and a strong community. www.kolami.ca **MARLEINE KAY** *"Volunteering at mitzvah-driven Kol Ami, led by a Tikkun Olam oriented Rabbi, is amazing. Our Social Action team is helping the homeless, AIDS orphans, women's shelter, food bank, and sick kids."*

The Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation Raises funds to support the work of the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem. Medical excellence, patient dignity and a compassionate individualized approach to all, regardless of race, religion, country of origin or financial circumstances, are fundamental for Shaare Zedek Foundation. hospitalwithaheart.ca **JODI FENWICK, DAVE ELFAN, PAGE MAGEN, MARNI WOLFE** *"We support the Hospital for its committed care of children, innovative research and technology and inclusive treatment practices. Inspiring a younger generation to give back and provide ongoing support to Israel is extremely rewarding."*

The House Our mission is to inspire young Jewish adults through creative and relevant Jewish education that fosters a deepening appreciation of Jewish values and traditions. www.thehousetoronto.com
MARLA PILPEL *"The House is a place where I am proud to volunteer, as it is so meaningful to me to be involved with Judaism-based programming that continues to positively impact me and other Jewish young adults in Toronto."*

The Leo Baeck Day School* A reform Jewish day school committed to providing academic excellence in a nurturing community. www.leobaeck.ca
RICHARD DAVIS *""It has been one of my life's most meaningful experiences to work closely with Leo Baeck in providing an extraordinary educational experience for the next generation of Jewish leaders in our community."*

The Toronto Heschel School* An arts-based, multi-sensory, religious Jewish Day School, the school welcomes and promotes religious pluralism, understanding and mutual respect. www.torontoheschel.orga
BRONNA GINSBERG *"Volunteering at THS has been a great way to immerse myself in the school, allowing me to interact with families, administration and students in a very meaningful way. Doing what I can to support our school's community is a very rewarding part of my life."*

Torah High Teaches Torah and Jewish values to public school teens, educating and inspiring them to make positive life choices while guiding these teens to choose a life infused with Jewish values. www.torahhigh.org
MARK LICHTBLAU *"I volunteer with Torah High because I am convinced that every Jewish child deserves a Jewish education. Jewish experiences and influences to that they will be able to make Jewish choices in their lives. Together we're building our community's future leaders."*

Torah Tots Pre-school Encourages children to actively participate in the world around them while supporting freedom of expression through exploration, examination of communication.
JILL POLAKOW *"I enjoy spending time contributing to society, specifically in the Jewish community. It gives me a great feeling of accomplishment knowing that I am giving back to a community that is close to my heart. Helping the children and watching their progress gives me a sense of fulfillment."*

United Jewish People's Order The United Jewish People's Order maintains and perpetuates a progressive secular perspective on social and cultural matters, our Jewish heritage and the Yiddish language. We celebrate holidays and festivals, and sponsor secular Jewish education. www.winchevskycentre.org | ujpo.org
SYLVIA LUSTGARTEN *"Through my involvement in the UJPO, Morris Winchevsky School and Camp Naiveh, I play an active role in keeping alive a vital and creative secular Jewish culture, and working towards the achievement of social justice for all."*

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism/United Synagogue Youth Is a community of Kehillot committed to a dynamic Judaism that is learned and passionate, authentic and pluralistic, joyful and accessible, egalitarian and traditional. www.ecrusy.orga
DARLENE GUSLITS *"My USY years shaped the person I am today – dedicated to Judaism and Social Action. My children have all been active in USY, and I delight in encouraging and nurturing the next generation of leaders."*

Ve'ahavta Ve'ahavta is Canadian humanitarian and relief organization motivated by the Jewish value of Tzedakah, that assists those in need at home and abroad through volunteerism, education, health and healing and acts of kindness while building bridges between Jews and other peoples. www.veahavta.org
FRAN GRUNDMAN & MAURA COOPERBERG *"As cousins, long standing volunteers of Ve'ahavta, from gala co-chairs to storage room organizers, we recognize that anyone can become marginalized and need help at any time. Ve'ahavta informs, energizes and mobilizes volunteers to engage in Tikkun Olam and make a difference."*

Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto* To improve the quality of life for children with disabilities and their families by providing the most up-to-date therapies and learning strategies so they may achieve their individual potential. www.zareinu.org
STACY MARKIN, ESTI COHEN, RENEE ROSENZWEIG *"We witnessed hurdles facing vulnerable children with disabilities and families. We produce major fundraisers to offset expensive therapy and special education received in one facility. Zareinu changes lives. We want to be part of that."*

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JACK FRIEBERG *"It's been said that UJA is the Jewish 911. This concept continually resonates with me and motivates me to volunteer for an organization that is always there for every Jew everywhere. I am very proud to help in a small way for a great cause."*

Committee for Yiddish Through educational, cultural and engagement programs, the Committee for Yiddish fosters and promotes Yiddish language and culture – indeed the entire Ashkenaz tradition – as a vibrant part of contemporary Jewish life. www.committeeforyiddish.com
VIVIAN FELSEN *"As a member of this Committee, I can work to support our educational, literary, musical and other cultural events for adults and children that play a vital role in preserving our rich Jewish heritage for future generations."*

Community Connect is a network of young adults in their 20s and 30s dedicated to building Jewish community and connecting each other to meaningful opportunities. **NATHANIEL HAEEMS** *"I believe this is a critical time in our history to ensure we are doing what we can to engage others. The opportunity to give back to our community is one of our greatest gifts."*

PJ Library is an international award-winning Jewish family engagement program designed to strengthen the identities of young Jewish families and their relationship to the community by mailing Jewish books and music to the home. **SUSY MILLER** *"As the mother of three grown children, I am aware of the importance of encouraging children to read and for young families to feel connected to the Jewish Community."*

Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre Through its museum and programs, the Centre generates knowledge and understanding about the Holocaust and serves as a forum for dialogue about civil society for present and future generations. www.holocaustcentre.com **HONEY SHERMAN** *"I have been involved with the Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre as it is a special and vital initiative of UJA Federation. Through commemorative and educational programs, we reach thousands in the community and beyond, ensuring that "Never Forget" has true meaning."*

Women's Philanthropy Inspired by the Jewish traditions of tzedakah and tikkun olam – social justice and repairing the world. It provides opportunities for every woman to take a stand on issues that affect her community. **CAROL GRUSON** *"I believe that we should all give back to our community in any way we can. Without UJA's help, many valuable programs cannot be sustained, making the most needy in our community more vulnerable."*

We gratefully acknowledge the support and generosity of The Canadian Jewish News.
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Inside

Tutu in Toronto

Jewish group meets with an unrepentant Archbishop Desmond Tutu and criticizes his views on Israel. **PAGE 12**

Time to plan a party!

Our 28-page supplement can help. **SECTION B**

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:38 p.m.	9:53 p.m.
Montreal	8:21 p.m.	9:38 p.m.
Toronto	8:38 p.m.	9:51 p.m.
Winnipeg	9:15 p.m.	10:42 p.m.
Calgary	9:28 p.m.	11:00 p.m.
Vancouver	8:56 p.m.	10:21 p.m.

A prayer for the fallen

As the 70th anniversary of D-Day approaches, Ellin Bessner says we should all say *Kaddish* for the Canadian Jewish servicemen who perished during the French campaign, and Paul Lungen profiles a Canadian veteran who fought all the way from Normandy to Germany. **PAGES 8 & 30.** See also commentary on **PAGE 6.** ELLIN BESSNER PHOTO

Candidates discuss schools, Israel

Three of the four main party leaders speak to *The CJN* about Jewish issues. **PAGE 26**

Doctor focuses on kids' strengths

Part 3 of The Inclusion Project, our series on disability in the Jewish community. **PAGE 28**

Probing barriers to police work

Are there systemic reasons why more Jews aren't in law enforcement? **PAGE 31**

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A Canadian marriage proposal, and a crooner at the Kotel

Like Birthright, only with social media

A day prior to his sold-out show before 46,000 fans at Tel Aviv's Yarkon Park, pop superstar Justin Timberlake's first act upon landing in Israel was to head to the Kotel to pray, a moment he captured in a photo that he posted on – where else – Instagram. Timberlake avoided most of the paparazzi, landing at 3 a.m. on May 27 and heading straight to the wall with his wife, actress Jessica Biel, and his parents. "The Holy Land… What an experience. I will never forget this day. #Israel," he tweeted.

Justin Timberlake's Western Wall moment

Would you like a cruller with that?

It doesn't get much more Canadian than a marriage proposal at Tim Hortons – and at a drive-thru no less – which is what happened May 22 when marketer Jared Gaber, 28, popped the question to his girlfriend of one year, divorce lawyer Stephanie Pasternak, as she pulled in to get her morning caffeine hit. Gaber arranged his sugary sweet stunt ahead of time with Tim Hortons' head office and had a friend record the whole thing for posterity, as well as the requisite YouTube posting, which has garnered more than 165,000 views and tons of free publicity for the chain. "You are the first woman I ever fell in love with, and the last woman I ever want to be in love with. Will you spend the rest of your life with me?" he asked through the North York, Ont., outlet's drive-thru window. A blushing Pasternak said yes, then climbed out of her car window to kiss her new fiancé.

Man U, Bucs owner dies

American billionaire Malcolm Glazer, owner of the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers and British Premier League soccer club Manchester United, died May 28 at 85. He had been in failing health after suffering two strokes since 2006. One of seven children born to Lithuanian Jewish immigrants, Glazer purchased the Bucs in 1995 for a then-NFL record of $192 million. Its value has more than quadrupled, and he's widely credited with turning around the sad-sack franchise, which won its only Super Bowl in 2002. He finished acquiring Man U in 2005 for $1.2 billion.

Inside today's edition

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Gematria

$2 billion

The reported amount former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer agreed to pay loose-lipped fellow Jew Don Sterling to buy the NBA's Los Angeles Clippers.

9:15 p.m.

The start time of the Rolling Stones' June 4 gig in Tel Aviv. The original start time of 8:30, five minutes after Shavuot's end, was changed so Orthodox fans could attend.

Quotable

"

I think it's unfair to call Israel an apartheid state.

— Former South African president FW de Klerk, in Israel to receive an honorary degree.

Exclusive to CJNEWS.com

Jewish & Digital columnist Mark Mietkiewicz explores the Ten Commandments.

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- Listing of Cemeteries and Maps of Sections
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Letters to the Editor

Healthy dose of controversy

"What is the point?" asks Ruth Sacher, about *The CJN* dishing dirt on COR and kashrut ("Fanning the flames," *The CJN*, May 29).

The point is this: scandal in a newspaper is an indicator of a healthy, democratic press. When articles are kept clean, we ask what other news is being kept from us? Who is doing the censoring? And if scandal is fuel for the anti-Semites, so be it. Do we cut off our noses because anti-Semites don't like them?

Charles Heller
Toronto

My Promised Land challenges

I agree with Martin Goldfarb's commentary about Ari Shavit's *My Promised Land* ("The challenge of *My Promised Land*," *The CJN*, May 15).

I would add my own comments as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. Shavit reveals to us in his first paragraph that he was traumatized in his early years, asking on the eve of the 1967 war and again in 1973 on the eve of the Yom Kippur War if the Arabs would throw Israel into the sea.

His book is well written with more of an empathic ear to the Arab "tragedy" than to his own Jewish Israeli brethren. The praise he receives for his writing is justified, but his conclusion betrays the Zionism of his great-grandfather Herbert Bentwich and would turn him in his Jewish grave.

Ed Pakes
Toronto

Hire workers with disabilities

I'd like to commend you on your series on inclusion of people with disabilities ("The Inclusion Project," *The CJN*, May 22). As a parent of a young woman with autism and as a board member of Reena, I am aware of how the Jewish community has been slow to accept and include people with disabilities.

Just a few years ago, when my daughter was younger, I could not find a Jewish camp that would accept her in the Toronto area and had to go to B'nai Brith Montreal for her to have a Jewish camp experience. The YMCA was also far more welcoming than the Jewish camps.

It would be wonderful if business owners could be encouraged to employ people with disabilities. They will prove to be dedicated and dependable employees who will stay on the job.

There are companies hiring people with disabilities who have found it profitable, and there are good business reasons for such hires. Walgreens in the United States, Specialisterne in Denmark, a Tim Hortons franchise operator and London Drugs here in Canada make a good business case for hiring disabled workers. There are also companies formed specifically to provide work for people with disabilities, such as Common Ground Catering and Good Foot Courier Services here in Toronto.

Linda Gruson
Toronto

Kiddush counts

I'm so glad to hear rabbis Adam Cutler and Adam Scheier recognize the importance of hosting and greeting individuals at kiddush ("Shul kiddush is about more than food," *The CJN*, May 15).

If every person attending was mindful of a stranger in their midst and just said "Shabbat shalom," it could make a world of difference in a return visit to shul.

Debbie Bauer
Toronto

From the campaign trail

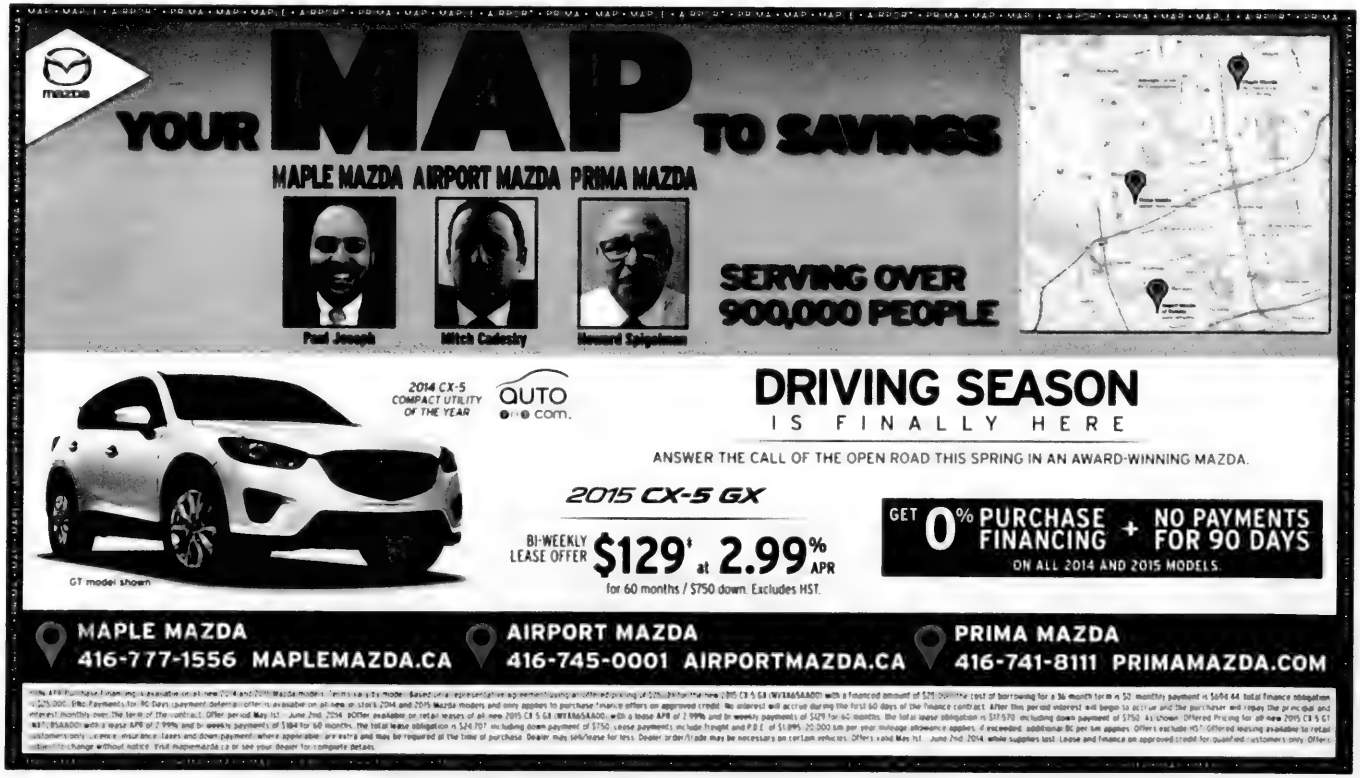
While campaigning to become the next MPP for York Centre, I'm often asked why I decided to run for office. In short, it's because of the strong sense of community that my parents instilled in me at a very young age.

Before immigrating to Canada from Ukraine, my parents struggled to maintain their Jewish identity under an oppressive Soviet regime, but they persevered through community engagement, mutual collaboration and hard work. These are the values that have served as guiding principles in my life.

Born and raised in York Centre, I know it is an amazing place for families to grow and prosper. Our community has been neglected for far too long and our economy, jobs and home life are suffering as a result. If given the opportunity, I will work hard to facilitate the change that needs to happen so our community can once again flourish.

Avi Yufest
Toronto

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*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When my husband died suddenly, my whole world stopped. I didn't even know where to begin with the arrangements. It was 2am. I called Benjamin's. To my surprise, Michael Benjamin himself answered the phone. They took care of every imaginable detail. They even had umbrellas for guests when it rained at the gravesite. I will never forget their wonderful care.

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RABBI·2·RABBI

Connecting Jewishly in a digital age

Google can't answer our larger, existential questions. The challenge is how to use new media to convey an eternal message.

Rabbi N.Daniel Korobkin
BETH AVRAHAM YOSEPH CONGREGATION, TORONTO

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow
TEMPLE EMANU-EL-BETH SHOLOM, MONTREAL

Rabbi Grushcow: Last time, we spoke about the Pew Report and intermarriage. But there are other findings from the report that are even more important. Fewer Jews are choosing to connect with synagogues. We are no longer living in an age in which people are looking to belong to religious institutions, or to see their Jewish identity as involving religion.

Rabbi Korobkin: You contextualized the issue of Jewish identity and religion as being connected with synagogue affiliation. While the two are definitely connected, I think synagogue affiliation is tangential to the larger issue: Jews, like all westerners, are dropping out of organized religion entirely in droves. We are living in a digital age when everything is being broken down into bytes and bits. Our youth are so busy texting and tweeting that they don't have time to ruminate over the larger issues and see if what they're reading online actually answers the bigger questions. Today, people have failed to see that religion doesn't compete with science and technology, but rather answers those larger questions that science and technology cannot.
I can only hope that with time, many of this generation will begin to start seeing these larger questions cannot be answered by Google. If we can solve that problem, we won't have to worry about the future of our synagogues.

Rabbi Grushcow: I agree that the issue of synagogue membership is tangential to the bigger question of how engaged people are with religion. That being said, I think people do continue to ask the eternal, existential questions.
There is no doubt that the Internet can provide quick answers, but not often deep ones. If you use your iPhone to ask Siri the meaning of life, you won't get a substantive response.
Every age uses its own media and its own language. For me, the question is: how do we use the medium to convey the message? Given that we live in the world of Google, how can we use search engines as entry points to a much more substantive search? And how do we recognize that sometimes, people turn to virtual communities because they feel like actual communities have failed them?

Rabbi Korobkin: You're spot on in your assessment of the human need for a deeper connection to existential truths, and that's where the human contact of clergy and community play a vital role. The challenge, as you say, is how to attract young people to the resources that we as a faith community are seeking to provide. I'm sure that your congregation has a Facebook page and is engaged in various social media, as is ours. But I'm still seeing too many people in my very Jewish neighbourhood of Thornhill, Ont., slipping between the cracks, either apathetic or oblivious to our offerings, or simply too bombarded by all the other "chatter" in their lives to pay attention to the gifts of Judaism that are theirs for the taking. But that doesn't stop us from consistently experimenting with new ideas to get the word out. We're also trying to present a larger "community" identity by encouraging our members to participate in more community- and Federation-sponsored events. We want people to see that we're truly "team" players, and not just worried about Orthodox concerns.

Rabbi Grushcow: There is a wonderful book called *Hamlet's Blackberry* by William Powers, in which the author argues that many eras have faced new technologies that have challenged reflectiveness and thoughtful living. Our response cannot be to be Luddites. Rather, we need to find ways to carve out sacred time and sacred space. In this, synagogue life and Jewish teachings have a lot to offer. Just having a synagogue Facebook account won't cut it.

Rabbi Korobkin: If we've been around this long, nothing, not even the Internet, is going to stop us! It never ceases to amaze me how, despite all the distractions of the modern world, so many Jews still see the synagogue and Judaism as a "sanctuary," a place of escape from this overly physical world, and a stairway to Heaven. Our job, yours and mine, is to embrace every single person with unconditional love and acceptance, and help them carve a holy space in their lives. ■

How to reach us

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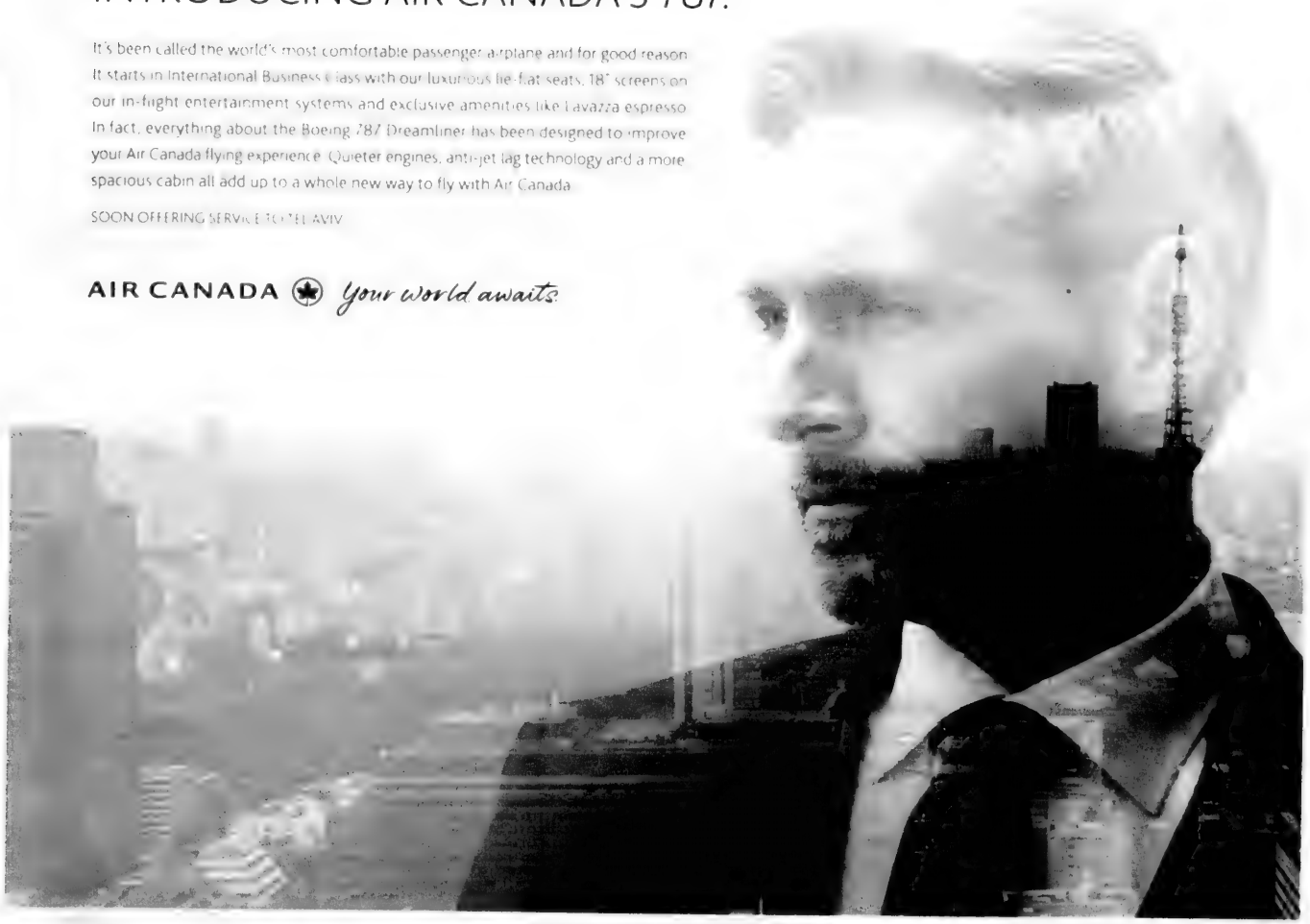

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From the archives | A papal audience

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES, BLANKSTEIN FAMILY HERITAGE CENTRE PHOTO

Then-Toronto mayor Phil Givens and his wife Min have an audience with Pope Paul VI in May 1965 during their visit to Rome organized by the Italian Relief Fund of Toronto.

SeeJN | Celebrating 80 years

TAMI JACOBS KLIGMAN PHOTO

The General Wingate Branch 256 Royal Canadian Legion in Toronto, is celebrating its 80th anniversary. At its recent annual elections meeting, from left, Rabbi Lazer Danzinger, captain in the Canadian Armed Forces and General Wingate chaplain, congratulated the assembled members along with immediate past president Murray Jacobs and president Jerry Rosenberg holding a congratulatory certificate from legion district command.

From Yoni's Desk

Shavuot's reminder: we're in this together

The notion of mass revelation at Sinai, the event we commemorate this week on Shavuot, is undeniably dramatic. The Talmud teaches all Jews – past, present and future – were there, quaking at the base of the mountain together, but no matter whether you consider Matan Torah a historical event or a metaphor, the image retains significance: A unified nation, a people born together. On Shavuot, we contemplate our Jewish connection.

The corollary of mass revelation is *kol yisrael arevim ze lazeh*, the principle that every Jew is responsible for the well-being of every other Jew. And if you're looking for an example of *kol yisrael arevim ze lazeh* at work, you couldn't do better than the story of George Meltz, as told in this week's *CJN* by Ellin Bessner.

Bombardier Meltz, a Toronto native, landed in Normandy on June 6, 1944 – D-Day. He died in battle and was buried at the Beny-sur-Mer war cemetery, the Magen David etched into his tombstone standing out among the rows upon rows of crosses, along with the moving epitaph penned by his mysterious widow: "He died so Jewry shall suffer no more."

Bessner is among a group paying tribute to the nearly 70 Jewish Canadians who died while serving in the Canadian Forces in France during World War II with a campaign called "#KaddishforDDay." It's based on a project undertaken by the Jewish community of France to say *Kaddish* on June 8 for all Allied Jewish servicemen who died in that country during the war. In essence, both efforts suggest *kol yisrael arevim zeh lazeh* is a living concept: George Meltz and his compatriots served us. Now, we honour them.

But there is another side to *kol yisrael arevim zeh lazeh*. It is equally a reminder to stand together when Judaism is endangered or injured. Thus, our vigilance when anti-Semitism threatens us – and, as Canada's score in the Anti-Defamation League's recent index of anti-Semitism confirms, the vast majority of Canadians understand Jews aren't the enemy.

But there are times when the hazard develops from within. Columnist Rabbi Dow Marmur argues, also in this week's *CJN*, the rise of so-called "price-tag" incidents, in which Israeli youth deface property – including religious institutions – belonging to Muslims and Christians, is a case in point.

"This should concern us all," Rabbi Marmur writes of what he calls a "manifestation of Jewish terrorism." And as the frequency of price-tag incidents trends upward, he argues the need to act has never been more urgent, concluding: "Our voices must be heard not only because we ourselves have been victims of such harassment as preludes to worse things, but also because these acts, ostensibly committed in the name of Judaism, fly in the face of the very basis of our faith and tradition."

The Sinai revelation is often referred to as a marriage between the Jewish People and God. Whatever that means to you, there remains a fundamental bond that ties us back to Sinai. Shavuot reminds us of the union we formed there, and that *kol Yisrael arevim zeh lazeh* represents its continuous manifestation. It applies always, for better and for worse. ■ — YONI

Photo essay

Montreal's mega mission

Federation CJA's recent Montreal Mega Mission to Israel was the largest organized trip of its kind in almost two decades, with 570 participants. The mission featured the impromptu wedding of Julie Morneau and Steve Lupovich (pictured, top right) atop Masada. For more on the Mega Mission, see pg. 25.

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George Meltz: just one of 17,000 D-Day heroes

Sacrifices of Canadian Jewish soldiers to be recalled on June 6

ELLIN BESSNER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Seventy years ago this week, a Toronto wallpaper salesman and truck driver, George Meltz, took part in the D-Day landings in Normandy.

Meltz, 25, was one of at least 70 Canadian Jewish servicemen killed in France during World War II who are buried in cemeteries there.

Meltz was the youngest of 10 children when he enlisted in Toronto in 1941. His family says a sniper killed him. According to niece Isabella Meltz, who lives in Toronto, "like most of his Jewish working-class peers, he enlisted quickly. My uncle married while posted in England, but the couple had less than a year together."

Meltz's tombstone in the Beny-sur-Mer war cemetery has a Star of David on it, and the powerful epitaph by his widow: "He died so Jewry shall suffer no more."

Now Meltz's name, and the names of nearly 70 other Canadian Jewish servicemen who also sacrificed their lives in France in World War II, won't be forgotten, at least for this week.

On June 8, the French Jewish community in Paris is organizing a special D-Day memorial service in Normandy.

Jean-Max Skenadji, the Paris-based promoter for the official French Jewish federation, known as CRIF, originally planned to honour only the 150 American Jewish servicemen buried at Colleville-Sur-Mer, near Omaha Beach, the site of the American D-Day landings.

"What would have become of us without the landing of the Allies on June 6?" the CRIF statement asks.

Some 17,000 Canadian Jews served in the Canadian forces during the war, which Historica Canada says was more then "one-fifth of the entire Jewish male population."

I emailed Skenadji in Paris, and asked him to consider including our Canadians. He replied, "Yes," immediately. He's already invited Canada's ambassador to France, Lawrence Cannon.

Among the other names the organizers will read out are Toronto's Fred B. Harris,

George Meltz

who was a close friend of the late Col. Barney Danson, and who never even made it onto the beach; Montreal's Fred Pascal, a son of the Pascal hardware family; and Meyer Schwartz from Windsor, who is buried in the same grave together with his gentile co-pilot.

Each of these soldiers and airmen has an incredible story. There's the lawyer, the Yiddish poet, the dentist, the doctors, and the 17-year-old, Frank Silverberg, who was sent back home to Toronto twice – each time the army had discovered he was too young to enlist.

Now I'm asking all Canadian Jews to remember these liberators, too, by participating in #KaddishForDDay.

It's an opportunity to honour the sacrifices of these Jewish men who fought for Canada and for freedom, their graves mostly unvisited.

Already, several synagogues in Canada have taken up the challenge of #KaddishforDDay, including Vaughan's Beit Rayim Synagogue.

According to Rabbi Chezi Zionce, when Jews say *Yizkor*, it is repeated for each individual *neshamah*, each soul. He will read each soldier's name during Yizkor services on Shavuot, June 5.

"It's about time," Rabbi Zionce said of the long overdue D-Day prayers, noting that Israel marks Yom Hazikaron every year for the fallen soldiers and victims of terror. "We Jews put a great deal of emphasis on remembering, and this can serve as a poignant reminder to a new generation who are sometimes unaware of the sacrifices that their grandparents and relatives made on behalf of freedom and for this wonderful country we live in."

In Montreal, Congregation Dorshei Emet will mark #KaddishforDDay on June 7.

"The command to remember, zakhor, is central to Jewish tradition, as is the value of gratitude, *hakarat hatov*," said Rabbi Ron Aigen. "We can only hope that this new tradition of #KaddishforDDay will give contemporary meaning to our ancient values."

Meltz's niece, Isabella is grateful to know that her late uncle's wartime story will not be forgotten.

"You think about it, as you get older, and how you do things through the generations and it's going to get lost," she said.

Follow and Tweet #KaddishforDDay. For the list of Canadian Jewish names, hometowns, burial places and brief biographies, visit ellinbessnersblog.blogspot.ca. ■

For more on the life of George Meltz see also cjnews.com

Ellin Bessner is a Toronto journalist, a professor of journalism at Centennial College, as well as a director of the Canadian Association of Journalists.

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At 89, Lawrence Levy still has a twinkle in his eye, a ready smile and a sharp mind. He can remember in minute detail stuff that happened 70 years ago – just don't ask him what he did yesterday, he quips.

Seventy years ago, Levy was a volunteer in the Canadian Armed Forces. His unit, the Second Survey Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, was part of a follow- up wave of troops consolidating the foothold in Normandy established on D-Day, June 6, by units of the Canadian, British and American armies.

READ ABOUT HIS D-DAY MISSION ON PAGE 30.

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We need a better way to debate our problems

Avrum Rosensweig

The CJN's recent foray into intense investigative reporting about the Kashruth Council of Canada, known as COR, is a journalistic departure and a game changer for the community. I don't remember a series of this nature, one in which an organization, its competition and some major industry players have been talked about so openly.

As this newspaper pursues a new course, the inevitable question is whether it's a healthy one that enhances the transparency of our community or an unhealthy change that encourages lashon hara – "bad talk" – in a world rife with public condemnation and gotcha journalism.

The Toronto Jewish community still maintains some of its shtetl-like character. Our population, services and organizations are growing, but many Jews up and down the Bathurst Street corridor continue to harbour some of the old time *zol zein shtil* sentiment – don't let the goyim hear. The remnant of this small-town mentality means our community frequently deals with issues the way our grandparents used to, by pretending they're not there and allowing them to fester, even though a problem could be causing much harm.

A case in point is COR. Many community workers and eatery owners will tell you there have been whispers behind closed doors for years about COR, including complaints about how much it charges restaurants for supervision and its growing stridency regarding the rules of kashrut.

Some will tell you privately that COR hasn't protected consumers as the cost of kosher food – particularly for Passover – has risen. Some also maintain that COR has few checks and balances in place to ensure transparency and has acted as a monopoly with virtually no competition.

The recent *CJN* series covered these topics with the goal of outing the *zol zein shtil* dialogue and challenging COR and the community to partake in an open discussion about the Toronto community's largest kashrut supervisory agency. COR didn't respond to requests for interviews, but instead posted its position on its website (cor.ca), a move somewhat reflective of the old attitude.

So what could be wrong with a *CJN* series that encourages introspection in such a public manner?

Here's the challenge: the *CJN* series doesn't limit its exposé to names of organizations, but in fact included references to individuals who are key to COR operations, as well as quotes from Badatz, its competition, and others. This is a traditional and standard journalistic approach used widely around the world, essentially pitting two or more people or organizations against one another in an attempt to create a widely read debate or examination of an issue at hand.

While this approach can be very effective, it has also played a key role in misrepresenting many individuals and their positions, and has encouraged people-bashing or lashon hara. We see this in Canada's mainstream media all the time. An extreme example would be waking up to a front-page picture of an investment banker who might have absconded with clients' money. Months later, that person may be found entirely innocent, yet the image sticks in our minds.

Furthermore, until now, our community has kept certain topics out of the public sphere, thereby maintaining peace within our ranks. While the quiet simmering of certain issues has cost us, one could argue it has also maintained a sense of unity, kind of like when our parents left the room to argue.

So what should we do? Do we applaud the newest iteration of *The CJN* for publicly helping to repair a perceived wrong, or do we challenge the new brass by saying, "Upsetting the peace is just not worth it"?

Either way, the Toronto Jewish community needs an alternative form of problem-solving so that hot, and even scalding, issues are dealt with in a more open and vigorous manner through such things as regular town-hall meetings and alternative forms of justice.

The COR series has definitely made that clear. ■

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

A museum whose time has come

Bernie Farber

It was to have been the very last time that a world gone mad would permit the attempted genocide of a people. For Jews it became known as the Holocaust, or in Hebrew, the Shoah. For the Roma, another group persecuted by the Nazis, it was called the Porajmos, or the Devouring.

To be sure, it wasn't the first time in human history when such evil walked the earth. Only a generation before the Nazis, Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin attempted to rid the U.S.S.R. of a portion of the Ukrainian population by instigating a man-made famine known as the Holodomor.

Earlier in the 20th century, the Turks, trying to find ways to deal with their rebellious Armenian population, slaughtered more than one million men, women and children. Known as the Meds Yahearn, it was to this genocide that Adolf Hitler, in preparing his own plans to murder the Jews of Europe, famously referred when he asked his leadership, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

So out of the ashes of the Holocaust, after Hitler's barbarians managed to murder almost two-thirds of European Jewry and just as many Roma, the cry "Never again" was repeated and almost believed.

And yes, immediately following the war, with war crimes trials in full swing, with the United Nations developing international law against genocide, humanity took a break from such evil.

Sadly, evil never leaves us. It may remain dormant for a while, but like a virus, it needs only to find a willing host to spread its poison yet again.

It didn't take long. Barely 20 years later, as we entered the 1960s, mass murder was once again in vogue. As the Vietnam War dragged on, it provided a shield for Cambodia's brutal dictator, Pol Pot, to slaughter almost two million of his people. Buried in mass burial sites known as the "Killing Fields," Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge seemed to have forgotten "Never again."

And let's not forget the wanton slaughter of up to 1.5 million Bangladeshis by the Pakistani army. And of course Mao Zedong was responsible for countless millions of Chinese deaths during his rule.

More recently, Rwandan Hutus hacked to death close to 1.5 million Tutsis and moderate Hutus. And in the last decade, Sudan's brutal Janjaweed have been responsible for the mass murder of countless Darfurians.

In Canada, many historians are taking a closer look at whether or not we committed genocide against our First Nations.

Indeed, "Never again" seems to have become "Again and again."

To teach necessary and valuable lessons, the late Izzy Asper, Jewish philanthropist and former leader of the Liberal party of Manitoba, came up with a way to truly understand and memorialize human rights and wrongs.

Situated in Winnipeg and set to open next fall, Asper's dream, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, will be a place where the next generation can learn and visualize a future that will speak forthrightly of genocide, discrimination and even Canada's own human rights record, good and bad, while heralding human rights heroes.

With $20 million from his own foundation, this was to be a private-public partnership. And while Asper didn't live to see his dream fulfilled, his daughter, Gail, has unwaveringly taken over the reins.

It hasn't been without its difficulties, including victimized groups vying for limited space and arguments about the extent of one genocide over another. Yet despite these issues, Gail Asper moves boldly forward. As she told me, "We can't be complacent, we can't rest while anyone's rights are under attack, and we all need to take personal responsibility for the preservation and enhancement of human rights in Canada and around the world".

Sadly, today, human rights are under attack from those who believe protecting them stifles freedom. Can anything be further from the truth? Thankfully, with visionaries such as Gail Asper, Canada can become a focal point for understanding humanity through a museum whose time has come. ■

We must all speak out against Jewish terror

Rabbi Dow Marmur

Fanatics are eerily similar, irrespective of which side they're on. Thus Jews in Europe and elsewhere who've experienced the daubing of synagogues and vandalism of Jewish property relive their nightmares these days when Jewish extremists in Israel deface mosques and churches, destroy olive trees and slash tires of cars that belong to Arabs. In their zeal, they even attack Israeli army posts.

In the graffiti they leave behind, they justify their crimes as *tag mechir* (price tag). They want us to believe their vandalism is the legitimate price to be paid for real or imagined curbs on Jewish expansion in the West Bank and east Jerusalem.

Some are equal opportunity offenders. The recent daubings of a Reform synagogue in Ra'anana and the centre for Conservative Judaism in Jerusalem are of the same ilk.

Many perpetrators are said to come from the settlements. Their spray-painted messages include, "Death to the Arabs" and "Kahane was right."

Meir Kahane was a rabbi in the United States before coming to Israel to form the Kach party, which closely resembled fascist groups in other countries. He gained a seat in the Knesset, but the government banned him in 1988 as racist and anti-democratic. Two years later, he was assassinated by an Arab gunman in New York. His ghost lives on.

As reported recently in this paper, unlike fellow travellers in Israel and abroad, responsible Israeli politicians have publicly condemned the attacks. Defence Minister Moshe Ya'lon said that "a state that must fight with an iron fist against the terror which is wrongly called 'price tag' – an ugly phenomenon that has no connection to Jewish values and morals, and whose aim is to harm Arabs only because they are Arabs."

Justice Minister Tzipi Livni added that Israel must erect a "strong public and political Zionist fence" against all who seek to torpedo a peace deal with the Palestinians and thus hurt Israel's image abroad.

But Carmi Gillon, the mayor of Mevasseret Zion and a former head of Israel's internal security organization (Shin Bet), pointed to the original seeming reluctance by law enforcement agencies in Israel to apprehend the culprits.

In a similar vein, the U.S. State Department has said Israel hasn't adequately prosecuted the perpetrators. Echoing this, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the representative body of American Jewry, sent a message to Israeli security agencies urging them to take the necessary steps to uproot the activities of Jewish terrorists.

Cabinet minister Gilad Erdan, whose portfolio includes internal security and who is known for having close ties to the settler movement, originally rejected Gillon's assessment. Later, however, likely in deference to public opinion, it was announced that his department would seek to curb Jewish as well as Arab violence. Since then, some arrests have been made.

As there's nowadays no representative body of Canadian Jewry, it's up to individuals and organizations that care about Israel to endorse initiatives that condemn every manifestation of Jewish terrorism. We can do so by showing tangible support for the coalition of human rights organizations in Israel, Tag Meir (Light Tag), that exposes Jewish terror, demanding swift and decisive action by the authorities. One of the coalition members, Rabbi Ron Kronish, head of the Interreligious Co-ordinating Council in Israel, has written that "if it were the other way – Palestinians vandalizing synagogues and Jewish institutions – the culprits would be apprehended the same day." He warned against "moral duplicity." He and other interfaith activists were particularly worried about possible attacks on the Pope during his recent visit to Israel.

This should concern us all. Our voices must be heard not only because we ourselves have been victims of such harassment as preludes to worse things, but also because these acts, ostensibly committed in the name of Judaism, fly in the face of the very basis of our faith and tradition. They undermine the foundations on which Israel has been built. ■

Uniting behind human rights

Sheryl Saperia

Last month, Canada's Parliament displayed rare unity. Iran Accountability Week, which was co-sponsored by MPs James Bezan (Conservative), Irwin Cotler (Liberal) and Paul Dewar (NDP), sought to highlight the threat emanating from Iran's military-nuclear program, terrorist sponsorship, incitement to genocide, and human rights violations. Members of all parties conveyed their concerns about the Iranian regime.

Canada's response to Iran's illicit nuclear conduct has been notable. Notwithstanding the absence of secondary sanctions (meaning non-Canadians are free to do business with Iran without penalty), the sanctions are considered fairly comprehensive. Imports from and exports to Iran are prohibited, with limited exemptions.

Yet David Albright, a physicist who founded the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) in Washington, D.C., recently released a report that notes "the widespread suspicion that Iran exploits Canada as a source of sanctioned goods." Albright further asserts that "Canada's export control efforts and laws against sanctioned countries such as Iran are rudimentarily enforced at best."

Even if the government addresses these serious claims immediately, it is increasingly possible that international nuclear-related sanctions against Iran will crumble as a result of the Obama administration's attempts to reach a deal – any deal – with Tehran.

Given Iran's progress in rehabilitating its economy under the shield of nuclear talks, it's imperative that its status as a preeminent violator of human rights not fall victim to this process. The Iranian regime is surprisingly sensitive to criticism about its domestic repression, and the desire to be reintegrated into the international community could make Tehran particularly vulnerable at this time.

Ahmed Shaheed, the UN's Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran, maintains that an international spotlight "can act as a boon to those seeking positive change and a spur for transforming words into action." He recommends that every state "keep urging that steps be taken to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights."

From a Canadian political perspective, the Iranian human rights file is one of those rare cases where principle trumps partisanship. All federal parties take umbrage at a regime that has the highest per capita rate of executions; imprisons more journalists and bloggers than any other country; targets religious and ethnic minorities; criminalizes fundamental freedoms of speech and association; and locks up opposition leaders and human rights defenders.

Canada should, therefore, consider imposing sanctions on the Iranian regime for its domestic repression. One option is to designate specific individuals or entities as human rights abusers under the Special Economic Measures Act (SEMA). SEMA has already been used to penalize the governments of Syria, Zimbabwe, and Burma for their human rights abuses. The Iranian regime's violations are no less serious, and meet the criteria for usage of the legislation.

Targeted individuals could include the Supreme Leader of Iran; the president of Iran; key officials within the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) or even the entire entity, as well as leaders of the Basij, the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, and others. The new restrictions could be similar to those prescribed by existing nuclear sanctions under SEMA, or be amended as needed.

Opponents claim that with a nuclear deal in the works, it's not the right time to challenge the Iranian regime on its human rights record. But the two are in fact connected. Iran's nuclear program would be more effectively monitored in a freer and more transparent environment. Furthermore, the linkage is not without precedent. Western negotiators successfully linked arms control agreements with the Soviet Union to demands for Moscow's adherence to human rights under the 1975 Helsinki Accords.

Ottawa should take a lead role in urging a similar arrangement regarding Iran. Canadian parliamentarians have shown themselves capable of uniting behind a common message of compassion for the Iranian people. The sentiments expressed by MPs during Iran Accountability Week must now be translated into concrete action. ■

News GTA

CIJA meets with Tutu, slams his views

JODIE SHUPAC
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Though known for his censorious statements about Israel's treatment of the Palestinians and his vocal support for the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement, human rights activist and retired Archbishop Desmond Tutu met May 27 in Toronto with a delegation from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

The archbishop was in Canada to attend an international gathering of the Order of St. John, of which St. John Ambulance is a service organization, and met privately with Shimon Fogel, CIJA's chief executive officer, along with CIJA chair David Koschitzky, board member Berl Nadler, philanthropist Michael Dan and former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, Bernie Farber, for about 40 minutes in his suite at the King Edward Hotel.

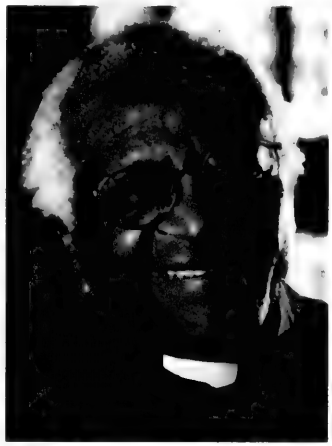
A Nobel laureate and the first black archbishop of Cape Town, the archbishop rose to renown in the 1980s for his ardent criticism of the South African government's treatment of blacks and his encouragement of non-violent measures of protest, including boycott and divestment. He has been widely disparaged within the Jewish community for likening Israel to apartheid-era South Africa and for endorsing international boycotts against it.

Fogel stressed that CIJA, part of whose mandate is to build relationships with other faith communities, did not initiate the meeting, but when approached by the Order with a request to meet with Archbishop Tutu, "felt there might be some value in sharing our perspective with him... an opportunity to speak directly and forthrightly about the extent to which [his] statements [about Israel] are misguided, hurtful and offensive."

> *We characterized his views as deeply hurtful and harmful to the one state in the region in which the Christian community can practise their faith free of the kind of intimidation, threats and persecution that exist elsewhere*
>
> **Shimon Fogel**
> CIJA

He said the meeting focused exclusively on the Arab-Israeli conflict and gave CIJA the chance to express its dismay at Tutu's articulation of anti-Israel views over the years.

"We characterized his views as deeply hurtful and harmful to the one state in the region in which the Christian community can practise their faith free of the kind of intimidation, threats and persecution that exist elsewhere."



Desmond Tutu WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO

The archbishop was, according to Fogel, "entirely unrepentant and unapologetic," showing no willingness to amend his position.

"He was not accepting of the suggestion that [these views] would benefit from additional considerations, for example... that Israel's legitimate security concerns gave rise to checkpoints, the security barrier and the like."

Farber stressed that the meeting was, nonetheless, an important opportunity for the Jewish community to convey its beliefs to Archbishop Tutu. He said that "this was done with focus and elegance, with no stone left unturned in terms of trying to make our point."

He emphasized the archbishop's views do not in any way represent the opinions of the Order of St. John, which is an apolitical organization supported by Jewish communities worldwide.

While CIJA decided to open a dialogue with Archbishop Tutu, B'nai Brith Canada issued a press release stating that it would not be seeking a meeting with him, given his "hateful statements about the Jewish People" and comparisons of the State of Israel to apartheid South Africa.

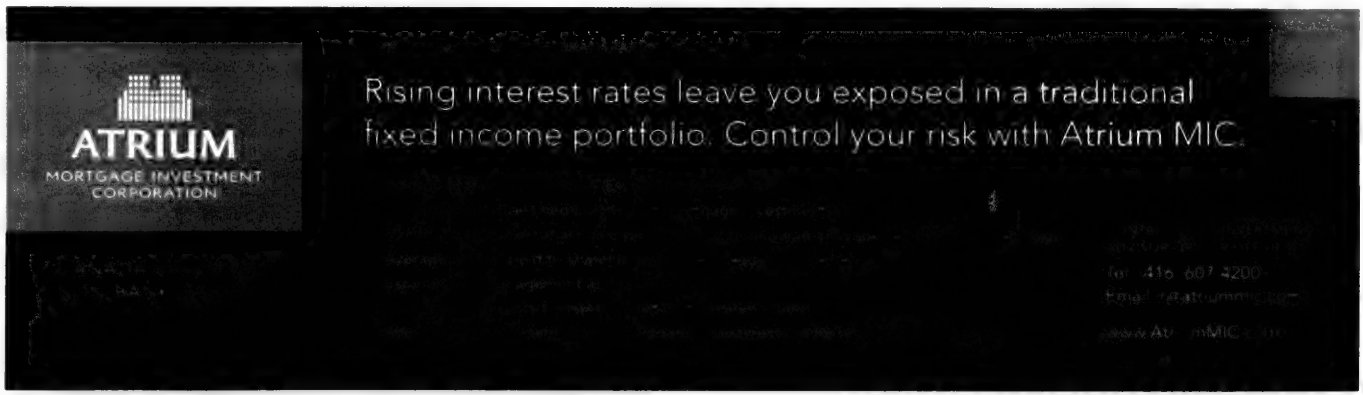
B'nai Brith CEO Frank Dimant said his organization was not approached about meeting with Archbishop Tutu, but that "anyone who has the kind of opinions [he] has vis-à-vis the State of Israel is not someone we want to engage in conversation, nor would our grassroots Jewish supporters be in favour of us meeting with him."

But he made it clear that B'nai Brith is not condemning CIJA's decision.

Last year, B'nai Brith and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto – with whom CIJA is linked as the advocacy arm of the Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA – signed an agreement pledging to strengthen their ties and work together.

"I clearly state that [CIJA] had every right to meet [Archbishop Tutu]," Dimant said.

"By all means. We're not saying anything disparaging about their having met with him. We're just saying that we chose, in representing our constituency, not to meet with him."■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Jewish Heritage Month Community Consortium Members

Torah stops in city on way to Reform shul in Israel

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

A Torah scroll that will soon head to a growing Reform community in Israel stopped in Toronto last week, as part of a 20-city tour across North America.

The Torateinu ARZA is on its way to Sha'ar HaNegev, a community in Israel with a new synagogue but no permanent Torah.

The scroll is connecting different Jewish communities across North America, and encouraging them to do something active and supportive for their Reform brethren in Israel, said Les Rothschild, president of ARZA Canada, the Association of Reform Zionists of America.

"We're doing this to support the ideals that the Reform movement has with Israel," said Rothschild. "Zionism for Reform Jews, in many cases, [means a] state that is pluralistic, that is egalitarian, that treats all citizens equally."

The Torateinu ARZA has been moving among Reform communities in cities across the United States since February, ahead of its flight to Israel at the end of June for Rosh Chodesh Tammuz.

The project started with the Beth Israel congregation in San Diego, Calif., which is a regional partner with Sha'ar HaNegev. Through its journey, the Torah has stopped in more than a dozen cities, including San Francisco, Seattle, New York and Boston. Toronto was the scroll's only Canadian stop.

On the left with the Torah scroll is Rabbi Noam Katz, the Dean of Jewish Living at The Leo Baeck Day School. On the right is Les Rothschild, the president of ARZA Canada. In front are grade 2 students from Leo Baeck's South Campus.

While in Toronto, Grade 2 students at both Leo Baeck Day School campuses did a hakafah with the scroll during their Torah ceremony. On Shabbat, members of Temple Sinai and City Shul congregations read from the Torah.

"We're recognizing that a Torah isn't something that sits in a museum or is sort of like an artifact," said Rabbi Stephen Wise, the leader of Shaarei Beth El, a Reform congregation in Oakville, Ont. "It's a real, living thing."

Sha'ar HaNegev is a mainly secular district with 10 kibbutzim. Located in the northern Negev desert, Sha'ar HaNegev is under the threat of rocket attacks from the nearby Gaza Strip. Over the past few years, Reform Jews there have borrowed a Torah from other congregations.

There are more than 40 Reform congregations in Israel, Rothschild said, and that number keeps growing.

When the Torateinu ARZA arrives in Israel at the end of June, it will not go directly to the Sha'ar HaNegev community. First, the Women of the Wall will read from the scroll on Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, at the Western Wall.

The members of Women of the Wall have prayed there together for 25 years, raising awareness about religious freedom in Israel. Women are currently not allowed to read from the Torah at the Wall. On that morning, three 12-year-old girls are to read from the Torateinu ARZA in honour of their bat mitzvahs. ■

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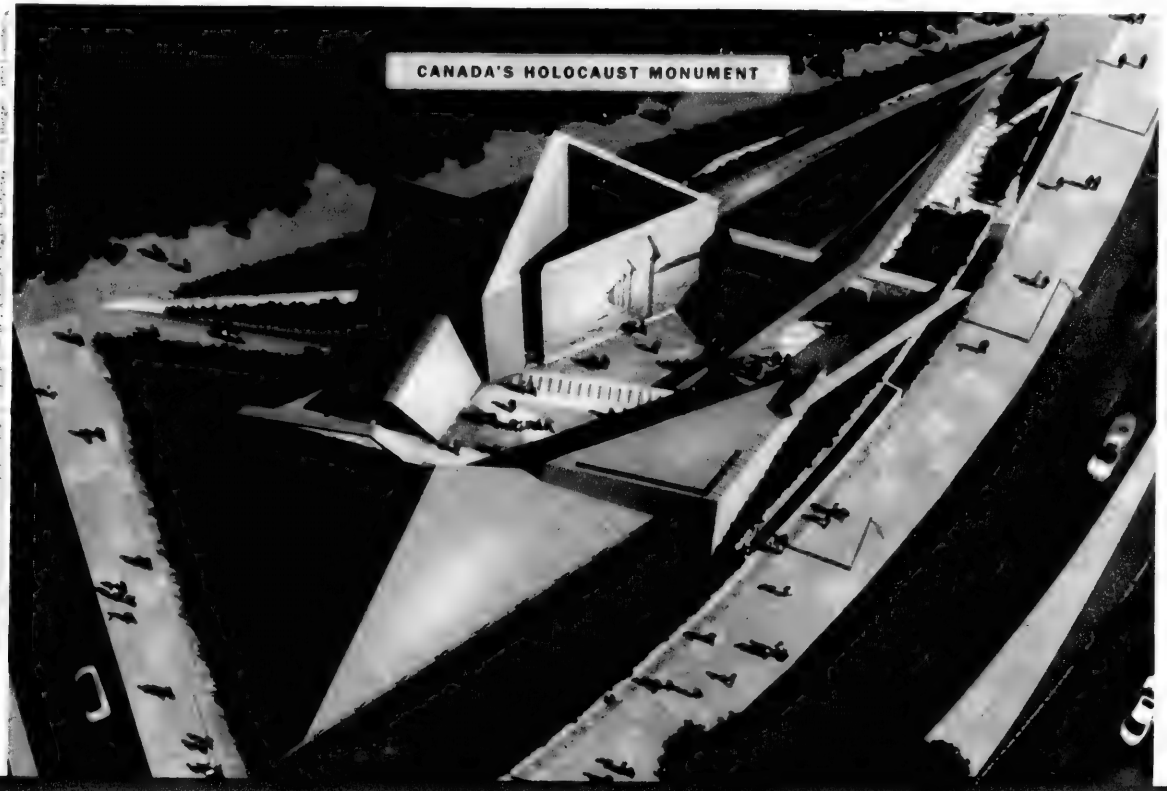

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Sharoni Sibony talks to visitors to First Narayever Congregation about the history of the shul during Doors Open Toronto. C. DAVID WEYMAN PHOTO

First Narayever takes part in Doors Open Toronto

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

More than 200 people toured First Narayever Congregation in the Annex on a recent Sunday during Doors Open Toronto, an annual event in which over 150 historically, culturally and socially significant buildings in Toronto are open to the public.

While viewing an exhibit that documents the congregation's history, visitor Kim Pokorn said that she had often walked past First Narayever on Brunswick Avenue without realizing that it's a synagogue.

Pokorn, who's Chinese, said "there's a similarity between Chinese people and European Jews." Noting that European Jews fled to Shanghai during the Holocaust era, she explained that she knows what it feels like to be unwelcome by a larger community. Pokorn is from Malaysia, where she said the Chinese community experienced discrimination.

First Narayever's rabbi, Ed Elkin, said that the shul participates in Doors Open – which it has done since 2012 – because "we consider ourselves part of a wider community and want to be integrated into that as much as we can. People pass by and they want to come in and don't know if they can, and this provides an opportunity."

He added that this year the congregation was particularly excited about Doors Open because it's First Narayever's 100th anniversary. "We're feeling pride of community and we're interested in sharing it."

For its centennial, congregation member Sharoni Sibony did some research on the synagogue's 13 founders. She pored over archival documents, read minutes of shul meetings, conducted oral history interviews and did genealogical research. "We didn't know who these people were," she said.

Sibony spoke to a steady stream of visitors on Doors Open day about the shul's first president, Israel Chaim Katz. Like the other First Narayever founders, Katz was from the town of Narayev, in Galicia, now Ukraine. A ship's manifest shows that in 1897, when he was 24, he sailed from Amsterdam to New York. Other records show that he married in 1901 and that his wife and six children moved to Toronto in 1913. "I assume he preceded her," Sibony said.

Katz and the other founders started the congregation in St. John's Ward in 1914. The ward was a notorious slum area in downtown Toronto where successive waves of immigrants settled in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. First Narayever's founders hoped to create a mutual benefit society, but with the Ontario government laws at the time, it was easier to establish a congregation.

Katz died in 1920 and was buried in another congregation's section in the Roselawn Avenue Cemetery, instead of in the Dawes Road Cemetery, where First Narayever has a section. Sibony said Katz may also have been part of another congregation that included other members from Galicia.

The First Narayever Congregation was itinerant until 1943, when it purchased and renovated its current home, the building at 187 Brunswick Ave., which had been a Mennonite church. In the 1950s and 1960s, as Jews moved northward,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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The following by-law will be presented for approval:

The Baycrest Centre Foundation By-law No. 20 - 2014

By-law No. 20 replaces the previous Foundation by-law and includes the following changes:

The Quorum for Meetings for members is reduced and a Director category for Emeritus is included.

Other changes of a non-substantive or minor nature have been made to correct grammar and to clean up language.

Copies of the amended by-laws are available by contacting Pam Isen at 416-785-2500 x3166 or pisen@baycrest.org

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Charity fashion show raises over $55,000

EDEN MITELMAN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

BAC2Fashion's sixth annual charity fashion show explored Toronto's fashion heritage last week while benefiting Toronto seniors at the same time.

The May 28 event was held at the Warehouse Event Venue in Downsview Park, which was draped with gorgeous sheer fabrics and lit with lavender lights for more than 300 invited guests.

Guests were greeted by upbeat melodies from violinist Tino Popovic. Beyond appetizer hors d'oeuvres, sweet tables offered a variety of desserts, all donated, to those with a sweet tooth. Guests also had a chance to win one of many gift packages available in the fundraising raffle.

Once again, proceeds went to UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's social, recreational, educational, cultural and health programs for seniors. The evening raised $55,400, surpassing the event's $40,000 goal. Programs and organizations that benefited included Circle of Care, social programs at the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living, and JF & CS' programs for Holocaust survivors.

BAC2Fashion has now raised more than $150,000 to support seniors initiatives in Toronto.

Steven and Marcia Krystal, parents of Andy Krystal, a model in the show, came out to support the cause because, Marcia Krystal said, "both seniors and Holocaust survivors deserve a lot more attention than what we are giving them, because they went through so much." The cause is very close to the Krystals, whose parents, along with those of many other guests, were Holocaust survivors.

The volunteer models sported clothing from top retailers and designers in Toronto and Israel, including Sense of Independence, Tana + Bee, Over The Rainbow, Shenkin West, Jeromes, Masha Apparel, Jilian Dayna, and Intuition.

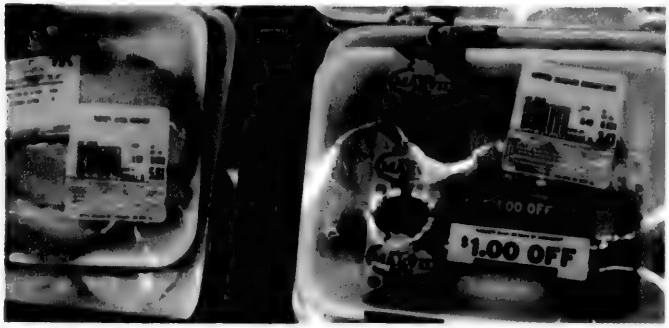
Along with the soft fabrics, suits and fun bright colours, Tyler Keating and Daniella Watters, two up-and-coming musicians, hit the stage and surprised the audience by performing their latest songs.

In a statement, event chairs Carly Goldberg, Nicole Inwentash, Jilian Naiberg, and Hanna Gofman, noted that "it costs approximately $10,000 per year to care for one senior, and there is a growing waiting list of 250 seniors who currently do not receive adequate care."

BAC2Fashion is just one way that UJA's Community Connect links young adults to the Jewish community. Besides raising money, BAC2Fashion also holds programs such as intergenerational yoga and a Tea and Talent Show that let young adults and seniors build more meaningful relationships with one another. ■

Israel Day Festival

The 19th annual Israel Day Festival at Wood Valley Park at the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, Ont. drew about 4,000 who enjoyed festivities and great weather throughout the day. For more photos, go to cjnews.com



Marvid may have competition by the end of the year. JEFF ROSEN PHOTO

Additional kosher chicken producer expected in 2014

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Ontario kosher consumers could have a locally produced source of chickens by the end of the year, according to a spokesperson for Chicken Farmers of Ontario (CFO), a producers' group that regulates the provincial poultry quota under the authority of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture.

The CFO received a number of applications to produce kosher chickens to serve the Ontario market under a request for proposal whose deadline expired on May 30.

"We are expectant that we will have an Ontario partner to produce kosher chickens for the Ontario Jewish community, up and running this year," said Michael Edmonds, director of communications and government relations for the CFO.

Edmonds declined to name the applicants or state how many there were. The CFO's board will examine the applications and make a decision based "on the strength of the business proposal," he said.

Edmonds said the CFO had agreed to increase the number of chickens in Ontario that can be processed to meet the kosher consumption needs of the Jewish community. Normally new entrants to the business must purchase the quota held by another processor.

Up until May 2013, kosher consumers in Canada were served by two chicken producers, Marvid, based in Montreal, and Chai, based in Toronto. Chai sold its quota last May to a halal producer, leading to a shortage of kosher chickens.

Marvid has stepped up production to meet consumer demand, but apparently not all Toronto consumers are satisfied with their birds.

"The community very clearly told us they're looking for Ontario kosher chickens," Edmonds said. "We've received numerous calls from consumers and retailers that there was not enough high quality processed kosher chickens in Ontario right now." ■

First Narayever has 650 members

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

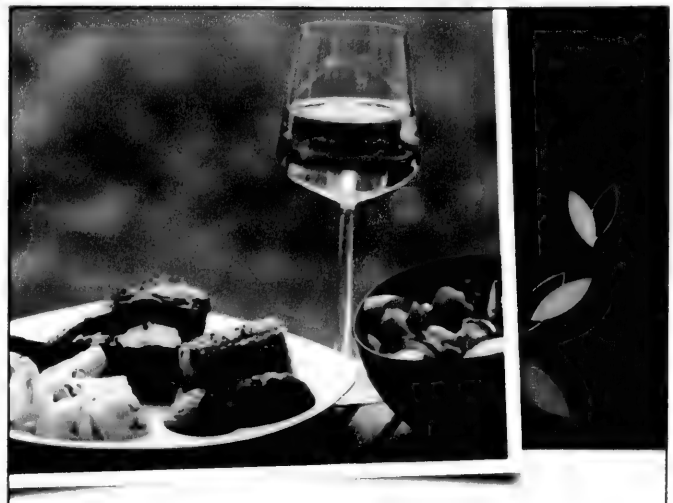
many buildings that housed synagogues fell into disuse, Sibony said. First Narayever, however, became a downtown "home for Orthodox Jews." New residents who moved into the area changed the shul's vision in the 1980s, she added, when the mechitzah came down and it became a traditional-egalitarian synagogue.

First Narayever's treasurer C. David Weyman, who's been a member since the mid-1990s, said that the synagogue is the best of both worlds for him. "It has the traditional service I grew up with in England," he said, adding that he's modern in that he wanted his three daughters, who are now grown, to be able to participate fully. Women take part in minyans, lead services, make aliyah to the Torah and read the Torah portion. "In that sense we are totally egalitarian," he said.

First Narayever is thriving, with some 650 individual members. Sibony, 37, said that members who are in their 30s and 40s are creating a "baby boom in the congregation."

The synagogue seats about 220 people, so holiday overflow services, attended by up to 1,000, are held at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. ■

For more information about First Narayever, visit http://narayever.ca.



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Nitsana Darshan-Leitner

Terror groups must pay, Israeli legal activist says

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, an Israeli lawyer and human rights activist who fights for the rights of terror victims, will be the keynote speaker at Chabad @ Flamingo's Women of Valour gala dinner.

Darshan-Leitner, founder of Shurat HaDin Israel Law Center, a civil rights organization that seeks to bankrupt terror groups by filing lawsuits against them, said the message she hopes to send at the June 9 event is that the private sector can have a role in the war against terrorism by stopping the flow of money to terror groups.

She said over the past 15 years, she's represented hundreds of terror victims and filed lawsuits against terror organizations and the states that sponsor them.

"We model ourselves on the Southern Poverty Law Center, which is a civil rights organization based in Alabama that goes after neo-Nazi groups, the Ku Klux Klan, and those types of organizations in the United States," she said.

"We have judgments against Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the PLO, the Palestinian Authority, Iran, North Korea, different banks for over $1 billion. We were able to collect more than $120 million that goes into the hands of terror victims and their families."

She said she began filing lawsuits against terror groups at the start of the second intifadah in 2000, in an effort to bankrupt them.

"We wanted to hit them in their pocket and to basically stop terrorism by stopping the flow of money."

She said it's important to note that Israelis aren't the only victims of terror, which became more apparent to the international community after the World Trade Center attacks in 2001.

She said after 9/11 the Americans made changes to the American justice system to reflect that.

"There are new laws that make it easier to file lawsuits in terror cases as opposed to regular negligence cases," Darshan-Leitner said.

She said Canada seems to be following suit.

Two years ago, Canada passed the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA), allowing Canadians to seek damages against Iran and Syria, designated state sponsors of terror. Last year, the Department of Foreign Affairs released a list of Iranian-owned properties in Ottawa, as well as 14 Iranian bank accounts in Canada holding $2.6 million in total.

Darshan-Leitner said she's been involved in cases on behalf of Canadian victims of terror who are seeking damages from terror attacks sponsored by Iran.

"These cases take a long time... but even if you get default judgments you still have to go after the assets of the defendants... and this takes tremendous effort."

Darshan-Leitner said she hopes her lecture will enlighten people about the fact millions of dollars are put into the hands of terrorists through "seemingly innocent charities and that they can have a role in blocking funding."

She added that Canadians should also know "that no terror victims should be left without compensation and terror organizations have to pay. They have to learn that there is a price for terrorism and they have to pay."

The Women of Valour event will honour three women: Eliana Di Biase, an educator with the Toronto Catholic District School Board, director of the Vaughanwood Ratepayers Association, and former director of Hospice Vaughan; Faygie Kaplan, co-director and rebbetzin of Chabad @ Flamingo. ■

For more information about the gala, visit www.chabadflamingo.com or call 905-763-4040.

Secret of happiness to be revealed by Israeli rabbi

SHERI SHEFA
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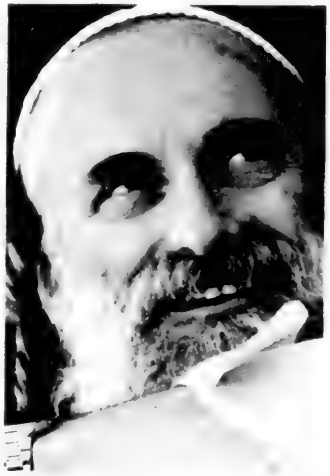

Rabbi Lazer Brody

Rabbi Lazer Brody, a Jerusalem-based spiritual guide and life coach, said he knows the secret to happiness and is eager to share it with anyone who wants to hear it.

"If you feel a lack of satisfaction, if something is wrong, it means that the soul is lacking and we need to give the soul what it needs... that's emunah, that's a connection with Hashem, the creator," said Rabbi Brody who will be in Toronto June 8 at Chabad Flamingo to deliver a lecture titled "Hashem Rofecha: Holistic healing using Torah as your guide."

"Understand that I am not talking about religion. I never talk about religion. I won't tell anyone to keep Shabbat or keep kosher or do anything else. But the point is, your soul needs a connection to the Creator. You're a tiny part of the Creator. Once you're connected with the Creator, he'll take you where you need to go," he said.

The American-born Rabbi Brody, who spreads this message – based on the works of Rabbi Shalom Arush, an Israeli Breslov rabbi – throughout the English-speaking world, spoke to *The CJN* about his own path to becoming a ba'al tshuvah and guiding people to lead happier lives.

"I grew up in a very Zionist home... We grew up with a very strong Jewish identity," said Rabbi Brody, who serves as the spiritual guide at the Chut Shel Chessed yeshiva in Jerusalem, which was founded by Rabbi Arush.

"As long as I can remember, I always dreamed about being in Israel. That's what led me to learn agriculture."

After obtaining a degree in agricultural studies at the University of Maryland, he moved to Israel in 1970, bought a farm, joined the Israel Defence Forces and served in an elite infantry unit.

During the Israel-Lebanon in 1982, in his role as a reservist, he was involved in a near-fatal mission in Beirut.

"The PLO was shooting at the Israeli forces from the Russian embassy... The government decided to do a commando mission... it was almost suicidal," he recalled.

"Against all odds, we made it out. As it was, only eight out of 12 of us came home alive. But on the spot, I decided that I had to change my life and I really felt like a divine hand pulled me out of the inferno... There are many people who make foxhole vows and forget about them, but I kept true to my word."

He said he went to Jerusalem and enrolled at Aish Hatorah for nine years of day and night learning. In 1992 he was ordained and he has been working alongside Rabbi Arush for the past 16 years, translating many of his books including the bestseller, *The Garden of Emuna*.

Rabbi Brody has also written self-help books in Hebrew and English, and recently published *Six Days to the Top*, a motivational book meant to help people reach their full potential.

Rabbi Brody, who takes a holistic approach to healing the body, mind and soul, said, "People are on pills, people are sick, people are not feeling good and there's stress and anxiety. The human body is not built to handle stress and anxiety... We have to see that our bodies are suffering from stress and anxiety because it is something we're doing wrong."

He said the missing piece to the puzzle is emunah, the pure and complete faith in Hashem and learning to keep outside variables from determining our happiness.

"What western society wants, the bank account, the car, a house in the right neighbourhood, a spouse with the right status – if you still feel something lacking, a particular item you can't put your finger on... you have a type of malnutrition in your soul."

He said he doesn't believe someone can be truly happy without a belief in God.

"I don't believe there is such a person. We're talking about a true sense of inner gratification that doesn't depend on anything external to be happy."

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Takes part in health conference convened by Prime Minister Harper

Israel a leader in field of neonatology, says Israeli expert

RON CSILLAG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

A leading Israeli expert in neonatology is eager to export his country's success in saving babies in distress.

Dr. Michael "Miki" Karplus was Israel's sole delegate to last week's summit in Toronto, "Saving Every Woman, Every Child Within Arm's Reach," convened by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to address maternal, newborn and child health.

The three-day conference, which drew dozens of doctors, scientists and experts from around the world, addressed three key objectives, according to a statement: delivering results for mothers and children, doing more together globally, and undertaking "real action" for women's and children's health.

Real action is something Karplus understands; it turns out Israel is a leader in the field of neonatology, a pediatric subspecialty devoted to the health and well-being of newborns.

Over the past few years, through two "mother and baby" units it established in the African nation of Ghana, Israel has learned how to treat troubled newborns cheaply and without expensive medical intervention that is unavailable anyway.

The idea is to involve mothers much more centrally, Karplus told *The CJN* in an interview before the conference's start. While the notion has taken hold, he's eager to take tangible results to other places.

"The whole idea is to expand," said Karplus, who headed the department of neonatology at Ben-Gurion University's Soroka Medical Center for nearly 30 years.

"We would like to come to international agencies and say, 'look, we have this model and we would like to propose that we take it to an area and set up a number of them. Then we can study [infant] mortality when we compare an area that has a unit with an area that does not.' "

The units in Ghana, established by Mashav, Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, with guidance from the Soroka Medical Center, do not rely on expensive respirators, ventilators or incubators.

"The high mortality in babies in the developing world...is due to infections and complications from being born small," Karplus explained. "Many of these complications could be dealt with [using] limited resources so that mortality can be reduced with simple means."

Dr. Michael Karplus in Ghana

> *The approach is really to work with the staff who are available. With these very simple means, you can reduce mortality tremendously.*
>
> **Dr. Michael "Miki" Karplus**

Among the best known methods is so-called "kangaroo mother care," in which the mother, through skin to skin contact, warms her baby. That replaces incubators, which are expensive and when they break down in developing countries, there's no one to fix them, Karplus pointed out.

Underweight babies, meantime, also need warmth, as well as feeding and a clean environment. Great care is taken to allow only the mother to handle her newborn. "Infection will be minimal because no one else is handling the baby. The big danger is cross-infection."

Decades ago, Karplus came to the view that newborns with problems could be saved through basic, inexpensive interventions that did not require a doctor. He and his team developed a training course for nurses and medical assistants based on simple, affordable methods.

In Ghana, the Israelis focused on newborns' most common problems and found that treatments, in most cases, did not require doctors. "There are very few doctors in Africa," Karplus pointed out. "You cannot set up such units in rural areas of Africa if you expect doctors to work there. So the approach is really to work with the staff who are available. With these very simple means, you can reduce mortality tremendously.

"If the condition of the baby deteriorates, we are helpless," he went on. "But the number of babies we will lose because of the lack of respirators is very small. We are going to save, with simple means, the majority of the babies who are now dying."

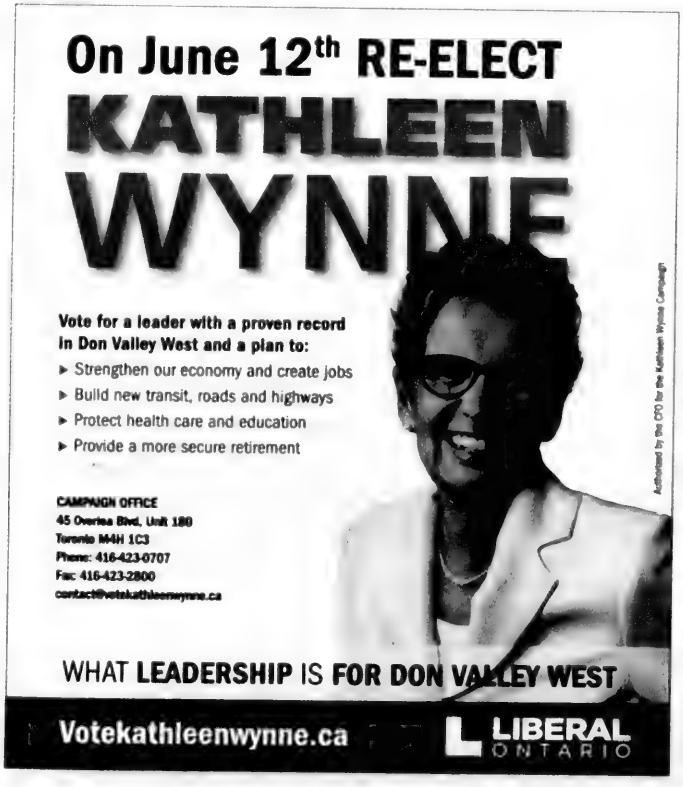
With just two centres in Ghana, both in the southern town of Kumasi, it's impossible to tell whether Israel's efforts have made a dent in the country's infant mortality rate, which in 2012 stood at 49 per 1,000 live births (Canada's rate is five, Israel's is three).

That's why this year, Israel will evaluate its units, both from a health and cost-effectiveness standpoint.

As a pioneer in the field, Israel was represented at the Toronto conference to share its experience in Africa and propose that its model spread elsewhere, Karplus noted.

"We started very early, 20 years ago, before there was an international trend [and] nobody was interested in this kind of approach," said Karplus. "Nowadays, it is the internationally accepted way of doing things."

Asked whether Israel is known for its work in the field, Karplus replied, "not enough. There are so many countries with very high neo-natal mortality that would gain so much if these units could be set up."■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Probe Muslim Brotherhood, report urges

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

A report on the Muslim Brotherhood in North America, which includes a substantial section on Canada, names names and identifies mainstream Muslim organizations linked to the fanatical Islamic group.

It calls on the Canadian government to "pursue a wider investigation into the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood."

In doing so, said the report's author, Tom Quiggin, it should consider co-operating with an ongoing investigation into the Brotherhood in the United Kingdom.

Quiggin, a member of the Terrorism and Security Experts of Canada Network (TSEC), prescribes a series of responses to what he termed a political and cultural threat to Canadians.

He suggests in the report that the federal government should look at local organizations and their senior membership, which he identified as affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. He advises that federal authorities should review the charitable status of these organizations and whether the Canadian Border Security Agency ought to increase screening of individuals from Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia, among others.

He also suggests the government ought to consider requiring those who advocate "imposing foreign standards on Canadians through political means" to register as lobbyists.

At the heart of the report is a contention by Quiggin that "the role of the Muslim Brotherhood does not appear to be consistent with values of the Canadian Constitution, the Canadian Charter of Rights nor the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights."

The report cites the Muslim Brotherhood's own explicit goal as "Sabotaging the Miserable House through the Process of Settlement and Civilization Jihad."

Quggin told *CBC News* that the threat facing Canadians is not physical as much as "cultural" and "political."

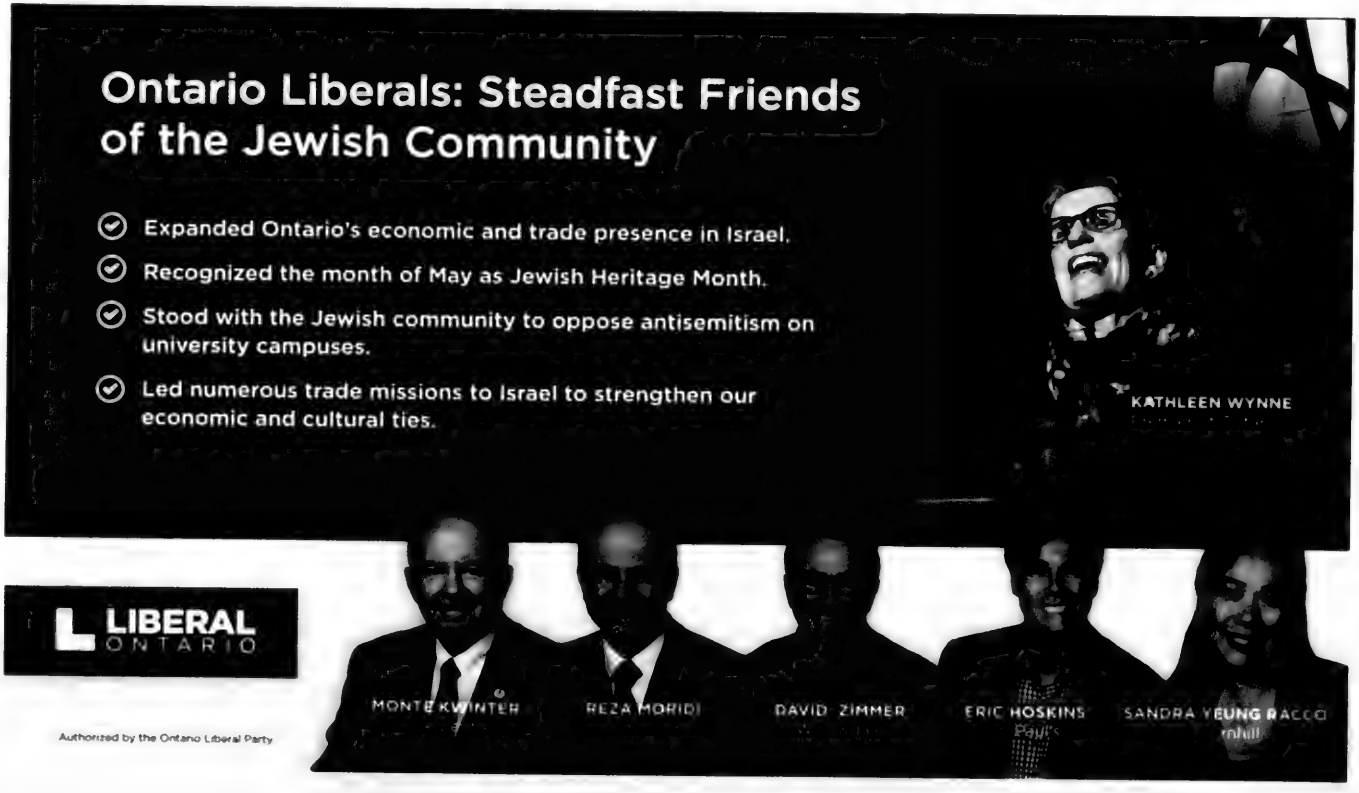
The Muslim Brotherhood has tried to spread influence and raise money through domestic groups, that have "sought to systematically and repeatedly circumvent and break Canadian regulations and laws," the report said.

"One of the points of this report was to say, 'Hey look, this group exists, the amount of money they're moving around runs tens of millions of dollars, they're funding terrorist groups all over the place," Quiggin told the CBC. "At a certain point we have to ask, 'Do we want this behaviour to continue?'"

The report calls for additional requirements on Canadian charities receiving funds from abroad, including divulging "the amounts and sources of the funds" and for reciprocity with the countries from which moneys are flowing to Canada so that "money from foreign countries should only be acceptable if reciprocity exists with the country of the donors involved."

The report pointed to a recent development in which a Canadian organization, International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy (IRFAN-Canada), was listed as a terrorist entity. Is this "the start of a trend or a 'one off' event is not clear, but it does send a message of its own," the report stated.

A spokesperson for Foreign Minister John Baird told the *National Post* that Ottawa is aware of the U.K. review of the groups and will be determining "possible next steps in short order." ■


Ontario Liberals: Steadfast Friends of the Jewish Community
Expanded Ontario's economic and trade presence in Israel.
Recognized the month of May as Jewish Heritage Month.
Stood with the Jewish community to oppose antisemitism on university campuses.
Led numerous trade missions to Israel to strengthen our economic and cultural ties.
KATHLEEN WYNNE
LIBERAL ONTARIO
MONTE KWINTER
REZA MORIDI
DAVID ZIMMER
ERIC HOSKINS
SANDRA YEUNG RACCO
Authorized by the Ontario Liberal Party

Israeli dance troupe marks 50 years in Winnipeg

MYRON LOVE
PRAIRIES CORRESPONDENT

In 1964, Talmud Torah nursery teacher Sarah Sommer had a vision of creating an Israeli dance troupe in Winnipeg.

According to historian Allan Levine in his *Coming of Age, a History of the Jewish People of Manitoba*, Sommer had originally been introduced to Israeli dance five years earlier, when the Inbal Dance Company from Israel performed in Winnipeg. And in 1963, she and her husband, Alex, went to Israel, where she spent five weeks with the Histadrut Dance Group.

Sommer later formed what became the Sarah Sommer Chai Folk Ensemble with eight teenage girls who were attending Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate, as the city's Jewish high school was known at the time.

Sadly, she was stricken by cancer just a couple of years later and didn't live to see her dream reach full fruition. However, her husband, Alex, and several members of the community stepped up and built on what she had started, and the Sarah Sommer Chai Folk Ensemble has gone from strength to strength.

This month, the internationally acclaimed Israeli folk ensemble is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a gala concert June 10 at Winnipeg's Centennial Concert Hall, followed by an appearance in early July in Israel, where Chai will represent Canada at the Karmiel Dance Festival.

"While we will be performing some of our highlight pieces from the past 50 years, many of our pieces at the concert will be new dances," said Tracy Kasner Greaves, Chai's artistic director for the last 11 years and a member of Chai for 22 years.

Chai Folk Ensemble dancers dancing *Hava Netzeh*, the closing piece they do at every show, at Folklorama last year.

> *People are constantly asking me how we do it in Winnipeg, how such a relatively small Jewish community has been able to support Chai all these years. There is nothing else like Chai in North America*
>
> **Tracy Kasner Greaves**

She said Chai will be introducing new dances by leading Israeli choreographer Shai Gottesman and former Chai dancer and professional choreographer Farrah Fernando (now based in Toronto), as well as new works by choreographers from Mexico City and Argentina and Chai's own Elan Marchinko.

The show will also be celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, Winnipeg's largest and oldest congregation. Joining the Chai performers on stage will be the Shaarey Zedek choir, the congregation's Rabbi Alan Green, Cantor Anibal Maas and past presidents and leaders of both Shaarey Zedek and Chai.

On June 6, Kasner Greaves said, the shul will host a community dinner featuring about 100 Chai alumni (including the original eight dancers), many of whom will be coming from throughout North America for the occasion.

On June 8, the alumni will put on their own show at the newly opened Regent Casino Theatre. That show is being co-directed by Chai alumni David Gale and Casey Chisick (now both of Toronto), Leah Braemer and Hillel Sommer, son of the late Sarah Sommer, who as a four-year-old attended the original rehearsals with his mother.

Over the years, Chai has performed in every major city in Canada, as well as in Florida, California and Mexico City. The Karmiel Festival will be Chai's second appearance in Israel. Kasner Greaves said it has commissioned award-winning choreographer and former Winnipegger Lindsay Nelko to choreograph a new work for the event.

The contemporary piece, based on a combination of the musical pieces *Adamah v'Shamayim* (*Land and Sky*) and *Zum Zum*, is about honouring the land, Kasner Greaves said.

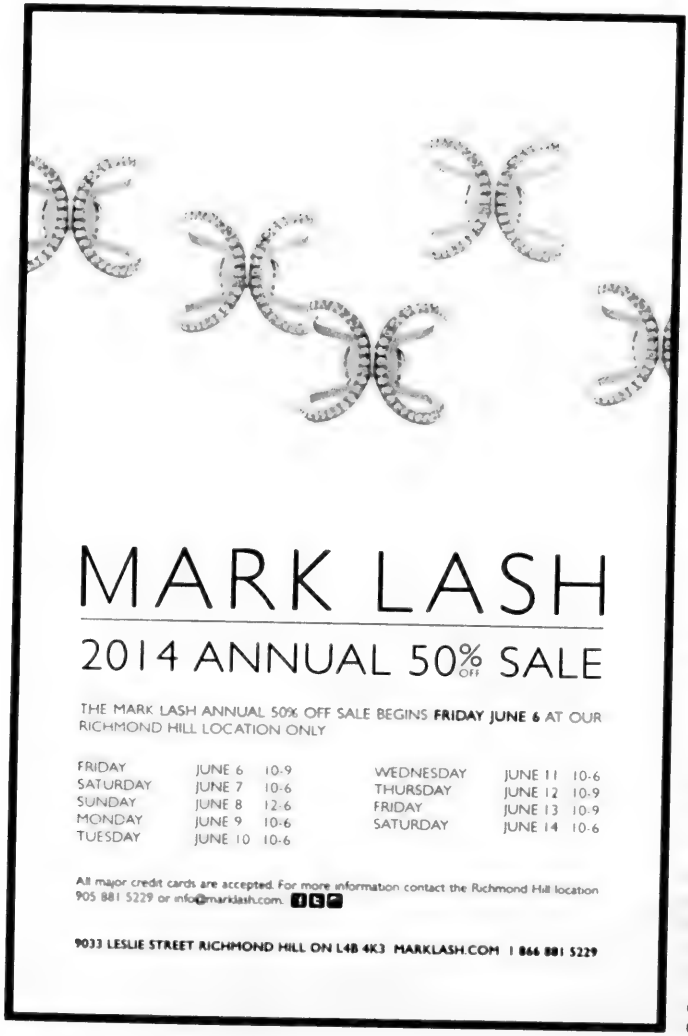
Chai comprises some 40 singers, dancers and musicians ranging in age from teens to adults in their early 40s.

"People are constantly asking me how we do it in Winnipeg, how such a relatively small Jewish community has been able to support Chai all these years. There is nothing else like Chai in North America," Kasner Greaves said.

"The reason is that Winnipeg's Jewish community is unique in its level of commitment. Chai provides young people with a Jewish cultural outlet, encourages a love for Israel and helps young people who are new to our city to find new friends."

Kasner Greaves related a story about coming to a recent Chair rehearsal to find a new member of the troupe, a teenage girl recently arrived from Israel, crying.

"As soon as she heard the music, she burst into tears," she said. "She was overwhelmed being in Winnipeg and hearing Israeli music that took her back to Israel. She understood what we are doing here. It's not about ego or professional dancing. It's about community and love of Israel."■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Surprise Masada wedding for couple on Mega Mission

JANICE ARNOLD
jarnold@cjnews.ca

Julie Morneau and Steve Lupovich had expected to get married quietly later this month in their rabbi's study, with only a few relatives present.

Instead, the Montreal couple made history when they were wed atop Masada before hundreds of people, and they only knew less than 48 hours earlier that it was going to happen.

Morneau and Lupovich were among the 570 participants in Federation CJA's Montreal Mega Mission to Israel, the largest organized trip of its kind in almost two decades.

Co-chairs Jonathan Wener and Gail Adelson-Marcovitz had their hearts set on holding a wedding on this site of an ancient fortification where 960 Jewish rebels committed mass suicide.

Wener and Adelson-Marcovitz had permission to do so – they just had to find the couple.

They correctly believed such a ceremony would be unforgettable for both the bride and groom, and everyone else. According to their information, a wedding has never been held on Masada.

When word got around that Morneau and Lupovich were planning to soon tie the knot, Wener approached them to move the date up – offering an all-expenses paid wedding. That was at the Friday night Shabbat dinner; the group was scheduled to visit Masada on the Sunday, May 18.

"We said, 'whoa, whoa', not so quick, we have everything arranged with our rabbi and family," said Morneau, who was in Israel for the first time.

When they learned their Rabbi Adam Scheier of Congregation Shaar Hashomayim was on the mission, and would be honoured to the perform the ceremony on Masada – and again on the planned date of June 22, the couple relented.

"It was also so sudden, we really didn't have time to think," she said. "We just got caught up in the excitement." It was a second marriage for both of them. Morneau converted to Judaism 20 years ago.

Lupovich was concerned about his mother not being there, but she gave her wholehearted blessing.

Morneau remembered she didn't have a dress. A woman on their bus lent her a white sleeveless one, while Lupovich wore the white shirt and capris he had packed.

"We had no rings or any time to shop because it was Shabbat. The federation said, 'Don't worry, we'll take care of it'," Morneau said. Ditto for the ketubah.

Morneau changed in a guard's hut on Masada with the help of women from her bus. "We had been hiking and I was full of sunscreen," she recalled. "I didn't even have a mirror to get ready."

Someone did her makeup, and a veil and bouquet of white roses were suddenly produced to complete her outfit. On her feet were flip flops.

Ten women from the mission served as bridesmaids, wearing shorts and T-shirts.

The chupah was improvised by hoisting a tallit atop four poles. The five other rabbis on the mission had a role in reciting the blessings.

All 600 or so people present were, in fact, spontaneous participants, not merely spectators, said Wener, "as if we were all on the bimah."

The wedding took place following an awards presentation for 100 IDF junior officers that had put everyone in an emotional mood.

As the sun set, everyone descended on the snaking path down to the Judean Desert where tents were set up for a lavish torch-lit dinner. Israel Philharmonic musicians played.

"The whole thing was magical, surreal," said Morneau.

Lupovich added: "It was very spiritual, almost as if it was blessed by God because everything aligned so perfectly."

He found it an awesome sight to have hundreds of people in a close circle around them as they took their vows and then to see them winding down the hillside single file behind them.

"Many people said that not only was it the best wedding they ever attended, it was the most incredible thing they have ever seen," he said.

However, he said, "one storekeeper said to me, 'Why would you get married up there? It's a place of tragedy.' As Rabbi Scheier said, our wedding represented the circle of life. It showed the world that we [the Jewish people] survived."

Wener feels the impromptu wedding was the icing on the cake, so to speak, of a successful trip that allowed a large contingent of Montrealers to bond as they experienced Israel.

"My sense is that it had an extraordinary galvanizing effect. As I told Julie and Steve, the gift you have given us is much greater than what we have given you." ■

Newlyweds Julie Morneau and Steve Lupovich are feted at their wedding on Masada.

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Political leaders talk with *The CJN*

With Ontario voters going to the polls on June 12, *The CJN* spoke with Kathleen Wynne, Tim Hudak and Mike Schreiner. (Editor's note: NDP leader Andrea Horwath declined to be interviewed.)

Liberal Party

Kathleen Wynne

School funding is dead: Wynne

RON CSILLAG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne is emphatic: the issue of public funding for private religious schools is over and has been for a while.

In the June 12 provincial election, "the discussion is over in terms of [funding for] faith-based schools," Wynne told *The CJN* in a brief telephone interview while campaigning in Sault Ste Marie.

"We went through a very extended discussion on this in the 2007 election campaign, and we're focusing on the education system as it exists," said Wynne, a former provincial education minister who became premier in February 2013 following Dalton McGuinty's unexpected resignation after nine years in office.

"We've made a lot of investments in the publicly-funded education system and it's world-renowned. I think people in Ontario were pretty clear in 2007 that they wanted to see public money go into the public schools."

Like other provincial politicians, Wynne has doubtless learned a lesson from former Ontario Conservative leader John Tory.

Famously, in the 2007 provincial election, Tory promised to bring faith-based schools into the public system. The pledge, if implemented, would have outdone his predecessor, Mike Harris, who as premier, introduced a tax break for parents of children in religious schools – the first relief of its kind.

At the time, it sounded like small change, but the issue blew up and became the 2007 campaign's cause celebre. It also cost Tory the race, with many Ontarians soundly declaring that public money should not flow to private and religious schools.

The whole matter of public money for private schools was so hot that when he became premier in 2003, among McGuinty's first actions was to retroactively cancel the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Progressive Conservative Party

Tim Hudak

For Hudak, it's all about jobs, jobs, jobs

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

They say that to be successful in an election campaign, you have to keep your message simple and hammer it home over and over again.

In the case of Progressive Conservative Party Leader Tim Hudak, the message is jobs, jobs, jobs. And then there's career jobs, middle class jobs, and jobs with "more take-home pay."

In a province that has seen the loss of 300,000 manufacturing jobs since 2002 and has more than 500,000 people unemployed, he's hoping it has some resonance.

You can colour the ridings where there are substantial concentrations of Jewish voters mostly Liberal red, but Hudak believes that for the Jewish community, like the broader range of Ontario voters, the most important issue is jobs.

Campaigning in Thornhill, currently held by Tory Gila Martow and York Centre, represented by longtime Liberal MPP Monte Kwinter, two seats he hopes his party can win this time around, he said voters are concerned their children are finding it difficult to find gainful employment, even with university degrees.

His "Million Jobs Plan" is geared to get more people working "in good career jobs," he said in a telephone interview. That will create the tax base needed to fund priority items such as health care and education, he added.

The plan – which he said would add 125,000 jobs a year for eight years – is part of a broader approach to incentivize the private sector, and move away from the proposition "that government always knows best," he continued.

More affordable energy, a reduction in business-stiflng red tape, and private/public partnerships will free up the private sector to get Ontarians back to work, he said.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Green Party

Mike Schreiner

Bringing honesty to government

PAUL LUNGEN
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It's doubtful whether a central plank in the platform of the Green Party of Ontario will appeal to many parents with children in Jewish day schools.

If the Greens take power – and all the polls show them well back of the Liberal and Conservative front-runners – they would bring an end to the Roman Catholic School Board and merge it with public boards. They'd do the same with French and English boards.

Not much hope there for supporters of public funding for religious schools. Of course, none of the other parties are making that an issue. According to most political analysts, school funding has proven to be the fatal third rail of Ontario politics and spelled doom for former Tory leader John Tory.

Mike Schreiner, an entrepreneur who operates his own small business specializing in local foods, said support for religious education "was soundly rejected by Ontario voters."

But referring to the education file in general, Schreiner asked: "Is it fair in Ontario that one religion receives public funding [Roman Catholic], and no other religion does? I don't think that is fair."

Jews should rightly wonder why their Catholic neighbours receive that benefit when they don't, he said.

His solution, however, is not to extend funding to other groups.

"Let's go the opposite direction that Mr. Tory proposed. The prescription we're putting forward is let's just have one public system, in French and English, and that will create fairness, it will address human rights concerns around discrimination, access and hiring based on religion and sexual orientation, and we will have savings of between $1 billion and $1.6 billion that can be reinvested in our children's classrooms.

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Liberals not planning on cuts to social service agencies

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Tories' Equity in Education Tax Credit, which would have given parents tax breaks of up to $3,500 per child. For virtually his entire time in office, McGuinty came in for harsh criticism in Jewish circles for discriminating against non-Christians, since the Roman Catholic system was and continues to be fully funded.

While that issue is off the table, *The CJN* asked whether a future Liberal government would at least commit to funding certain health services, such as speech and language therapy, in private and faith-based schools. Apparently, the answer is no.

"Obviously, there are services that are delivered through the [provincial] community care access centres to children who go to a full range of public and private schools," Wynne said. "So those programs remain in place."

On the other hand, if re-elected, Wynne's Liberals are not planning to cut funding to social service agencies.

"As you know, Jewish Family & Child, Reena and Jewish Vocational Service all receive funding from Ontario. We have no plans to cut those."

What about boosting funding to Jewish social service agencies if needed?

"To the extent that we make investments in services across the board, absolutely," she said. "Those are the kind of services that we know need support. The work that Reena does, for example, dealing with supporting adults with disabilities… we've committed $810 million in our budget as part of our plan, and if we are re-elected, we are going to invest that money in services for people with developmental disabilities.

"I can't tell you exactly which organizations are going to get how much money," she noted, "but the fact is that organizations that provide those services should benefit from that money."

Wynne said Ontario's warm relationship with Israel is resonating with Jewish voters, and she credits her Liberals for growing it.

It was kick-started in 2005, when then-Israeli deputy prime minister Ehud Olmert and McGuinty signed the Ontario-Israel Memorandum of Understanding, with each side committing about $1 million to facilitate at least a dozen joint economic ventures.

Five years later, McGuinty visited Israel, where President Shimon Peres asked Ontario to partner with Israel on leading-edge brain research.

Wynne pointed out that Eric Hoskins, Ontario's economic development, trade and employment minister, visited Israel last autumn. In late April, the Liberals announced the opening of an office in Israel to help promote business and trade between the two jurisdictions.

"The relationship between Ontario and Israel is very important," Wynne said. The trade office "is something that the [Jewish] community is pleased we are moving forward with."

She also pointed out that it was a Liberal MPP, Mike Colle, who introduced a motion in 2012 to designate each May as Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario. The measure received all-party support.

Asked whether she has perceived a coattail effect, in which Prime Minister Stephen Harper's staunch support for Israel has attracted voters to provincial Tory Leader Tim Hudak, Wynne said, "I haven't experienced that, quite frankly."

She added: "I see the Jewish community very much as part of the fabric of this province and a very important part of the fabric of this province. That's always been my position and continues to be." ■

Funding for religious schools not on Conservative agenda

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"This is all crystal clear," he said.

He said a Tory government would improve the delivery of health care "under the OHIP umbrella" by supporting front-line professionals who actually deliver health care.

As to an issue that has been a priority issue for Jewish community leadership for decades – public money for religious schools – Hudak said Ontario voters have considered it and turned it down.

"We're not going down that path," he said.

Instead, Hudak quickly shifted the conversation to the support the Progressie Conservatives have shown for the Jewish community over the years, such as standing against Israeli apartheid week.

"That has no business on our campuses," he said.

He applauded the pro-Israel position taken by the federal, Conservative, government and criticized an annual anti-Israel hate-fest held on government grounds.

Referring to the al-Quds Day Rally, a pro-Hezbollah event that has been held for the past few years on the grounds of the legislature, Hudak said, "We say it has no business to be at Queen's Park."

He referenced a visit he made to Israel in the company of the late federal finance minister Jim Flaherty, saying he was impressed with the country's beauty, its vibrant democracy and its innovative business sector.

He called Israel's technological strength and ability to innovate, "a model around the world."

Asked if he supported a recent move by the Liberal government to establish a representative office in Israel to promote trade and business relationships between the two jurisdictions, Hudak said, "I'm all for greater partnership."

There is room to grow a partnership between Israel and Ontario, particularly in the realm of high tech and environmental technology, he said.

Hudak said his visit to Israel was "spiritually moving." As a Catholic he felt special significance when he visited holy sites, including Jerusalem.

One of the more emotional parts of his visit was at Yad Vashem, the memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.■

Greens aim to 're-imagine' government for 21st century

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

That benefits any child in a public system."

"That's just creating a system that is fair, fiscally responsible and addresses human rights concerns," Schreiner said.

Would the Greens' approach to education – favouring a single publicly-funded service provider – be applicable to other services delivered by community agencies, such as family services, immigration aid and the like?

No, Schreiner explained. "We're only talking about education."

But in "re-imagining government for the 21st century," Schreiner said government might not always be the best organization to deliver public services. Sometimes it ought to partner with the non-profit and charitable sectors to come up with innovative ways of offering services at a more effective cost.

"That I would be very supportive of," he said.

Asked whether ancillary health services delivered to children in schools through the Ministry of Education, such as occupational therapy and pyschological assessments, should also be available to religious schools, Schreiner said he was not familiar with the issue."I'm definitely open to look at that."

"The Green Party is all about integrity and openness. The key issue for me is what is fair to our students and how can we maximize services to people in the most cost effective way."

Asked about "green issues" per se, such as the Green Energy Act and its effect on the cost of electricity, Schreiner cited Ontario Energy Board reports. According to those documents, "over the last five years the biggest contributor to the increased prices in electricity is actually nuclear cost overruns, not green energy. So about 46 per cent of the increase is due to nuclear cost overruns and contracts and about six to nine per cent due to green energy. So there's a lot of misunderstanding about what's driving up electricity and energy costs.

"The Liberals have made two mistakes. The first one is they prioritized new generation over conservation. The cheapest and greenest solution to our energy needs is helping people save money by saving energy," he said.

The Greens would create a fund to help Ontarians make their homes more energy efficient, he continued.

Schreiner said nuclear power should be replaced by cheaper hydro power from Quebec at a savings of $1 billion a year. And the government would invest that billion by providing grants to retrofit homes to better conserve energy and reduce costs.

Addressing the issue of poverty, Schreiner said the Green Party would double the child benefit to help lift 400,000 kids out of poverty.

It would be paid for by cancelling "the Liberal's 10 per cent hydro handout, which primarily benefits the wealthy and costs $1.1 billion."

The Green Party would tackle unemployment – 500,000 Ontarians are currently out of work – by lowering payroll taxes for small businesses by doubling the exemption from $450,000 to $900,000 for companies with payrolls under $5 million.

People are sick of the scandals, "magic math" and "political games" at Queen's Park, he said. "The Green Party is on a mission to bring honesty, integrity and good public policy to Queen's Park. I think we need more honesty in politics." ■

Doctor puts focus on people with ASD, Down syndrome

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Dr. Jacob A. Burack, a researcher and a professor in McGill University's educational and counselling psychology department, was in Toronto late last month to speak at the Current Trends in Pediatric Neuro-Developmental Disabilities conference, co-organized by the Zareinu Educational Centre.

His work over the past 30 years has focused on the development of attention and perception among people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and Down syndrome.

Burack spoke to *The CJN* about how research developments have changed the way special needs children are and should be treated.

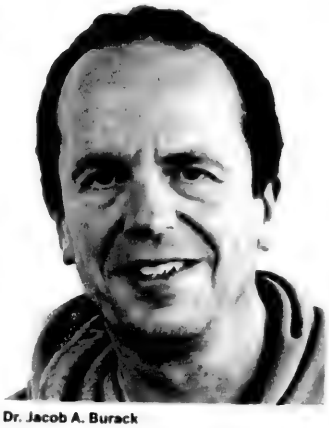
What was it 30 years ago that prompted you to want to work in this field?

I always wanted to work with kids. I worked for three summers at Camp Reena – the Reena Foundation is still around, but the camp has been closed for quite a few years. So I spent three summers working as a counsellor at Camp Reena, and that's what changed my life, and I started focusing on that.

In your 30 years of research, what would you say is your most significant finding, most surprising finding or the most interesting thing about your work?

For autism specifically, I think that I found a kid with autism has a lot of strengths and people always focus on the weaknesses. Specifically, in the type of work that I do about how children retain and perceive objects in the environment, they actually have strengths, quite a few strengths, that in some way are to their benefit, but also lead to them seeing the world in a different way than some other people might.

We actually have a theory with a colleague of mine at the University of Montreal, Laurent Mottron, called the enhanced perceptual functioning model of autism, and it talks about how autistic behavior is a result of better-than-average perception. It's become very popular. It's one of the ways of understanding people with autistic behaviour.



Dr. Jacob A. Burack

> *What's really important is that the Jewish community needs to make more of an effort to include people with disabilities to be part of our community. We find in schools, in synagogues, and maybe most important, in the social fabric that people with disabilities need to be integrated to be part of it.*

Have there been a lot of changes in the past 30 years in the way children with disabilities are treated?

There have been. But I think what's more important is the attitude toward people with disabilities. I have a close colleague who was actually one of my former graduate students who is now spearheading all sorts of work in Quebec about transitioning young people with disabilities from school to the work force, into college programs. We have an understanding that people, even with disabilities, are people who have aspirations and hopes and that is the most important thing. We are much more looking at the strengths of people with disabilities and we see that, as my old graduate school adviser used to say, seeing them as a whole person and not just thinking about them in terms of their disability.

What's your message to the Jewish community about special needs children?

What's really important is that the Jewish community needs to make more of an effort to include people with disabilities to be part of our community. We find in schools, in synagogues, and maybe most important, in the social fabric that people with disabilities need to be integrated to be part of it.

I think there is a stigma. I think some schools don't want to deal with it. Many of the Jewish schools may be very success-oriented. I've travelled all over Canada, all over Quebec and in the most remote places, like the Gaspé region, they have many fewer facilities and resources than we have, but they have no problem including those kids. If you belong to the community, you're in that school with the rest of the kids in that community. I don't think that happens with the schools here. I think young adults don't have the kinds of social lives they should be having and that should be a priority for the Jewish community and see it as one of our major missions.

Is there anything you've learned about children with autism or Down syndrome that could maybe help parents give their children the best treatment?

As I tell my friends who are parents in general, for the most part, parents need to trust their own instincts in a lot of ways. Too often they're being told they need to do this or that, but most parents have good instincts. They know their own children better than anyone else. I think especially if their child has some kind of a disability, or is different somehow, those parents know them the best. I think it's important for parents to keep that in mind. The unfortunate reality is that parents need to be on top of the system. Children can fall through the cracks and they need to be persistent as much as they can. The third thing I would say is that parents need to be wary or careful about these "miracle interventions" or popular interventions. It's something I often speak about. Parents, in a lot of ways, want to do anything to help their children, and then they get taken in by people. Unfortunately, a lot of people make a lot of money off children with disabilities. ■

How can art engage inclusion?
See story on page 36

On cjnews.com: Defining the term, "disability"

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2013 Survey of American Jews—Lessons for Canada

How is Jewish identity and practice changing in America?
What can this tell us about what is happening in our own Jewish community?

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Panel **Dr. Frank Bialystok**, Centre for Canadian Studies at University College, University of Toronto

Bernie Farber, former CEO of the Canadian Jewish Congress, Senior Vice President with Gemini Power Corp.

Rabbi Aaron Levy, Founder and Executive Director of Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism

Moderator **Janice Stein**, Director, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto

Come hear about the recent landmark national survey of American Jews, and participate in a discussion with our panel of Canadian experts on what it might tell us about the Canadian Jewish community.

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Is inclusion an illusion?

JARED KRYBUS
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

I was born in Toronto. I'm 29 and have two younger siblings, Jordan, 26, and Karla, 22. My parents, Manny and Marlene, adopted me at birth. They're the only parents I've known, and I'm so fortunate that they have treated me like their own. They instilled in me a "never give up" attitude and told me not to let moments define who I am.

I live in a condo by myself. I work as a teacher's assistant at Zareinu Educational Centre and as a program assistant at DANI. I pay all my own expenses. I play goalie on a hockey team. I'm into hip hop and like to freestyle rap. And I love cooking, especially pasta with chicken.

I've been told that I have something called global delay, but I don't really know what it means. All I know is that I have a delay with processing, fine motor issues and a speech impediment. I stammer, and when I get really stuck, my mouth starts to tic or my hand goes up. I've had lots of awkward situations where people thought I was drunk, and that hurts.

I grew up in Thornhill and went to Vaughan Secondary School. I was in what they call an intensive program, where my classmates and I would integrate with the other kids for subjects such as gym and art. Kids would make fun of me in the playground and ask me why I spoke funny, so I became a great storyteller, because I really didn't know what to tell them.

> *People don't want to see people like me get hurt. They don't want to see me struggle. But struggling is good.*

I can never be myself. People always interrupt me and correct me and don't allow me to follow through. It takes me longer to process things than other people, but I was taught that it's better to take your time and focus on what you're doing and put your heart and love into it. But everyone is in a hurry. They don't take the time to hear me out. I'll be talking and they're trying to figure out what I'm saying, and they'll say the word before I have a chance to say it. I don't know what their intentions are – maybe nothing, maybe ignorance – but they don't have time, so they think it'll be faster if they try to figure it out themselves. I'm used to it by now, but it still annoys me.

I love working with people with challenges. I already advocate for myself, so I'd like to become a spokesperson who advocates for others like me, to help them find jobs, to prove to society that everyone is capable. I would love to change the perception that people with special needs are insufficient. We have to try to include them in society, even though they should already be considered part of society.

Everyone is human. Everyone has issues. People forget that every child is human. Instead of calling them "a special needs child" they should be calling them "a child with special needs" or "a child with Down syndrome." Put the human features first and the challenges second.

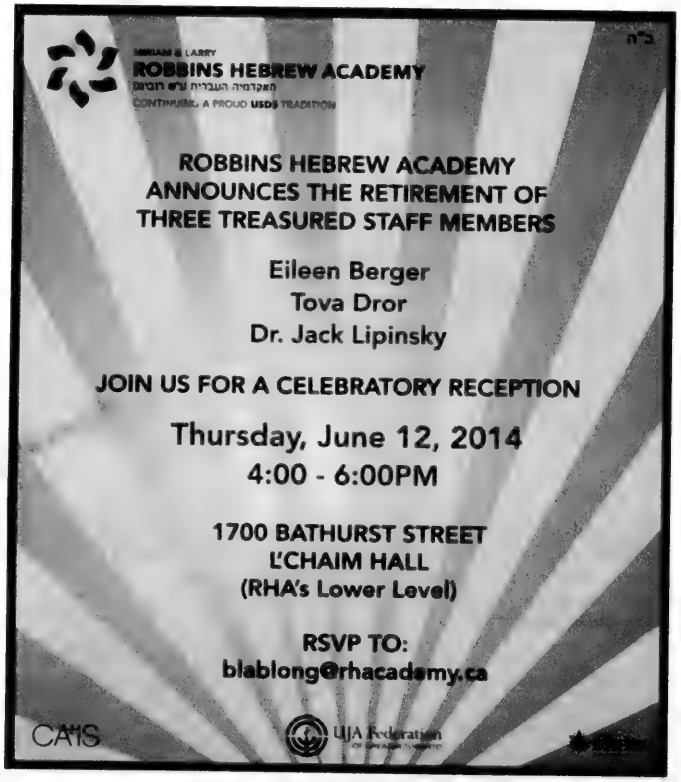
People are under the illusion that they're not special needs. Everybody creates their own normal. I play hockey every week, and that's normal for me. I've had a stutter all my life, so that's normal to me. It doesn't make me who I am, but it's part of me.

I am where I am not in spite of my limitations, but because of them. For example, I've developed problem-solving skills: if I can't get a word out, then I say an easier word. It has taught me to go with the flow and to take chances and not be afraid of the outcome. People are usually awkward around me, because they don't know what I'm going to say or how intelligent I'm going to be. But I can keep up a conversation with anyone about politics or sports or whatever. I may not have higher education, but that's doesn't mean that I'm not educated or I don't have my views or opinions.

People don't want to see people like me get hurt. They don't want to see me struggle. But struggling is good. It lets you know how to handle things, to problem-solve. You've got to learn how to deal with your struggles yourself, rather than have other people smooth things over for you.

If I could offer advice to people I'd say this: have no expectations whatsoever, have no preconceived notions. Don't judge. Saying, "He can't do it" is dismissive. There's a reason for everything! A child might not be able to communicate by mouth, but give him an iPad or another communication device and he can tell you everything.

I've learned so much from Zareinu's children. They've taught me to smile every day, and that when you think you can't do something, that's when you show people that you can. And that when you least expect it, that's when greatness happens. ■



THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 3, 2014

Canadian vet fought from Normandy to Germany

PAUL LUNGEN
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Lawrence Levy, who served in a forward position in the Canadian Army during World War II, proudly displays a flag he received in 2000 to commemorate the liberation of Holland. At right, during the war years. PAUL LUNGEN PHOTO

At 89, Lawrence Levy still has a twinkle in his eye, a ready smile and a sharp mind. He can remember in minute detail stuff that happened 70 years ago – just don't ask him what he did yesterday, he quips.

Seventy years ago, Levy was a volunteer in the Canadian Armed Forces. His unit, the Second Survey Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, was part of a follow-up wave of troops consolidating the foothold in Normandy established on D-Day, June 6, by units of the Canadian, British and American armies.

When he arrived in Normandy a few weeks after D-Day, the monumental seaborne invasion also known as Operation Overlord, Allied armies had advanced seven or eight miles inland. They were bogged down in front of the French town of Caen, which had been a British objective for the first day of the invasion.

When Levy's squad arrived on the scene, it was clear they'd driven into a particular kind of hell. Fighting at Caen was intense. The Germans had placed the bulk of their western panzer, or tank, forces in front of the city, which was a key crossroads and offered Germany an effective defensive position.

Levy's job as part of a five-man squad was to radio back to the artillery command the unit's observations of how effective its bombardments were. To get that sort of information, the unit had to be right at the front of the front, at the tip of the spear, so to speak.

So how far forward was he, actually?

"I could almost holler at those guys," he said.

Of course, hollering wasn't on his mind. Keeping his head down and staying alive was. He experienced moments of terror during the war, but the most frightening times were those he spent at Caen – even more frightening than the time later in the campaign when a German bomb landed on a Belgian school that had been turned into a barracks. He and other soldiers had to be dug out, he said, adding that despite the blast, he didn't suffer any injuries.

At Caen, though, survival meant staying underground in a slit trench he dug to avoid the bullets, bombs and shrapnel that could cut your life short in an instant.

"I couldn't move," he recalled. "The Germans were knocking hell out of us."

When they used "sound ranging" to identify German artillery, the unit's radio frequencies alerted German units to their presence and invited retaliation. "As soon as that happens, the world comes apart," he said.

One time, his judgment suffered a lapse. A fellow soldier one night left the protection of the trench, ventured into no-man's land and came back with food and drink for all. The next day, Levy decided to try it for himself, but he was quickly pinned down by enemy fire and he spent hours in a trench, waiting for darkness. Under cover of night, "I went back to my trench and stayed there."

> *I couldn't move. The Germans were knocking hell out of us.*

The battle for Caen marked a remarkable success story for Canadian fighters. The 3rd Canadian Division suffered some 1,200 casualties in the battle, more than at D-Day, but they liberated the city and opened the door to further advances in Normandy.

Their opposition included a formidable German fighting unit, the 12th SS, also known as the "Hitler Youth" regiment. Fanatical fighters, they were also, of course, fanatical Nazis. When they captured Canadian soldiers, their commanding officer, Gen. Kurt Meyer, ordered them shot.

That was just the sort of fate Levy had hoped to avoid by receiving permission to alter the religion on his dog tags – the identifying plates carried on a necklace by all soldiers – from "Hebrew" to Protestant.

He knew he'd be at the front and risked capture. The last thing he wanted is for the Nazis to know he was a Jew. Later, when he saw Canadian soldiers being buried in mass graves, he realized that with his dog tags, he too would have been buried under a cross. Not exactly what he signed up for.

When he enlisted in the army as an 18-year-old, fighting as a Jew against Nazism was only part of his motivation, he said. He was greatly influenced by the ill-fated Dieppe raid in August 1942. When casualty lists were published back in Toronto, he recognized a lot of the guys who were killed. They were from his neighbourhood, the area around Palmerston and Euclid avenues and Major Street. He wanted to avenge their deaths.

He enlisted, declining the recruiter's suggestion he serve in the infantry. Instead he asked to be placed in a mobile outfit. He joined the survey unit, which contained a fair number of other Jewish guys, he said.

His unit consisted of himself armed with a Sten gun, a driver and two sergeants, who made the observations and passed them along to him to radio back. Three of the five survived the war. The driver was killed. The other soldier was wounded and his ultimate fate is unknown to him.

Levy saw plenty of death. He recalls vividly trying to help soldiers in a Polish armoured unit of 20 to 30 Sherman tanks who were wiped out by Germany's dreaded 88-mm high velocity guns. There was not much left of them to help.

Following the battle for Caen, Levy's unit took part in the battle for Falaise, another important engagement in which Allied forces attempted to encircle and capture German units.

From there, his unit and Canadian forces headed north, through Belgium. They played a vital role in opening the port of Antwerp to Allied shipping by clearing out an entrenched German army in the Scheldt estuary, which cut off the port from the sea. From there it was northwards to Nijmegen, Holland, and then across the Rhine into Germany. Levy was in the port city of Emden when Germany surrendered. Remarkably, after all these years, he can recall his unit's advance, city by city, town by town.

In 2000, Levy joined other Canadian veterans on a trip to the Netherlands, where they were showered with food and drink, not to mention gratitude for liberating the country from the Nazis.

"It was a great feeling to be with the Dutch people," he recalled.

It remains a pleasant memory that made all the difficult ones worthwhile. ■

Do cultural barriers keep numbers down?

SHERI SHEFA
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Lawrence Sager, who rose through the ranks over his 25-year career to become a sergeant with the Toronto Police Service, emphatically insists that as an organization, the TPS is not systemically anti-Semitic.

"But being Jewish hasn't helped me in this job. I'm not going to say there is anti-Semitism, but there is a stigmatism," Sager said.

Speaking to *The CJN* about some of the reasons why Jews don't typically consider careers in law enforcement and why they're so underrepresented in this field, the Montreal-born Sager discussed whether anti-Semitism is a problem.

"There has been real anti-Semitism on the service, like any other organization. It's not that Toronto Police is anti-Semitic. It's not, but you get some people, who just out of ignorance, are," he said.

"There was a sergeant of mine, who I always considered a friend, and he always made jokes about Jews. I used to let things roll off my back and a couple of my guys came up to me and said, 'Lawrence, you know what? He's not joking'... and they felt bad... because he was even making them uncomfortable."

He said that somehow his sergeant's behaviour was leaked to the unit commander, and he was asked to make a formal apology.

Morris Zbar, who spent about 27 years working in corrections in various roles, starting out as a prison guard and working his way up to serve as Ontario's deputy minister of corrections, said when he first started working in a maximum security prison in 1975, "there weren't very many Jewish prison guards. I'm not sure there were any."

Zbar said that although he didn't experience "overt" anti-Semitism, his Jewishness was questioned by his colleagues.

"There were references made when I first started... Here I was a Jewish boy with a master's degree working on a doctorate, working as a prison guard and people were wondering, so there was a little suspicion, a little concern," he said.

"People would say, 'How come you're working here? Don't you have money?' But to me, that wasn't said in a mean, personal way," he said, adding that it was more of a "characterization based on ignorance."

"Inmates would sometimes say, 'Dirty Jew,' and things like that... but it is what it is, and certainly, in terms of my career, I wasn't hindered, because I ended up being deputy minister."

Jacob Berkenblit, a probation officer with the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, is newer to the field, having worked in the system for the past eight years.

He said he hasn't faced anti-Semitism, but he did recall a client who asked him if he read the Bible, and Berkenblit responded that he was Jewish.

It wasn't until months later that his client mentioned that "the judge [in his case] was Jewish, the lawyer was Jewish, I'm Jewish, and we're all out to get him," Berkenblit recalled.

"But I've never felt that my religion or beliefs were ever compromised, used as a negative, used as a positive, used against me. It's never been an issue."

Sager believes the fact that law enforcement professionals have so little contact with members of the Jewish community feeds into the stereotypes and general ignorance.

He said that even in Toronto's 32 Division – bordered by Steeles and Lawrence avenues to the north and south, and by Bayview Avenue and the CN Rail line (near Dufferin Street) to the east and west – which serves a large Jewish community, some of his colleagues are still ignorant about the community.

"They come here, they police a Jewish community and they take a certain viewpoint and make fun of people, whether it's because of the Sabbath elevator being hypocritical, or even if you need the police, you're not going to call them because it's the Sabbath, and to them, it sounds stupid," he said.

"There is ignorance on the part of the police into the customs of Orthodox Jews. This Jewish population sometimes views this lack of understanding as intolerance, which it is not. The service has seen little need to learn the customs of the Jewish population, as there is little interaction with this community. They seldom call the police and are not frequently caught committing crimes."

Zbar estimated that there are about 80 Jewish inmates in federal prisons across the country.

"The Jewish community is not considered a community in crisis. We're not lawbreakers... so the police don't feel like they have to make the inroads that they would with other communities," Sager said.

But he added that the Jewish community is just as much a part of the problem.

"We have the blinders on, thinking police work isn't for Jews... Here's what the recruiters think: the Jewish community has... no interest in becoming policemen, so why should we bother?"

Sonia Halpern, an English and writing studies professor at the University of Western Ontario who recently wrote a study about Jews in law enforcement, reported that internationally, significant inroads have been made in recent years by police forces to accommodate Jews and address anti-Semitism both internally and in society, but they're still having difficulty recruiting Jewish officers.

"Combine these issues with the low Jewish population generally, and the fact that, culturally, policing is not generally encouraged within North American Jewry, and we see that Jewish citizens are not as represented by their own people as much as other groups are."

Even Sager is torn about how he would feel if any of his four children followed in his footsteps

"I told my wife that not one of my kids is going to be a policeman. I don't want it for them. I want something better for them. I didn't want them to face danger, and I want them to do better for themselves," he said.

On the other hand, what makes him question his instinct to keep his children from considering careers in law enforcement is that he wouldn't have to worry about them financially.

"I'd worry about their safety, but not financially, and sometimes that's a bigger problem than anything else," Sager said.

"I think if parents knew that their kids could be making six figures almost from the start and be guaranteed a job for the rest of their lives, and a pension, they might look at it differently."

Aside from a few isolated incidents, Sager insisted that police officers today are much more sensitive to minority issues than in the past.

"It's a younger generation, better educated, they've got more life experience... They come from different backgrounds, and the values that they are taught at home are completely different from the values that were taught to the generation that came before them."

In fact, two years ago, Sager led an initiative to obtain and erect a six-foot menorah every Chanukah in front of the 32 Division station near Yonge Street and Finch Avenue, which was supported by his superintendent, Selwyn Fernandes, and his staff.

Halpern agreed that police are being better trained to be more culturally sensitive.

"I think the police realize that it only serves to their benefit and the benefit of the communities. They develop greater respect for the communities they are policing and the community, as a result, develops greater respect for the police. So it's really a win-win for everybody."

In spite of these inroads, Halpern said that based on her research, it doesn't look like Jews are more or less likely as a group to enter the field than in the past.

"But I'd like to get across the idea that so much of Judaism is based on the theme of justice and police work addresses the concerns of justice. Because of the value that police place on saving lives and maintainimg a quality of life for people, it seems to me very consistent with Jewish values," Halpern said.■

> *"I've never felt that my religion or beliefs were ever compromised, used as a negative, used as a positive, used against me. It's never been an issue.*
>
> **Jacob Berkenblit**
> PROBATION OFFICER

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Identity plan for Diaspora Jews gets OK

JTA

Israel's government has approved an initiative to strengthen the connection between Israel and world Jewry, as well as to strengthen the Jewish identity of young Diaspora Jews.

The Government of Israel-World Jewry Joint Initiative was approved by government ministers on Sunday.

The comprehensive, multi-year plan will be based on joint initiatives to be developed by the State of Israel and world Jewry, according to the Prime Minister's Office and the Jewish Agency for Israel, which will work in partnership with the government in organizing the initiative.

The total budget to implement the initiative of about $168 million will come one-third from the Israeli government and two-thirds from world Jewry. The Israeli government's contribution is above existing funding for world Jewry programs.

Natan Sharansky

> *The State of Israel needs a strong Jewish world and the Jewish world needs a strong Israel.*
>
> **Natan Sharansky**
> Jewish Agency Chair

Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky addressed a government cabinet meeting on Sunday in support of the plan.

"The State of Israel needs a strong Jewish world and the Jewish world needs a strong Israel. This government decision, which comes during a difficult period of budget cuts, is the strongest expression of the centrality of Jewish identity as the cornerstone of Israel-Diaspora relations," Sharansky said in a statement following the vote.

The initiative will work under the auspices of the Ministry of Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs, headed by Naftali Bennett, leader of the Jewish Home party.

The initiative comes following a two-year planning process that involved thousands of Jewish leaders from Israel and around the world. ■

Suspect in museum shooting claims responsibility

JTA

A man arrested on suspicion of killing four people last month at the Jewish Museum of Belgium allegedly claimed responsibility for the attack in a video.

Belgian federal prosecutor Frederic Van Leeuw said Sunday in a news conference in Brussels that a video found after the arrest of Mehdi Nemmouche, 29, at a bus and train station in Marseille May 29, includes his voice claiming responsibility for the May 24 attack and murders. Nemmouche had tried to film the attack, according to Van Leeuw, but the camera failed.

Nemmouche was arrested at Marseille's main train and bus station, Saint-Charles, on May 29 and is currently being held on suspicion of terrorist activity. He arrived in Marseille aboard a bus that left from Amsterdam via Brussels.

According to TF1, a French television broadcaster, Nemmouche was stopped by customs officers performing routine checks. He declined to open his bag, leading the customs officers to evacuate the bus and check the contents of every bag aboard. The weapons found in the man's luggage "were arms of the same type used on May 24 in Brussels," an unnamed source told *AFP*.

Nemmouche also carried a small, portable video camera and a baseball cap similar to the one that is believed to have been worn by the perpetrator of the Brussels Jewish museum shooting, according to *AFP*.

> *It seems that the worst fears of western governments are being realized. The European jihadists in Syria are a time bomb waiting to go off.*
>
> **Natan Sharansky**
> President, CRIF

Also Sunday, Belgian police took two people in for questioning in connection with the investigation into Nemmouche, according to *AFP*.

Nemmouche became a radical jihadist while serving a sentence in France in 2009 for armed robbery, TF1 reported. He left France for Belgium in 2012 and from there travelled to Syria.

Nemmouche had spent a total of five years in prison from late 2007 to December of 2012, and had visited the United Kingdom, Lebanon, Turkey and Syria after his release. He returned to Europe in March 2014, BFMTV reported Sunday.

Roger Cukierman, president of French Jewry's umbrella organization CRIF, told the British *Independent* newspaper that it would be a "huge relief" if Nemmouche is found to be the Brussels killer.

"While he was free, another attack was likely," Cukierman said. "It seems that the worst fears of western governments are being realized. The European jihadists in Syria are a time bomb waiting to go off." ■

Israeli Dragons

The Ohalo Dolphins group of dragon boat paddlers from Israel are participating in the world championships in Italy this September. The team is made up of men, women, Jews, Christians, Druze and Muslims from Israel's kibbutzim, moshavim and cities. See how you can support the team by visiting their Ohalo Dolphins Facebook page.

OPINION

Zen and the State of Israel

Sagi Melamed

On the evening before Passover, I called H. and after we had wished each other a happy holiday, I posed an open question: "What will be?" H, one of the most senior media people in Israel, sighed and said: "Things are not good in Israel. I don't think it could be worse."

"You've been saying that for nearly 20 years!" I replied.

"You're right," said H, "but this time I think it's really true."

Nowadays I'm hearing more and more pessimistic comments about Israel from Israelis. Many are saying, "Things aren't like they used to be" or "The situation is going downhill" or "It's hard to see any light at the end of the tunnel."

Consider three reasons for these pessimistic assertions.

The first reason is personal. Most such comments are made by older people. Inevitably, the human body has its own dynamic. What was once strong and healthy is less so today. Over time, posture becomes less erect and knees hurt more. Once, running was easy. Today, climbing the stairs is a challenge. Without reading glasses, the words are blurry. As for the future, that, too, does not promise much improvement. So having a sense that the country is deteriorating is also a reflection of a sense of betrayal by one's own body.

The second reason is sectoral. I have not conducted a survey, yet I'm prepared to suggest that complaints about the decline of the country tend to come more from secular Ashkenazim. They were the primary founders of the country, they ruled and led Israel for the first decades of its existence, and their supremacy was gradually taken away from them. The melting pot has done its work. The music that was once dubbed "Mizrahi music" is now mainstream, a Sephardi chief of staff or president is no longer newsworthy, and the ethnic demon became history a long time ago. Anyone who has attended an officers training graduation ceremony recently will have seen how many IDF officers are wearing kippot. So the complaints of secular Ashkenazim about the country are also complaints about the hegemony that was taken from them.

The third reason is national, an undermining of the basic belief of Israelis that "the sun will come out tomorrow," as the song from *Annie* says. This is due to several parallel processes: economic ones, such as the high cost of housing alongside the consumer appetites of Israelis, which are growing out of all proportion to productivity or their ability to support those desires; and political and regional processes, the foremost of which is losing the hope of reaching peace with our neighbours, undermining the belief that the next generation will no longer need to fight.

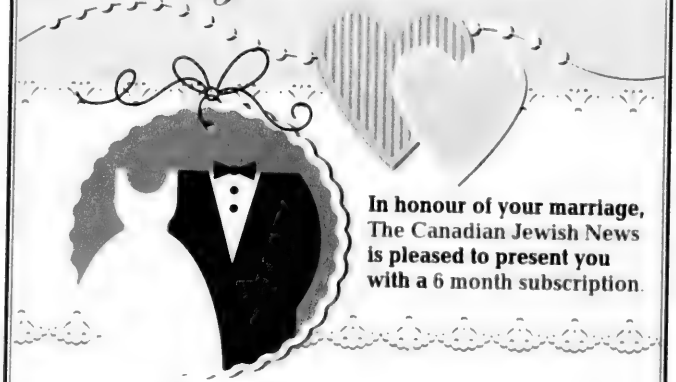
So much for explaining the pessimism. So what about the optimism? Worrying about the future is understandable and maybe even part of the Jewish character. However, if we look at the current situation of Israel in general and of Jews around the world in particular, using the lenses of Zen, which focus on the here and now, things have clearly never been better!

In other words, if we can overcome the nostalgic tendency to glorify times gone by and to doubt that "the sun will come out tomorrow," we can see that it would be hard to point to a time in history, from the patriarch Abraham until the present day, when things were better for the Jewish People. A very brief summary:

A sovereign state; a strong Jewish army; a stable economy; innovation and creativity; weakening of the country's enemies; and equal rights and opportunities for Jews almost anywhere they live – and that's just a partial list.

To close, a quote from Albert Schweitzer: "To the question of whether I am a pessimist or an optimist, I answer that my knowledge is pessimistic, but my will and my hope are optimistic." ■

Congratulations!



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German car maker Audi reveals Nazi past

THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

German car giant Audi's predecessor company used slave labourers from concentration camps during World War II on a massive scale, a new report has found.

An historical investigation commissioned by the company – the last German auto company to do so, preceded by Volkswagen, Daimler and BMW – found that when Audi was operating under the name Auto Union, it struck a deal with the SS in which more than 3,700 inmates from Nazi concentration camps were put to work for the company.

The 500-page report, authored by historians Martin Kukowski and Rudolf Boch and published May 26, revealed that the Nazi SS divisions built seven labour camps for this purpose.

Another 16,500 labourers – not interned in concentration camps – also were made to work for the car company in the Saxon cities of Zwickau and Chemnitz, in addition to 18,000 at a plant in Bavaria where more than 4,000 died, the report noted.

"More than 20,000 forced labourers were used in the production of Auto Union in their Saxon works, including almost one-fifth from concentration camps," said the study authors, who also found that disabled workers were sent to concentration camps to be executed.

German tank production line WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO

During the war, some of Audi's plants were turned over for military production of tanks and aircraft engines.

Kukowski and Boch, basing their report on access to Audi archives, said that Auto Union's management bore "moral responsibility" for the exploitation of slave labour, focusing particularly on founder, Dr. Richard Bruhn, a Nazi party member.

Bruhn was Auto Union's chairman of the board from 1932, when the company was founded, until 1945, and again after the company was re-established after the war. Bruhn, heralded on Audi's website as the "Father of the Auto Union," died in 1964.

The study's findings came as a shock to its current management.

"I'm very shocked by the scale of the involvement of the former Auto Union leadership in the system of forced and slave labour," Audi works council head Peter Mosch told *Wirtschaftswoche*, a German business news magazine.

"I was not aware of the extent [of this involvement]," he added.

Auto Union merged with Volkswagen, Audi's parent company, in 1965, dropping the original name in 1985 after a merger.

According to the *Daily Mail*, a decade ago, Audi paid millions into a fund set up by the German auto industry to compensate Nazi slave labourers and their descendants.

The president of Audi Canada did not respond to requests for comment as *The CJN* went to press. ■

TimesofIsrael.com

World leaders urged to ignore new Palestinian unity government

JTA

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticized European acceptance of a Palestinian unity government just hours before its new ministers were sworn in.

"It is surprising for me that European governments, which vehemently condemned the Brussels shooting, talk collegially or even in a friendly tone about the Palestinian unity government with Hamas," Netanyahu said Monday morning at a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee.

"This is a terrorist organization which undertakes criminal attacks and boasts about them."

The Palestinian unity government was sworn in Monday by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank city of Ramallah, the capital of the Palestinian Authority.

The ceremony was almost delayed by last-minute fighting over the configuration of the new cabinet and a threat of boycott by Hamas.

Israel stopped actively looking for ways to continue American-backed peace talks with the Palestinians after the announcement that Abbas' Fatah party had agreed to form a unity government with Hamas.

Netanyahu urged world leaders not to recognize the new Palestinian unity government.

"I call on all responsible elements in the international community not to run to recognize the Palestinian government of which Hamas is a part and which rests on Hamas. Hamas is a terrorist organization that calls for the destruction of Israel, and the international community must not embrace it. This will not strengthen peace; it will strengthen terrorism," Netanyahu said Sunday at the start of the regular weekly cabinet meeting.

Abbas said on Saturday during a meeting in Ramallah with pro-Palestinian activists from abroad that Israel has threatened to boycott the new government.

The U.S. State Department on Friday said that the Obama administration had not yet officially recognized a new Palestinian unity government and that Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah has not been invited to the White House to meet with U.S. officials, despite claims to that effect by Palestinian authorities.

"There has been no invitation issued to Prime Minister Hamdallah. As we've said all along, we'll not make decisions until we see the final formation of the interim government," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said during a briefing with reporters. ■

Thousands march in NYC Israel parade

Tens of thousands marched in New York in the Celebrate Israel Parade, which is marking its 50th anniversary. Organizers had expected some 35,000 participants in Sunday's parade up Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. This year's parade was the focus of intra-communal controversy, with some right-wing activists objecting to the participation of several left-wing Jewish groups, including the New Israel Fund. Among those participating were more than 80 Jews from around New York who are planning to make aliyah in the coming months.

Jewish Life

The story of DAVY THE PUNK

Canadian folk musician Bob Bossin stands in front of a backdrop of him as a young boy with his parents, Marcia and Davy Bossin during his performance. BARRY PRICE PHOTO

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Canadian folk musician Bob Bossin has spent much of his life searching for his father Davy Bossin who died in 1963, when Bob was a teenager. While he remembers a quiet, conservative man who was also an arresting storyteller, Davy was better known as one of Toronto's most wanted men.

Davy's Jewish pals and the local authorities knew of Bossin's dad as Davy the Punk. When the son first heard of this nom de guerre in the mid-1970s, Bossin began an investigation that would define the rest of his life.

In 2014, that search for his father has turned into a one-man show that Bossin is now touring across Canada. The show, *Davy the Punk*, features original songs and electrifying stories about the underbelly of Toronto the Good that few history books mention.

"When I turned 60, I had this little epiphany," Bossin says. "I said if there's something you've always wanted to do and haven't started it yet, when exactly do you think you're going to. For me, that was to write about my father's life."

Bossin spent eight years working on the production ; the first two years doing research, the next six writing the music and bringing the various story strands together.

The show is a tribute to both sides of Bossin's dad: the loyal patriarch who set his criminal life aside to raise his son right, as well as that "punk" who was notorious to Toronto police.

Davy the Punk also features Bossin's original music. He says that this was the first time he wrote about his father directly in his music. One of the show's tunes, *Scatter My Ashes on the Racetrack*, came from one of his father's demands to Bossin's mom for when he died.

Bossin, now 68 and a B.C. resident, says he grew to adore storytelling from his father, who loved to tell tall tales of his life on the street to close friends and family.

In *Davy the Punk*, Bossin touches on his father's Jewish upbringing. In the 1920s, Jews were mostly barred from getting white-collar jobs in Toronto and many Jews ended up in the gambling business, which was illegal.

Davy grew to be a leader in the city's gambling enterprise. He came under the watch of Toronto authorities when he started a race wire, an up-to-the-second soundboard of information from the horse racing tracks.

In 1940, police raided Davy's race wire operation in what was, at that time, the biggest police raid in the city's history.

"The prevailing theory was... if they could knock out the race wire, they could stop organized crime in its tracks," Bossin says, noting that the theory was far from true.

Davy may have been notorious by the standards of the local police, but he was a beloved member of Toronto's Jewish community. Since he got into the gambling business before the Great Depression, he was quite wealthy during years when his friends were in financial strain.

"He was extraordinarily generous," Bossin says. "He would take 30 people out to dinner and he was a very honest man. What he did was illegal but in every other way, it was honourable."

To track down details about his dad's past, Bossin spoke to old relatives and some of his dad's acquaintances, although only a few came forward with details. He also dug up dirt by looking through newspaper archives and Freedom of Information requests.

Davy the Punk has music, as well as comedy and Canadian history. Bossin presents his father's story and performs music while wearing his father's tie. Meanwhile, Bossin released a book about his father, also called *Davy the Punk*, which came out in March.

Those familiar with Bossin's career as a folk singer and songwriter, most notably as a member of the influential Canadian group Stringband in the 1970s and 1980s, will likely enjoy his new material.

Bossin says that his mother, the late Marcia Bossin, told him that his dad left the gambling business to protect his son, saying he didn't want Bob to grow up with a dad who had a criminal lifestyle. For the rest of Davy's life, he was a booking agent at Southern Ontario nightclubs.

"I see every year more and more of how he was in me, so I think the influence is profound," says Bossin, who later named his son Davy.

"There's a mountain of information that I'll simply never know. But that's probably true of everybody and their father." ■

The one-man show will stop in Vancouver (June 3-7), Toronto (June 10-14), as well as the fringe festivals in Ottawa (June 19-29) and Winnipeg (July 16-27). Bossin will also perform "Davy the Punk" at Concordia University in Montreal on June 30.

Musical challenges audience to discuss inclusion

KATHRYN KATES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

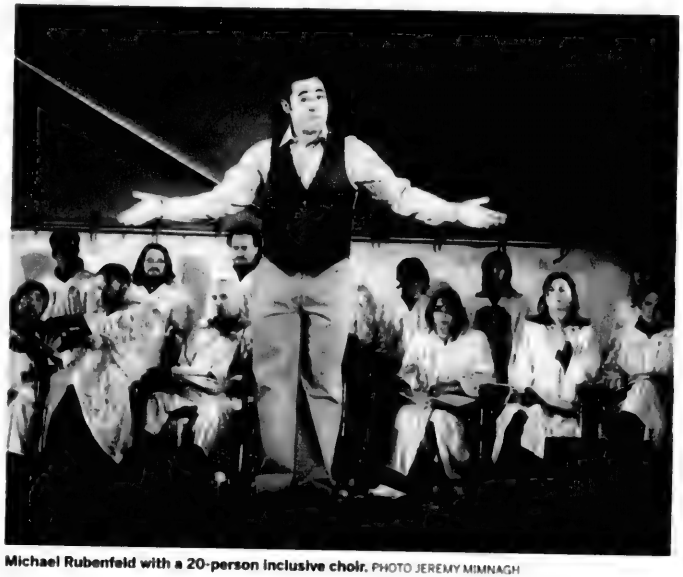
A chance encounter with a quadriplegic led Michael Rubenfeld to create *The Book of Judith*, a musical that questions commonly held ideas about disability, running at the Ability Centre in Whitby June 12-14.

Created with Sarah Garton Stanley and Judith Snow, the musical came about when Rubenfeld met Snow, a visual artist and advocate for inclusion communities. The trio have worked together extensively to explore Snow's life as a quadriplegic.

"I met Judith in 2005. A good friend of mine, Caleb Yong, was working as her personal assistant and approached me because Judith was looking for a lover and he asked to see if he could help her find one," says Rubenfeld. "He asked me if I knew of anyone. I was blown away by the question because it was weird to be asked. I couldn't think of anyone who would be interested in being her lover because she was a quadriplegic.

"My answer to him was, I don't know but I would love to make a piece of theatre about it and explore that question theatrically. We met and she asked me if I had considered anything about her beyond the fact that she was quadriplegic and I realized I hadn't. At that point she said she would let me do this play, but that we had to do it together and that is when our relationship began."

The play, which was staged in Toronto in 2009, challenges audiences to confront their own assumptions surrounding disability, and engage in a conversation. Whitby will mark the end of the play's four-city Ontario tour, starring Rubenfeld, and featuring Snow, and actor Alex Bulmer, along with a 20-person inclusive choir local to each area the play is performed in.



Michael Rubenfeld with a 20-person inclusive choir. PHOTO JEREMY MIMNAGH

Rubenfeld says the story is about him making a piece of theatre with Judith that fails and the reasons for why he did. "I play myself in the show, but I play a kind of version of myself that is stuck in this idea that because my life was changed by Judith, then now I have the capacity to change other people's lives with Judith's story. The play is set up as a story I'm going to tell about me and Judith, but what we slowly come to realize is that what we are actually getting is my version because Judith quits because she didn't like the way I was behaving. So, in my pursuit of telling this story about inclusion I end up excluding her from the process so that I can be front and centre and tell her story. She ultimately does come back and make the show with us," Rubenfeld says.

"Most people would assume they are inclusive, myself included. But, what I realized through my work with Judith is that she embraces other people's ignorance and allows space for them to make mistakes and then to grow and learn with her. As a result, she's built relationships with people all over the world."

Snow is also founding director of Laser Eagles, an organization that creates opportunities for artists with limited mobility and speech to explore their artistic vision.

The Book of Judith is staged outside in a tent and is treated like a religious revival.

Inspired by *The Book of Judith's* core message of inclusion, a day-long symposium on June 13 will be held at the Abilities Centre in Whitby to examine collaboration and inclusion within the performing arts. Artists, arts professionals and organizations committed to incorporating inclusive thinking and practice through their creation process, programming and educational initiatives will be in attendance.

The play is produced by Selfconscious Theatre in partnership with Abilities Centre and the Theatre Centre. For tickets visit www.bookofjudith.com, or by phone at 905-665-8500. The play boasts original music by Andrew Penner, under the musical direction of Paula Wolfson. ■

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Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

ANNE DUBLIN LAUNCHES NEW YOUNG ADULT NOVEL AT HOLY BLOSSOM, JUNE 8

Anne Dublin, the award-winning author of books for children and teens, is nothing if not prolific. Her works have included biographies on Toronto social activist **June Callwood**, Montreal Jewish athlete **Bobbie Rosenfeld** and *Anne of Green Gables* writer **Lucy Maud Montgomery**. She's also written historical novels set in Hamburg in the early 18th century (*The Baby Experiment*), in Poland in 1937 (*The Orphan Rescue*), and in Toronto in 1954 (*Written On The Wind*, about Hurricane Hazel).

Dublin's newest historical novel is *Stealing Time* (ages 10 and up), about young Jonah Wiley who steals an antique pocket watch and is hurled back in time with his stepbrother to Egypt, China, France and other places. The book launch is at Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St., June 8, 1:30 p.m. Free admission.

• • •

Davy The Punk: British Columbian **Dave Bossin** revisits Toronto's gambling underworld of the 1930s and 1940s in a new musical show based on the life of his long-deceased outlaw father. Bossin knew his father only as a mild-mannered booking agent, but later learned from his associates and the police of his career as a gangster and gambler. Bossin's *Davy the Punk* tells the story – first as a book (published this spring by Porcupine's Quill), now as a stage musical at Innes Deluxe Theatre, 2 Sussex Ave. June 10 to 15, 8 p.m. www.davythepunk.com

• • •

Names in the News: Ottawa professor-poet **Seymour Mayne** recently traveled to Romania where two of his books of word sonnets were released in a bilingual edition titled *Auspicious Calligraphy: Word Sonnets*. His book of short stories, *The Old Blue Couch and Other Stories*, was also reissued in Romanian translation.

• • •

Musical Notes

• An all-star klezmer band performs to raise funds for the Klezkanada Scholarship Fund. Oakdale Golf Club, June 8, 12 p.m., concert at 2 p.m. For details please email p.godfrey@sympatico.ca

• Active 55+ presents Art Appreciation with art history teacher **Osnat Lippa**, with a focus on *Francis Bacon and Henry Moore – Postwar Perspectives on the Human Form*. (These artists are currently on exhibit at the Art Gallery of Ontario.) Preregister $20, or $12 per session at the door. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesdays June 10 and 17, 1 to 2:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Singer **Gillian Stecyk** presents *Arias & Anecdotes*, an "afternoon at the opera" featuring an array of arias and fascinating historical anecdotes about the operas and their composers, with selected choruses sung by the MNJCC's Daytime Choir. Miles Nadal JCC, June 11, 1:30, $4 drop-in. 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem recently acquired Gustav Klimt's *Die Medizin*. It is his only remaining oil study for a controversial series of monumental paintings created for the University of Vienna's Great Hall. The painting, completed in 1898, is one of three allegorical panels representing the themes of enlightenment Klimt developed. The others were destroyed by retreating Nazis in 1945.

Arts in Brief

• Holocaust survivor **Sidney Zoltak** returns to his childhood town of Siemiatycze, Poland and is reunited with members of the Krinsky family who provided underground shelter for 14 months; then he joins thousands of people on the March of the Living. It's all part of a broadcast to air on CBC's *The National* on June 4; it should also be online. www.marchofthelliving.org

• The 2014 Luminato Festival features many theatre, dance, music, film and other arts events. Runs June 5 to 16 at venues around town. www.luminatofestival.com

• Critic **Adam Nayman** continues his series on the films of **David Lynch** with a look at *The Straight Story*. Miles Nadal JCC, June 9, 7 to 9 p.m. $12 drop-in, students $6.

At the Galleries: **Philip Baldwin** and **Monica Guggisberg** are the artists behind *Amphores Boats and Journeys: New Work 2014*, an exhibition at the Sandra Ainsley Gallery Warehouse, 100 Sunrise Ave., Unit 150, until June 20. 416-214-9490, www.sandraainsleygallery.com

Out of Town: *The Esther Diaries*, a new song cycle by Canadian composer **Haralobos Stafylakis**, focuses on the story of the *Scroll of Esther (Megillat Esther)* as a sort of "psychological thriller, with Esther as its powerful heroine." Featuring soprano **Sharon Azrieli Perez**, dancer **Roger Sinha**, and the **McGill Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Boris Brott**. Maison Symphonique, Montreal, June 10, 7:30 p.m. www.ocm-mco.org ■

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Bonert wins fiction prize at Jewish Book Awards

BILL GLADSTONE
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Like sunlight diffracted through a prism into a spectrum of colours, the books honoured at the 2014 Stan and Helen Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards represent a diverse assortment of places across the Diaspora, including South Africa, Belarus, Ukraine, Salonika, and Central and Eastern Europe.

Kenneth Bonert took the coveted fiction prize for his acclaimed novel *The Lion Seeker*, which documents the life of Jewish characters in Johannesburg, who are originally from a shtetl in Lithuania.

Bonert, who was born in South Africa and came to Toronto in 1989 at age 17, based his characters on his family's past. "I found when I started to write that a lot of the voices of my relatives and the people I grew up with were strongly embedded in my mind," he told *The CJN* prior to receiving the award last week in a ceremony at the Toronto Public Library's Bram & Bluma Appel Salon.

"I think the first 18 years of your life are probably the ones that make the most vivid impression. And a lot of writers tend to go back to that period as a sort of wellspring for their imagination. That was certainly the case with this book."

Although she is a New York-based American whose book focuses on the experiences of the Jews in a predominantly Jewish city in Greece, Renee Levine Melammed won the biography/memoir prize for *An Ode to Salonika: The Ladino Verses of Bouena Sarfatty*.

The Canadian connection comes through her subject: Salonika-born Bouena Sarfatty Garfinkle, who lived in Montreal for more than half a century after the war. During the Holocaust the Nazis deported and killed almost all of Salonika's 60,000 Jews. Sarfatty Garfinkle gave Levine Melammed hundreds of her Ladino poems memorializing the community she knew, and the latter translated them and put them into an historical context.

The scholarship prize went to the chronicler of another Nazi-decimated community. Dr. Albert Kaganovitch, originally of Russia and now of Winnipeg, wrote *The Long Life and Swift Death of Jewish Rechitsa* in Russian but won the prize for the English translation.

Kenneth Bonert AVITAL ZEMER PHOTO

As in years past, Holocaust themes dominated the awards. The prize in youth literature went to Winnipeg author Carol Matas for *Dear Canada, Pieces of the Past: The Holocaust Diary of Rose Rabinowitz*, while Toronto author Ken Setterington won the Holocaust literature prize for *Branded by the Pink Triangle*.

Although Setterington isn't Jewish and his book has no explicitly Jewish theme, it won because it chronicles the Nazi persecution of gay men, who were incarcerated in Nazi work camps and forced to wear pink triangles.

The Holocaust also resonates through *Correspondences* featuring poems by Anne Michaels and portraits by Bernice Eisenstein, each of whom was cited for the poetry award.

Jeffrey Veidlinger's *In the Shadow of the Shtetl* presents a portrait of Ukraine as told by local Jewish survivors of the prewar years, the Holocaust and the Stalinist era. Veidlinger interviewed more than 400 elderly Ukrainian Jews, many of whom were still living in their native shtetlach.

The prize for Yiddish translation went to Frieda Forman, editor of *The Exile Book of Yiddish Women Writers* and the prize for Jewish thought and culture to Josh Lambert for *Unclean Lips: Obscenity, Jews and American Culture*.

Over 26 years, some $104,000 in prize money has been handed out to 194 winners. ■

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Two books by Toronto authors

MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Now and Then Books, a Toronto-based publisher is to be commended for bringing readers *A Basket of Apples*, an anthology of six thematically connected short stories by the acclaimed writer Shirley Faessler who died in 1997.

The stories were first published in 1998 by McClelland and Stewart. As a way of re-acquainting new generations of readers to Faessler and to the vibrant Yiddish-speaking enclave in the Kensington Market area of downtown Toronto in the late 1920s and 1930s, Now and Then Books has reissued the collection in an esthetically pleasing booklet of some 180 pages.

The stories are intertwined. They appear to be autobiographical, depicting different pieces of the jumbled jigsaw that formed the author's colourful family. With unabashedly bold writing, she deftly, pointedly, captured the cacophonous, mostly hard-edged, tangled-up, Jewish immigrant life that she remembered growing up.

Faessler introduces us to a roughhouse assortment of vivid, memorable characters. There are no wilting, diminished personalities in these stories. All of them leave a dent in the wall of the reader's memory bank. In one story we meet the author's step-uncle, Yankev, and his wife, Henye. In another story, we meet the author's father, Avrom Mendel and her stepmother, Chayele. Faessler describes the respective spouse's feelings for one another in pitiable and painful detail. In the other stories, we meet a former employer from the author's young adulthood, school chums, street personalities and countryside rakes. The characters are remarkably convincing and emotionally evocative.

Faessler is greatly adept at creating believable dialogue. She writes scenes of high drama and emotional gravity through authentic-sounding conversations among the new arrivals who are her family members, friends and the overflowing humanity of the neighbourhood in which she lived.

Thus, for example, Mr. Layevsky, the author's boss at a take-away dry good store, scolds the narrator when she brings a book to the office: "No, no, no. Don't bring no more a book to the office. It's not nice a customer comes in and the girl sits with a book." Many of us can hear Mr. Layevsky's facsimile of spoken English echoing in the missing voices we can recall from our own past.

Faessler's ability to establish character and content through conversation is astonishing. But the characters she establishes are mostly gruff, harsh, lacking in warmth or compassionate sentiment and, at times, even cruel. To be sure, there are occasional moments in the stories of loving and humane interactions, but these are at the periphery.

Roughly hewn personages and the brash, stark, sometime brutal way they encounter life does make compelling reading. But one is left wondering whether these were the sum total of the author's recollections of life in the Yiddish-speaking world of her family.

Were there no moments in her world – as there were in the Yiddish-speaking immigrant world in which countless others were raised in Toronto – of thoughtful gesture, sweet song and tender caress?

A Basket of Apples is indeed compelling reading, but it leaves us feeling and regretting this absence in Faessler's portrayal of her immigrant world.

• • •

By contrast, Fiona Gold Kroll has written a gripping story, which in profound manner is itself a thoughtful gesture and a tender caress to the memory of someone she never met, namely her great-uncle, Benjamin Albaum.

A Stone for Benjamin is a moving testament to the author's iron will and determination to track down all the details of his life, despite the inevitable sorrow in knowing her great-uncle's ultimate fate during World War II.

A Basket of Apples
Shirley Faessler

Now and Then Books

A Stone for Benjamin
Fiona Gold Kroll

Iguana Press

Kroll writes her story as a resolute detective piecing together, clue by partial clue, the fragmented story of her grandmother's brother. What happened to him and to his family after he left Poland in the 1920s to settle in Paris? Her tale began with a photograph clutched in her hand and ended with an indelible imprint seared into her heart.

"My search for Benjamin has changed me in profound ways," Kroll writes in the epilogue. "Every one of the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust deserves a place in our memory and in our hearts. Benjamin Albaum is one of them and he will stay in my heart forever."

Kroll writes in a forthright manner: spare with narrative, precise with description. For example, while peering out of the window of the plane on her way to Krakow, she observes, "All I can see are quiet country roads cutting through emerald green rolling hills. Fields are lush and horses graze peacefully in the bucolic landscape. It is a stark contrast to the circumstances 65 years earlier when Nazis surrounded terrified Polish Jews, some of them my family, who struggled to flee their assassins."

The author's quest was more than a personal search for historic certainty, although that would have been sufficient justification for her exemplary enterprise. It was an individual's attestation – achieved through tears and fears, courage, strength and dignity - that it is the sanctity of all human life that counts above all else in this world.

"Now I am beginning to understand what is driving my obsession," Kroll wrote after receiving some information at her home in Toronto from the archives at Auschwitz. "Every piece of information about Benjamin that I gather helps negate the Nazi doctrine of dehumanizing their victims. I want to erase the idea of Benjamin as a number. He should be remembered as a human being, a man with feelings and a man who lived life and cared deeply for his wife and children. I want to give Benjamin back his life."

Alas, Kroll could not give her great-uncle back his life. But she did restore the memory of his life to those who live after him. And if we could only follow Kroll's example – not in seeking out the details of the way they were killed but in remembering and recalling and then conveying the details of the way they lived – we too will have helped sanctify, for eternity, the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust. ■

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Steve McDonald is the Associate Director, Communications at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, where he serves as an advocate for the Jewish Community in the National media.

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THOMAS (MINUK) ALI

What's New

JUNE 3 - JUNE 12

by Lila Sarick

Thursday 5	Friday 6	Saturday 7	Sunday 8	Monday 9	Tuesday 10	Wednesday 11
Shavuot			Enjoy the day – drop by a garage sale or go for a walk in the park.		Cantors entertain tonight at Beth Radom.	Israeli Air Force and Machal volunteers honoured.

Tuesday, June 3

LUNCH AND LEARN
Norene Gilletz discusses "The Menus in My Life," Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 12:15 p.m. $20.

JOB FAIR
JVS holds a job fair 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Bathurst-Finch Community Hub, 540 Finch Ave. W. Bring your resume. For more information, email hubjobfair@jvstoronto.org.

Saturday, June 7

WATER AND ISRAEL
David Brooks discusses "Good News and Bad News About Water in the Jordan Valley," 1:30 p.m., First Narayever Congregation, 187 Brunswick Ave.

Sunday, June 8

TIKKUN OLAM GARAGE SALE
Temple Kol Ami holds a garage sale to benefit orphans in Zimbabwe. Bring items to sell to 36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill, 8-9 a.m. Sale begins at 10 a.m.

CONCERT-IN-THE-ROUND
Aviva Chernick and members of Jaffa Road perform music from her Juno Award-nominated CD *Aviva*, Temple Sinai, 8 p.m. 416-487-3281.

WALK IN THE PARK
Singles in the Park (for single, divorced and widowed Jewish men and women over 50) enjoys a walk through Edwards Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. E., at 11 a.m. Meet in front of the Botanical Building

Deadline Reminder:

The deadline for the issue of June 19 is June 9. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Aviva Chernick and members of Jaffa Road perform June 8 at Temple Sinai.

Centre. Free, but RSVP to mail@deannasamuels.com or debbygo@yahoo.com or call 905-883-2963.

BOOK LAUNCH
Anne Dublin launches her new book, *Stealing Time*, for readers 10 and older, Holy Blossom Temple, 1:30 p.m.

TRANSFORMING ISRAELI LIVES
Itamar Hamiel from Mahapach-Taghir and **Mohammad Darawshe** from the Givat Haviva Institute discuss Israel's social challenges. Sponsored by the New Israel Fund of Canada, 7 p.m. at the First Narayever Congregation, 187 Brunswick Ave. Free, but space is limited, so register at nifcan.org or call 416-781-4322.

Monday, June 9

HEALTHY EATING FOR YOUR MIND
Dr. Carol Greenwood discusses "Healthy Mind: Eating for Optimal Brain Health," noon, Temple Sinai. $15, includes a light lunch. To register, call 416-487-3281 or email programs@templesinai.net.

ART TOUR
Young professionals are invited to tour an art collection in a private Yorkville home, 6:30 p.m., sponsored by Young Hearts, in support of the Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation. $18. Next tour, June 25. To register, call 416-781-3584, or visit youngheartsarttour.ca

Tuesday, June 10

LUNCH AND LEARN
Rabbi Jarrod Grover discusses "Multiculturalism in Canada and Around the World," Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 12:15 p.m. $20.

CHUG HA-TANACH
Barry Levy discusses Chapters 126, 137 and 145 of the Book of Psalms, 8 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

IRVING BERLIN
Mike Daley discusses "Irving Berlin," Temple Har Zion. Refreshments at noon, program begins at 12:30 p.m. $3/$6. 905-889-2252.

MUSICAL EVENING
Beth Radom Congregation hosts a musical evening featuring four Toronto cantors, Israeli wine tasting. Wine tasting at 6:30 p.m., concert at 7:30 p.m. Tickets $25/$36. For tickets, call 416-636-3451, ext. 24, or visit www.bethradom.com.

Wednesday, June 11

OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT
Kerry Bowman, clinical bioethicist, discusses "Adapting to a Changing Environment and Responsibilities to Future Generations," Beth Emeth Synagogue, 7 p.m.

ISRAELI AIR FORCE HONOURED
Canadian Institute for Jewish Research holds a reception honouring the Israeli Air Force and Machal, volunteers from outside Israel who fought in Israel's War of Independence. Keynote speaker, **Gen. Eitan Ben Eliahu,** former commander of the IAF, 11:30 a.m., Moss Park Armoury, 130 Queen St. E. Call 1-855-303-5544 or email CIJR@isranet.org.

Thursday, June 12

JEWISH VIEWS ON THE END OF LIFE
Rabbi Michael Dolgin, Lorne Sossin, dean of Osgoode Law School, and **Dr. David Kendal**, of Mount Sinai Hospital, discuss Jewish perspectives on death and dying, 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

YIDDISH VINKL
Sol Hermolin discusses his recent trip to Poland, "Looking for my roots," noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18, includes lunch. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP
Pride of Israel Synagogue is offering a 4-week bereavement group for adults who have recently lost a parent, starting today. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

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A HISTORY OF JAZZ

Mike Daley presents "A Concise History of Classic Jazz," 8 p.m., tonight, June 16 and June 19 at Beth Tikvah Synagogue $10/$12.

MUSSAR

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Mussar: Path of Personal Growth," 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

COMING EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Reena is looking for volunteers to work as "rec buddies" at Camp Reena this summer. No experience needed. Call **Mille Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112.

- Volunteers needed for Zareinu Move-athon Festival at Downsview Park, June 8. Call **Ilanit** 416-661-1800, ext. 226, or email ilanit@zareinu.org.
- Act to End Violence Against Women is looking for volunteers with expertise in marketing, communications, public relations, social media or web development. Call 905-695-5372 or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

CAMP AND SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Registration is now open for Chabad of Markham's Kindercamp, Hebrew School and Torah Tots programs. Call 905-886-0420.

SUPPORT FOR ABUSED WOMEN

The Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Free. Call 905-695-5374, or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **When You're About to Separate, What To Tell the Kids:** A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. June 12, 9:30 a.m.
- **Stop the Roller-coaster:** A workshop for parents and professionals about how to deal with the changes in adolescent behaviour and attitude. June 18, 7 p.m.
- **High-Conflict Divorce:** A workshop for parents who want to develop strategies to deal with a high-conflict situation. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. June 18, 6:30 p.m.
- **Dating in Midlife:** A workshop for men and women over 40 who have been single for more than two years. June 24, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club meeting three times a week. Call 416-256-1892.
- **Bridge Players** wanted for games at Forest Hill Public Library. Call **Lea,** evenings, 416-487-7630.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC.** Art appreciation with **Osnat Lippa.** A discussion on painter Francis Bacon and sculptor Henry Moore, June 10 and June 17, 1 p.m. $10/$12. Singer **Gillian Stecyk** and the MNJCC's daytime choir entertain with opera arias and choruses. June 11, 1:30 p.m. (Doors open at 1 p.m.). $4. To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Specialty fitness classes in osteofit, posture perfect and tai chi are offered at the Miles Nadal JCC. Call 416-924-6211, ext. 526 or email colinb@mnjcc.org.

- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. June 10, **Simon Houpt** discusses "A History of Art Theft," 10 a.m.; June 12, **Stanley Chung** discusses "Stress Reduction," 1:30 p.m.; June 12, Laughter Yoga, 12:15 p.m.
- **Chabad of Markham** offers lunch and learn classes for seniors with Rabbi Michael Gitlin, Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. for women; Fridays at 10 a.m. for men. Call 905-886-0420 or email Rabbig@chabadmarkham.org.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Lunch and Song, June 19, noon. Couples dance with live music, June 22. Casino Woodbine, June 25. Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

- **Kevin Courrier** discusses Marlon Brando, Wednesdays June 11-July 2, 1 p.m. Pre registration required, call ext. 4235.
- **Osnat Lippa** explores the art of Francis Bacon and Henry Moore, June 3, 1 p.m.
- **Daniel Aronchik** reviews the latest in electronics, Mondays June 2-16 at 1 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

- Tikkun Leil Shavuot, June 3. All-night Jewish learning festival. *Sinai Unscrolled* hosted by **Ralph Benmergui** 7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Reservations required for 7:30 p.m. program, drop-ins after 8:30. Call ext. 154.
- Drawings submitted to the Bogoroch Art Contest for Jewish Music Week on display in the gallery until June 5.
- Critic **Adam Nayman** analyzes the work of **David Lynch** Mondays until June 23, 7-9 p.m. June 9: *The Straight Story.*
- Downtown Jewish Community Council hosts a tent at the Annex Festival on Bloor, June 8, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. Call ext. 250.
- Fitness programs: MELT Method-full body Tuesdays to June 17, 7 p.m.; Wednesdays to June 18, 11 a.m. Gentle techniques for joint pain and injury management.

Toronto loves MELT, a 90-minute workshop with **Sue Hitzmann** June 6, 11 a.m. One day MELT hand and foot, June 8, 11 a.m. For all fitness programs email joolip@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 574.

- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

- Supervised bridge meets Thursdays July 10-Aug. 28, 10 a.m.

To register for programs, call **Jennifer Appleby** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275. ■

SENIOR SIDE OF LIFE

Setting medication dosages is like making gefilte fish

Dr. Michael Gordon

When we think about the relationship between food and medication, what usually comes to mind are those little sticky warnings on bottles that tell you whether you should take a medication with or without food, whether the food might interfere with the absorption of the medication, or whether your appetite might be affected by it. It's not uncommon for people to have problems with certain medications that have nausea as a side effect. At the extremes, there are some very potent medications whose most significant side effect isn't just nausea, but actual vomiting. For them, special steps are often required for the medication to be tolerated.

I was thinking about these issues after speaking with a concerned daughter about the challenges she faced in finding the right combination of medications to address serious behavioural problems associated with her mother's late-stage dementia. Often these behavioural problems – which physicians call BPSD, behavioural and psychiatric symptoms of dementia, and might include severe agitation or paranoid suspicions and hallucinations – can make it impossible for a person to be cared for in a facility or at home.

As I was explaining the principles of changing the doses of some medications her mother was using and heard about the daughter's difficulty in getting medical advice, I realized that giving the daughter the means, understanding and permission to change her mother's dosages within a range of acceptable therapeutic parameters would let her adjust her mother's medication without feeling she might be doing something "wrong" while awaiting medical or other professional confirmation.

Passover was coming up, so I started to explain the principles that physicians use to reach the best dose of a medication, within a recommended range, by recalling how my maternal grandmother made her famous gefilte fish.

In those days, the traditional Passover dish would always be made from scratch, and in our family, never bought in jars (which had just recently come into being – it was before frozen products became available). After she cleaned and eviscerated the freshly bought fish, my mother would chop it in a large wooden bowl using her hand steel chopper, which I think she got from her own mother. Most importantly, I recalled, after she chopped and added the spices, she would taste the raw mix, then add something more and taste again.

(An aside: this practice of eastern European Jewish women became famous in the annals of clinical epidemiology during the early 20th century, when outbreaks of fish tapeworm – diphyllobothrium – among this population was eventually traced to the gefilte fish-making process. The raw fish was the benign carrier of the parasite, which wasn't so benign when it entered the human digestive system.)

I explained to the daughter that a medication dose starts with the standard recipe. Then, after "simmering" for a few days, depending on her mother's symptoms, the dose would either be increased incrementally by amounts I detailed to her, or if side effects became pronounced, the dose could be decreased, also incrementally, all the time "tasting" the result of the change.

The next stage might include the addition of another medication to the one being taken, using the cooking analogy on how to add and adjust medications as one might season the gefilte fish mix.

The daughter had a good laugh as we talked, and by the end, I could feel her anxiety subside. She agreed to let me know if the "recipe" resulted in an acceptable outcome, or if we needed to explore something else entirely.

The food-medication connection is profound on many levels, both clinically and in how we manage medications with comfort and security. ■

Family Moments

Happy 100th birthday, June 5, Armin Herman Schleichkorn!! Czechoslovak Holocaust survivor & Allied WW II veteran. With love, your children & grandchildren

Mazel Tov Jordyn Daitar on your recent bat mitzvah. We are all so proud of you. Love from your family.

Mazel Tov, Adam Gottfried & Sara Wooldridge on your engagement. Love and best wishes from your parents Linda & David Gottfried, Connie & Bob Wooldridge (Edmonton)

Wishing Raphael Fleming mazal tov on his 80th birthday. We love you very much. Ellen Joy, Mark, Shari, Sonic, Basho, Dean, Mason and Finnigan.

Mazal tov and best wishes to Millie & Al Soren on your 70th anniversary from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren with all our love.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click on "Family Moments"

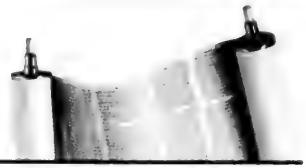
Mazel Tov!

מזל טוב!

"Happy Birthday to a True Athlete" Dave Usher. All the best to you, love your children, grandchildren.

Parshah

Beha'alotcha | Numbers 8.1 - 12.16



Yacov Fruchter says Jews could never truly accept the Torah until they ceased being slaves
Rabbi Shalom Spira argues rotating communal responsibilities is the key to a healthy society
Rachael Turkienicz suggests Judaism's covenant requires active rejection of the alternatives

Yacov Fruchter

Beha'alotcha, meaning "as you light the candles," the third Torah portion of the book of Bamidbar, is read in the same week that we celebrate Shavuot and the gift that is the Torah.

The *midbar*, the desert, is often described as "the wilderness." This was a time when the Jewish People were in a state of unknown after leaving Egypt, feeling confused and out of sorts despite their new freedom. We all have moments when we feel a bit lost, when we're unsure of each next step or action. The children of Israel complained a lot in the desert, but wouldn't you if you spent 40 years walking in circles?

Their entire journey in the desert was for one purpose: to change their way of thinking. Though they had received the Torah and were expected to fulfill the commandments, without a change in thought and without a change in their thought habits, they would forever see themselves as worthless slaves who didn't deserve any better. As slaves, or with their enslaved thoughts, they could never truly accept the Torah, God or their role in the world.

I recently attended an incredible lecture by Rae Ringel at the Collaboratory, a conference for innovative Jewish organizations in New York City, and she ended her talk with a powerful quote from Henry David Thoreau: "As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives."

As we prepare for Shavuot, we need to reignite our passion for Jewish life, refine our thoughts and reinforce them with positive action over and over again. Chag Samayach and best of thoughts! ■

Yacov Fruchter is spiritual leader of Toronto's Annex Shul.

Rabbi Shalom Spira

"And Joshua... answered saying, 'My master, Moses, exterminate them.'" (Numbers 11:28) The Gemara, Sanhedrin 17a, explains that Joshua advised Moses to appoint Eldad and Medad to a position of communal authority, the emotional aggravation of which would surely kill them. Tosafot interpret this figuratively: since prophecy requires a state of personal joy, Eldad and Medad would be unable to continue to prophesy while aggravated.

Maharsha, however, questions Tosafot on the grounds that Joshua didn't realize that Eldad and Medad were true prophets. Maharsha's proposed alternative is cryptically phrased, but he appears to hint that Joshua was literally seeking their death, and indeed so indicates the Sifrei to Numbers 11:28. Since the Gemara in Pesachim 87b declares that "political office buries its holders," the cause and effect become comprehensible.

If our hypothesis is correct, it would shed light on a mysterious Rema in Shulchan Aruch Yoreh De'ah 339:1, where the latter forbids placing synagogue keys under the pillow of a moribund patient (*gossess*). Maharsha reveals that communal responsibility is pathologically stressful (and, presumably, may not be imposed upon a *gossess*). Possession of keys is symbolic of assuming responsibility, pursuant to Pesachim 4a, that in a rental relationship, the party which has the keys at nightfall on the 14th of Nissan is obligated to search for chametz.

Rabbi Shmuel Wosner (Teshuvot Shevet ha-Levi 1:40) endeavours to reconcile Tosafot with the ruling of Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 93:4 that one may commence praying while in the midst of a communal responsibility. Rabbi Wosner answers that although a workaholic will indeed be negatively impacted by incessant communal duty, an occasional communal duty can actually energize its well-balanced trustee with joy and the ability to pray. This, then, is the key (no pun intended) to managing a healthy society: rotating communal responsibilities, so that everyone's longevity benefits. ■

Rabbi Spira is a research assistant at the McGill AIDS Centre in Montreal.

Rachael Turkienicz

The holiday of Shavuot, the Revelation at Sinai and the receiving of the Torah are simultaneously an acceptance of a new vision and a rejection of the old.

When Moses climbs Mount Sinai, we're told that the mountain itself became alive. As Moses ascends, he's hidden from view, and the nation watches him disappear into the mountain. To us, this is a magnificent event, but to them, it's a familiar one.

The mountain is shaped like a pyramid. The pharaohs of Egypt would die, be placed inside the pyramid and emerge from the top, ascending to return as a god and watch over Egypt. The Israelites likely believed they were witnessing such an event. Moses, their royal Egyptian Jewish leader, raised in the palace, disappeared into the pyramid/mountain and they awaited his ascent to the gods. But this last part was missing, and after waiting and waiting, they decide to build an Egyptian god, a Golden Calf.

The visceral reaction of God and Moses, as well as the civil war that followed, was more than a punishment – it was an uprooting. Israel hadn't left Egypt behind, so it couldn't embrace the new vision of covenant.

Ancient Egypt was a culture that embraced death and viewed it as the ultimate achievement. Judaism is a culture that embraces life and celebrates it. Preserving life trumps the commandments. We drink to life, and we're taught to always prefer joy to sadness. Some opinions say many of our commandments are an active rejection of Egypt. For example, Egyptians would shave all the hair on their bodies, while we're forbidden to shave our heads or faces.

When we celebrate Shavuot, we remind ourselves the covenant is not only defined by what we bring into our lives, but also by what we keep out. We don't merely accept Torah, we actively reject its alternative. ■

Rachael Turkienicz is executive director of Rachael's Centre in Toronto.

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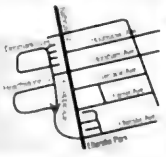

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 3, 2014

Nir Barkat: Preparing Jerusalem for the next 100 years

YONI GOLDSTEIN
ygoldstein@thecjn.ca

Since winning the mayoralty of Jerusalem in 2008, Nir Barkat has embarked on a number of bold initiatives to rejuvenate the city. By most accounts, he has been successful, establishing the capital as a cultural, economic and political hub, while cracking down on crime and corruption.

A year into his second term, Barkat, 54, spoke to *The CJN* ahead of a June 8 visit to Toronto about his plans for the city and the strong bond between Jerusalem and Canada.

What are the differences between your first and second mandates? What did you learn the first time around that helps you this time?

Entering my first term, the city was in quite a negative state. After five years of hard work, the economy is booming and our municipal budget has grown by double digits four years in a row. Crime rates are going down and good things are happening. So we have entered the second term with very strong backwind and lots of things on the ground. Because of the success of the first term, I believe we will accomplish even more this time.

Tell us about the rejuvenation projects you've undertaken.

We have more than quadrupled the number of cultural events in the city. We've launched many new projects, like the light festival in the Old City that drew 300,000 visitors in a week. We had the Formula One road show, with almost 300,000 spectators in two days. Our cultural organizations have moved from survival to creative mode and are doing much better than in the past.

Tourism is up – hotel occupancy rose from 40 per cent to around 70 per cent, and we have investments in the pipeline to create more than 10,000 hotel rooms.

Nir Barkat

When you look at all the parameters of a healthy economy, we're headed in the right direction. There are many cranes in the air. We also see progress in high school matriculation results. We've moved from below the national average to above it. And the number of people in youth movements went from 25 to 44 per cent.

What are the next steps in your rejuvenation project?

We have mega-projects in the pipeline. We finished the first light rail line in the city, and we're deep into developing two additional light rail lines that I believe we'll start working on as soon as this year. We have the fast train from Tel Aviv in the works, which will be ready in the first half of 2018.

We are building a very large business district at the entrance to the city. There will be 13 towers of 35 stories, with 11 million square feet of office space, hotel rooms and commerce.

We're building the largest sports complex in the country, which includes the expanded Teddy soccer stadium and a new arena, the largest in the country.

When you look at Jerusalem five, seven, 10 years down the road, it will be a fundamentally different city – much more connected with public transport, with a big push for the business sector, hotel industry, culture and sports.

We're positioning Jerusalem for the next 50 to 100 years.

Why do you believe government ministries should be based in Jerusalem? And why do you think the decision to move them there has been stalled?

The law in Israel requires all national offices to be in the capital. In the last few decades, there has been a slow decline in the fulfillment of the law. The national government should lead by example in obeying the law. By not having government ministry offices in Jerusalem, you are actually weakening the city. I believe in the next few years when we develop the new business district, we will see swifter and faster movement of more government offices to Jerusalem.

Why have you taken a stand against partitioning Jerusalem?

Jerusalem was never and must never be divided into tribes. There's only one way for the city to function, both ideologically and practically, and that is as a united city. There's no city in the world that has stayed functional while being divided. They either become dysfunctional or reunite. So why go there in the first place? Ideologically it will never work. Practically there are no good examples.

With the news that one of your predecessors, Ehud Olmert, is going to jail for corruption, how can the Israeli political class restore the faith of voters?

The fact my two predecessors disobeyed the law is sad for Jerusalem. However, since I took office, I've made some dramatic changes in the way I manage the municipality. We opened up all committees. We have proposed that all municipal planning processes be totally transparent and open to public debate. We have dramatically fixed the way we do business. My message to the public is that they can trust the municipal government to be honest and ethical and to serve the residents. I'm very happy that Israel has proven that nobody is above the law.

How does Canada House contribute to Jerusalem? What does it say about the relationship between our two countries?

Canadians have a high degree of commitment to the mutual goals of our two peoples. Outside Israel, Canadians are the most committed to the future of our country. Canada House focuses on one of the key elements of our future: how to keep young people in Jerusalem. It's had a huge impact in understanding how to do that, which is critical to the success of the city. It's building future leadership and strengthening Jerusalem today.

How would you characterize the security situation in Jerusalem?

When I fly to America, I pray before I get on the airplane. Our murder rate is one per 200,000 people every year. That's probably 10 times better than any average American city, and I would guess it's better than Toronto, too. We are one of the safest cities in the world, with one-third the crime of Tel Aviv and one-tenth of any American city. If you come and walk the streets, you will feel extremely secure. ■

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150 years since a Jewish artist for all reasons

Backstory

JAIME OKSEMBERG

May 2 marked the 150th anniversary of the death of Jacob Liebmann Beer, better known as Giacomo Meyerbeer.

He was one of the most popular opera composers of the 19th and part of the 20th centuries, although his reputation had to withstand the contempt of some critics and fellow musicians who accused him of using the wealth of his Jewish family to influence opera managers in his favour.

Yet his advancement as a musician, starting with a precocious talent, giving piano concerts as a child, followed the ways of that era. Studies in his native country of Germany and also in Italy, using his experiences there to create a more spectacular type of opera, led to an appointment as *kapellmeister* (music director) in Berlin.

His new approach and the themes he used required elaborate settings, and he found a perfect place for them in the Paris Opera, with its advanced staging resources, where his works were performed for many years, starting with *Robert le diable* in 1831 and others like *Les Huguenots, Le Prophète, L'Etoile du Nord* and *L'Africaine*, all to great acclaim.

An opposing minority didn't agree, though. His growing success made his adversaries even harsher, disapproving of his operas as being not only too grandiose, but also vulgar, perhaps because his music had transcended the concert venues and was played by military bands, dance hall orchestras, and not just individual pieces, but whole potpourris made with them.

In time, criticism became aimed more directly at his Judaism. Musician-turned-critic Theodor Uhlig, later a Richard Wagner follower, elaborated about "the propaganda of the Hebrew art taste" and said that Meyerbeer "lacked a fatherland." Composer Robert Schumann, referring to one of Meyerbeer's operas, wrote that listening to it, he tried in vain to find "a persistently pure thought, a truly Christian sentiment. It is all contrived hypocrisy."

Years after Meyerbeer's death, French composer Hector Berlioz, refreshing an old accusation, wrote that the formerly Jewish poet Heinrich Heine believed that

> *His life, both personally and artistically, could have been much easier had he renounced his faith, as other Jewish artists of his epoch did*

before he died, Meyerbeer paid the authorities of the Paris Opera in advance – in effect bribing them – in order that they would continue to stage his works.

Then Richard Wagner himself came to the fore and called Meyerbeer, among his mildest slurs, "a Jewish banker who happened to compose operas," even though Meyerbeer had helped him to stage his first operas, *Rienzi* and *The Flying Dutchman*, and also with personal loans. It's unclear what made Wagner such an adversary – it may have been Meyerbeer's refusal to lend him more money – but besides attacking him, Wagner went after Jews in general, publishing *Das Judenthum in der Musik* (*Jewishness in Music*).

All that hostility, together with increasing production costs, resulted in Meyerbeer's operas being less frequently staged, and his popularity dropped considerably. Then the Nazis banned his and all other Jewish composers' music, and his operas are seldom performed today.

His life, both personally and artistically, could have been much easier had he renounced his faith, as other Jewish artists of his epoch did, however he remained always a proud Jew. Giacomo is the Italian translation of Jacob, and Meyer was his grandfather's middle name. He kept Jewish traditions, maintaining contacts with Jewish communities and taking part in the collection of liturgical music for services in a Paris synagogue. He proved that under trying circumstances, artists can succeed without having to give up their Yiddishkeit or Sephardi heritage. ■

OBITUARIES AND RELATED NOTICES

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Brockman, Helen	May 16/14	131 Beecroft Rd
Weisher, Miron	May 18/14	184 Moore Park Ave
Grojecki, Sarah	May 18/14	28 Coreydale Court
Laipsker, Boris	May 19/14	1121 Steeles Ave. W
Elzicovics, Leah	May 19/14	7420 Bathurst St
Gorsky, Oleg	May 20/14	1101 Steeles Ave. W
Lash, Percy N.	May 20/14	22 Norfinch Ave
Pliamov, Alexei	May 21/14	Private
Berlyand, Yelena	May 21/14	15 Torresdale Ave
Niman, Clara	May 22/14	541 Finch Ave.W
Applebaum Martin David	May 22/14	39 Crosby Ave
Feig, Allen	May 23/14	85 Skymark Dr
Vekselshtein, George	May 24/14	Private
Katzoti, Yacob	May 25/14	Private
Korobok, Ester	May 25/14	4455 Bathurst St
Schreiber, Milada	May 26/14	74 Spadina Rd
Ruvinsky, Maria	May 26/14	Private
Baruch, Victor	May 26/14	8501 Bayview Ave
Lutsky, Milton	May 27/14	
Jakubovicz, Iran Esther	May 27/14	4 Stormont Ave

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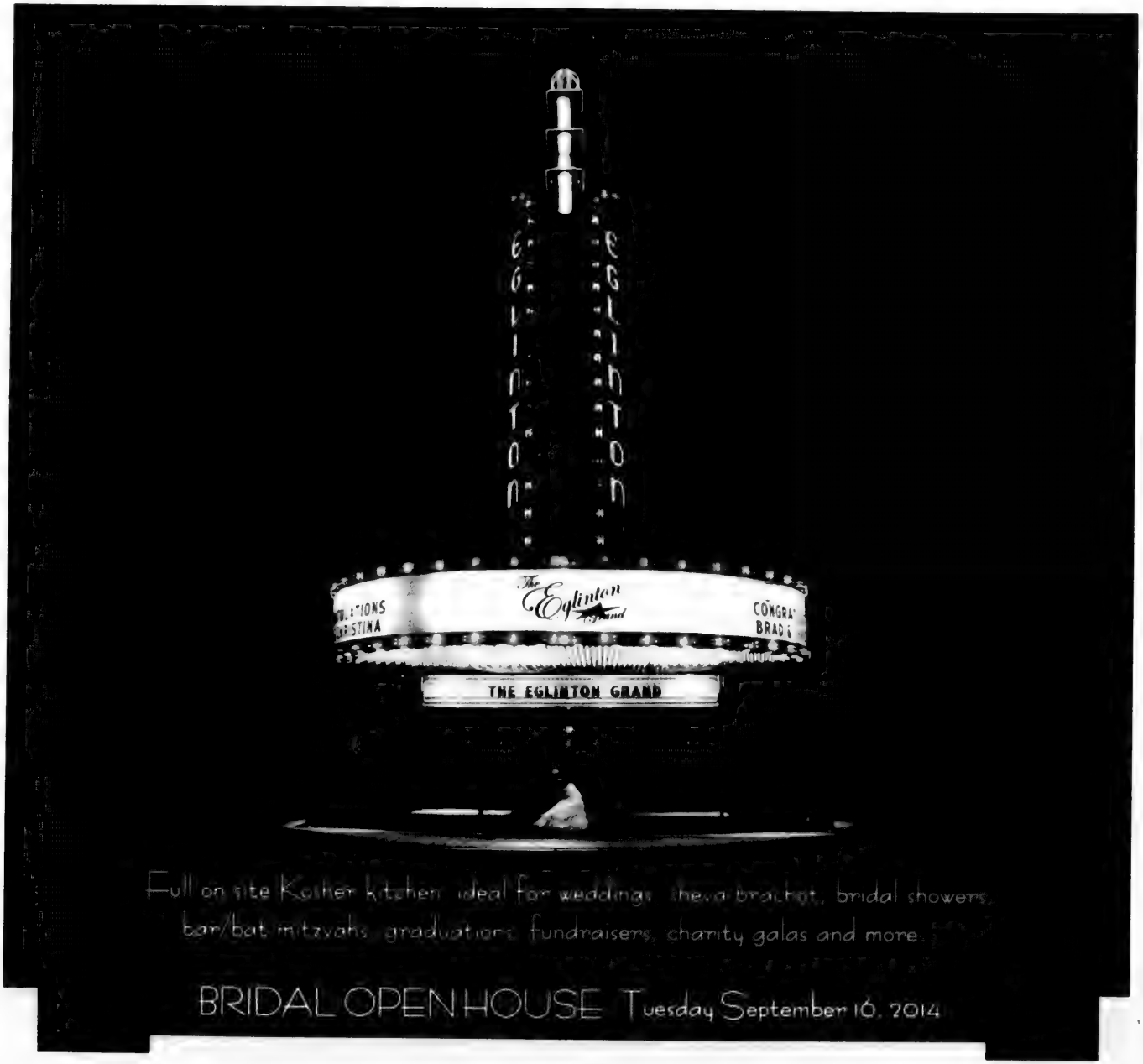
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"Anyone who's visited Newfoundland knows that if you go off the beaten path and try and walk through the shrub, you're basically walking through patches of low-to-the-ground blueberry bushes," said Laura Higgins, CEO of Amethyst Wine Agency.

Higgins has been the one putting the blueberry wine, created by Rodrigues, in the LCBO in Ontario, but sometimes where it lands on the shelves is a mystery.

"There are [many] sections for Canadian wine, but there's no section for fruit wine," said Higgins of the off-dry wine. "Sometimes they'll put this wine either into the fortified section, though it's not like port, or they put it into a dessert wine section.

"Part of the misconception about this wine [results from] where the LCBO houses it on their shelf."

But for those who live in more Jewish areas, it might be a little easier to find.

"Luckily, in the last five years, they have created distinctive kosher sections within the stores," Higgins said. "Wherever there is a kosher section, Rodrigues Blueberry Wine is usually put there, but not always."

Finding it in the store is sometimes like searching through those Newfoundland shrubs for the perfect blueberries.

"It's a bit of a hidden treasure [as] it's usually around other items that are more popular," Higgins said. "So usually, Rodrigues Blueberry Wine is low-lying to the ground in the stores, just like it's low-lying in the crates in the hillside of Markland.

"So you have to go out and harvest this wine from the massive jungle that is the LCBO."

Rodrigues Blueberry Wine sells at the LCBO for $16.35, which is more than a number of grape wines, including Manischewitz, but is very reasonable for blueberries.

"I challenge people to go and look at the cost of pure blueberry juice at the store," said Higgins, who suggests the wine be kept at cellar temperature or put briefly in the fridge. "It's not much less than $16.

"The Rodrigues Blueberry Wine is the only straight 100 per cent blueberry in the LCBO," Higgins added. "There are a couple of places in Ontario that make blueberry wine and sell straight from their winery, and theirs are all priced anywhere from $17 to $25."

At an alcoholic content of 10 per cent, it is a versatile wine.

"You can freeze fruit juice into ice cubes and put them into it and top it up with club soda or champagne," Higgins said. "In that way, we turn it into a cooler, but [not one with] synthetic flavour.

"If you take sparkling fruit juice and add it to the wine, it has all natural flavours, which is preferable."

Rodrigues WINERY

Higgins recommends drinking Rodrigues Blueberry Wine within three to four days of opening it, and says that it gets richer in flavour and develops some deeper notes to it.

"If you don't finish it, there are lots of things you can do with it afterwards, like turning it into a blueberry vinaigrette or reducing it to create a blueberry sauce, which is great over cheesecake," Higgins said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

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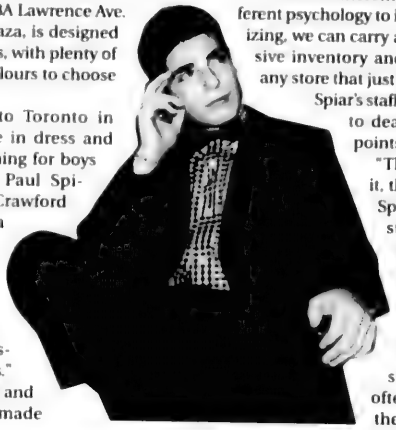
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Suit shopping, especially for kids, can feel like a chore.

But at Crawford Boys Clothing (416-782-8137 or crawfordboys@gmail.com), they might actually have a good time.

The fixture at 508A Lawrence Ave. W. in Lawrence Plaza, is designed exclusively for boys, with plenty of sizes, styles and colours to choose from.



"We're unique to Toronto in that we specialize in dress and better casual clothing for boys aged 4-16," said Paul Spiar, the owner of Crawford Boys. "We carry a full range of not just regular-sized clothing, [but] husky sizes as well, which is a very important aspect of the business."

The focus on kids and young adults has made Crawford Boys better suited to take care of them.

"It allows us to be more expert in what the young boys need and how to fit them properly, and we can become quite expert in dealing with the young boys, which is often quite different than their fathers," Spiar said.

"It's a whole different approach, a different psychology to it, and by specializing, we can carry a far more extensive inventory and selection than any store that just carries a bit of it.

Spiar's staff is well equipped to deal with the finer points of the business.

"They're expert in it, they're fantastic," Spiar said. "They're strong believers in providing the best in customer service, and customers trust us."

Going in to shop with a kid often means all of the children have to tag along.

But Crawford Boys isn't exactly a stuffy place for them to have to be.

"We have some distractions for them," Spiar said.

"We've got some toys for them to play with, a car for the young ones to drive around in, we have some blocks that they can play with, and a basketball net where they can shoot hoops.

"I've got a huge box full of hockey and baseball cards that kids can poke through, and we always tell them to grab a handful for themselves before they leave.

"Overall, we enjoy working with the younger kids and we just have a good time joking around with them," Spiar said.

It's been memorable enough for those kids that when they have children of their own, they bring them to Crawford Boys too, he said.

"Over the past five or six years, we've been seeing second generations coming in," Spiar said.

"We've seen mothers who are now grandmothers, reintroducing themselves, and we have boys coming in and telling me that, although I may not remember them,

Paul Spiar

they bought a bar mitzvah suit here and they have a little boy now.

"We've started carrying some young men's suits, because kids are bigger and taller now. We're carrying a nice selection of young men's slim-fit suits for the older boys. So we're moving a bit in that direction."

If they're not doing something you'd like to see, just go ahead and tell them, Spier said.

"We're always telling our customers to let us know if there's something they think we should be carrying [or] if there's something we can improve on with the store too, because we're always looking to be better than we are." ■

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Bar/bat mitzvah students help repair the world

VICKY TOBIANAH
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

During times of celebration, families and friends often focus on the parties, lavish gifts and fancy dinners.

But Ve'ahavta, a Canadian humanitarian and relief organization dedicated to helping the needy and promoting the Jewish value of tzedakah, recently launched an iMitzvah program to give celebrations more meaning.

Although they've had a tikkun olam program for years, in which students looking to make their bar/bat mitzvah more meaningful could make a monetary donation or participate in one of their programs, iMitzvah is a new program that will allow children entering their bar/bat mitzvah years the opportunity to engage in good deeds in a variety of ways.

"I like to call it a holistic approach to the bar mitzvah project," said Robyn Segall, Ve'ahavta's director of communications and operations. "It's not only a tzedakah component but also a hands-on volunteer program. There aren't a lot of opportunities like this."

The program launched in January 2014 and more than 15 families have already participated.

Left: Josh Arbess donated to the Kinder Kit project and travelled to Haiti with Ve'ahavta to deliver the school supplies to the House of Hope orphanage. Right: Centrepiece program got creative with sock centrepieces.

"It's very rare to find a hands-on meaningful volunteer experience for 12 or 13 year olds. They can go out on a van from 6 p.m. to midnight, distributing clothes, food and hygiene supplies to the homeless.

"Most importantly, they speak to people, providing a friendly face and some company," said Segall.

"They go out and have a powerful experience, and they might direct their tzedakah funds to an experience they've had first hand. Then they come into the office and learn their Torah portion with Avrum [Rosensweig, Ve'ahavta's president and CEO,] relating the very experience they've had through us.

"So now they have a very rich content to deliver their parshah at their bar/bat mitzvah."

Another way to make their affair meaningful is to rent Ve'ahavta's centrepieces, which are baskets filled with items that the homeless need, wrapped in a professional and elegant way. The centrepieces are displayed on the tables at the party, and then the bar/bat mitzvah or other Ve'ahavta volunteers distribute the packages to the homeless.

The idea for the iMitzvah program came to Segall years ago, she said, when she realized that there weren't many meaningful opportunities for young kids to give back in ways that made a difference to them, and touched them.

"I think that raising money and giving is a wonderful thing in and of itself, but if it's not personal I think it loses a lot of impact. When you package it with a first-hand experience and learning, I find it holistic," she said.

"I like to use that word because it incorporates your mind and your intellect. The volunteer experience incorporates the soulfulness, and the giving is part of everything we do in Judaism, especially at the time of the bar/bat mitzvah when you're teaching the student that they have a responsibility to play a role in tikkun olam. If we want them to take that seriously, we have to come at it in a multi-faceted way. When they're truly engaged and truly inspired, that will carry them beyond the party and beyond the bar mitzvah." ■

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Ketubah.com clicks with customers

STEPHEN SWEET
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

When you're getting married and it's time to think about a ketubah, the first place many couples look is online.

It's convenient then, that ketubah.com is right there at your fingertips.

The popular, Toronto-based website has been serving customers across the world with brilliant prints for almost two decades.

"We're celebrating our 18th anniversary online," said Michael Shapiro, founder of ketubah.com. "We've been at this longer than anyone, and from the beginning we made the decision to be very specialized and focus entirely on ketubahs."

Shapiro, who had originally been looking to open a fine-art Judaica gallery in Toronto, ended up realizing the market that was there for ketubot.

"As I was doing research on that, it morphed into something different," Shapiro said. "I flipped the idea on its head, and started a business that focused on one type of Judaica that [would be offered] to the entire world."

The website is very extensive and provides options at every price point.

"We want to make ketubahs available to all kinds of couples, in a range of budgets," Shapiro said. "We have some starting at $100, going up to around $900, but most are in the $200 to $300 range."

The quality in all of the ketubot is evident.

"These are fine art, limited edition prints and most of them are based on gorgeous, painstakingly prepared originals," Shapiro said. "The artists make the originals by hand and we work very closely with them and develop the [copies] as master prints.

"These are museum-quality prints that will last a lifetime and beyond."

Their precise and beautiful work has been noticed around the world and has even landed them the opportunity to bring some old ketubot into the 21st century.

"A year and a half ago, we were approached by the Jewish Museum in New York and they asked us if it would be possible for us to make reproductions of some of the most stunning prints they had in their collection, going back to the 1500's," Shapiro said. "We'd never done anything like that, but it seemed like a fabulous challenge and opportunity."

If you go to their website and look under 'museum ketubahs', you can find prints of ketubot from almost 600 years ago, which can be reproduced and are for sale.

"We started last year with eight of European origin, from Germany and Italy, and now we have ones from Rhodes, Iran and Morocco," Shapiro said. "Each of those represents the artistic preferences and methods that were used in those areas across time."

Shapiro, who was eager to reproduce these, quickly discovered that the old ketubot were a hit with the current generation.

"I knew this would be a really worthwhile thing to work on, but I was surprised at how popular these designs are with [contemporary] couples," Shapiro said. "They've really struck a chord.

"You can get a museum-quality, stunning ketubah from centuries ago, but with your ketubah text."

"We have different text choices for all denominations," he said.

Getting a beautiful design for your ketubah is also part of the enhancement of the mitzvah.

"It taps into a very old tradition of *hiddur mitzvah*, which is to make a Jewish ritual object beautiful," Shapiro said. "While it's not a halachic requirement, there's a lot of tradition to make a ketubah something

that is beautiful, and these days, an expression of the couple's shared artistic taste."

The comprehensive website is well-designed and user friendly.

"In the last 18 years, being so focused on one thing, we've evolved our service and website to make it as easy as possible for customers," Shapiro said.

You can find them online at www.ketubah.com. ■

The BOOMERANG Project

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Hospital launches Boomerang Project

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation has recently launched its Boomerang Project, which will provide boys and girls who are becoming bar/bat mitzvahs with the opportunity to support a hospital in Israel and learn important life lessons.

Lisa Colt, executive director of Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital, said, "The Boomerang Project is a wonderful way to learn about charity while making a meaningful impact in support of the Wilf Children's Hospital at Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem."

Nicole Rudberg, who will be celebrating her 12th birthday on July 3, is participating in the project.

With a passion for basketball, Nicole put together a fundraising challenge, Hoop Jam, that will take place Sept.14, at Bialik Hebrew Day School, Viewmount campus.

Kids ages 8 to 14 can register with an entrance fee of $20. Participants will receive a t-shirt, enjoy refreshments, kosher pizza, entertainment by the Magen Boys, and prizes.

"Everyone is welcome to come out, have fun and shoot some basketball. We are encouraging the kids to have a goal of raising $100," said Barb Rudberg, Nicole's mother.

Funds raised from Hoop Jam will go to the Huberfeld Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Israel's largest and most advanced facility for the treatment of premature and sick babies.

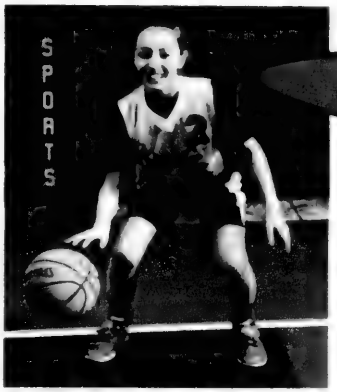
Nicole and her family will be travelling to Israel in 2015 where she will have her bat mitzvah service and visit Shaare Zedek Hospital.

The Boomerang Project offers a variety of ways a child can make a difference in the lives of pediatric patients at the hospital.

Wheelchairs are in high demand at the Wilf Children's Hospital, and they are affordable to purchase. One way to help purchase a wheelchair is by setting up a personal fundraising page on the Boomerang website, and raising funds. For every $500 raised, a wheelchair is purchased for the hospital.

Boomerang participants will be invited to play in a special exhibition basketball game with an NBA alumnus, win prizes, and receive a plaque on the Wheelchair Wall at Shaare Zedek Medical Center.

Through their imagination and a desire to make a difference, participants in the project can choose the area of support at the hospital that resonates with them.



Nicole Rudberg

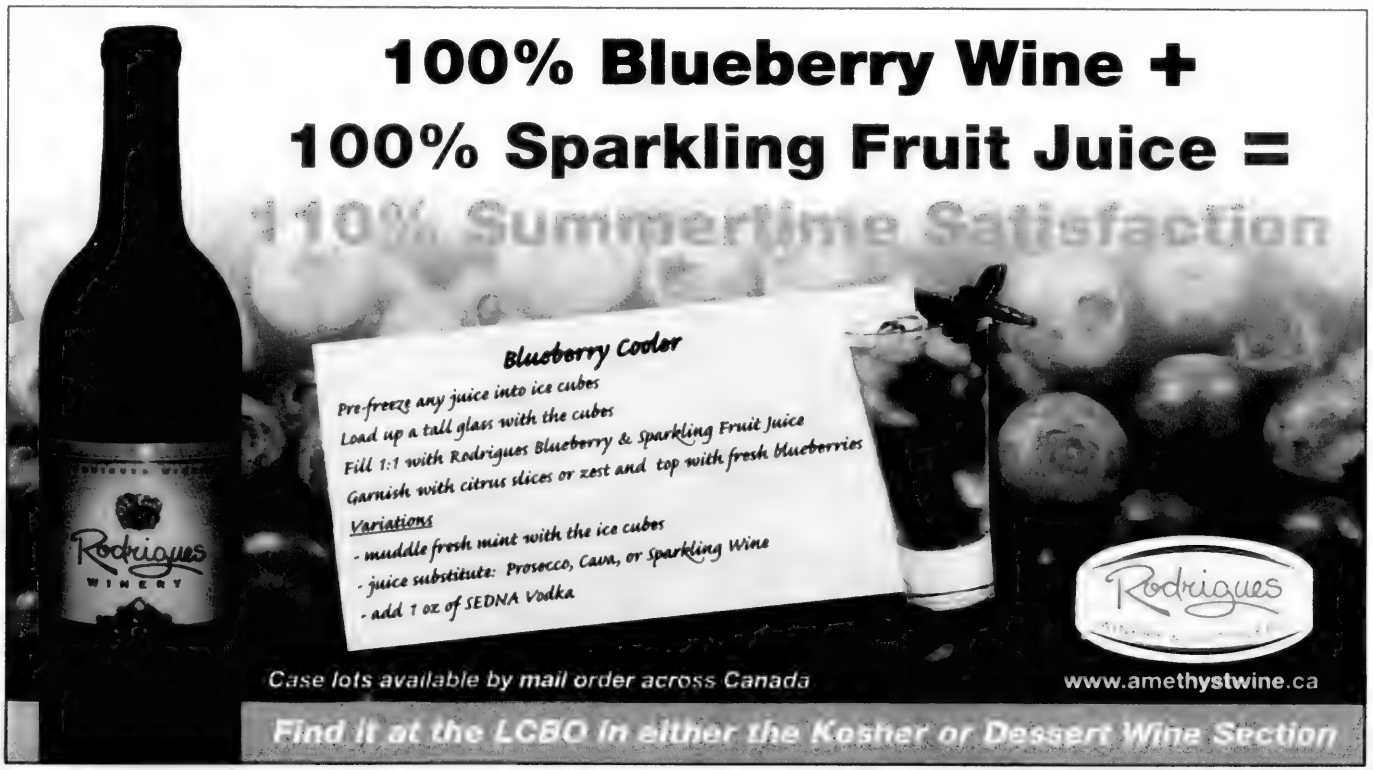
If fundraising isn't their thing, they can still support Shaare Zedek by donating a portion of their bar/bat mitzvah gifts. There are wonderful and unique programs in need of support, such as the pediatric art therapy program, clown therapy, and pet therapy in the Wilf Children's Hospital.

Shaare Zedek is the city's fastest growing hospital and the only major medical facility in the city's centre, treating more than 500,000 patients annually. An academic health science centre fully affiliated with Hebrew University School of Medicine, Shaare Zedek is deeply committed to treating patients of every race, religion, nationality and political view with compassion for all human life.

The hospital does not receive government funding for equipment, education and research and relies on donors around the world to provide philanthropy.

The hospital's existing pediatric facilities were built nearly 30 yeas ago, and since 1979, the number of children treated as in-patients has risen by 400 per cent. As a result, the hospital has taken on one of Israel's most significant and ambitious projects, with the construction of a $60-million Next Generation Building. This new centre of excellence will focus on providing maternal, infant and pediatric care together in one facility and will be complete by the end of 2014.

Visit www.hospitalwithaheart.ca to learn more about the Boomerang Project. ■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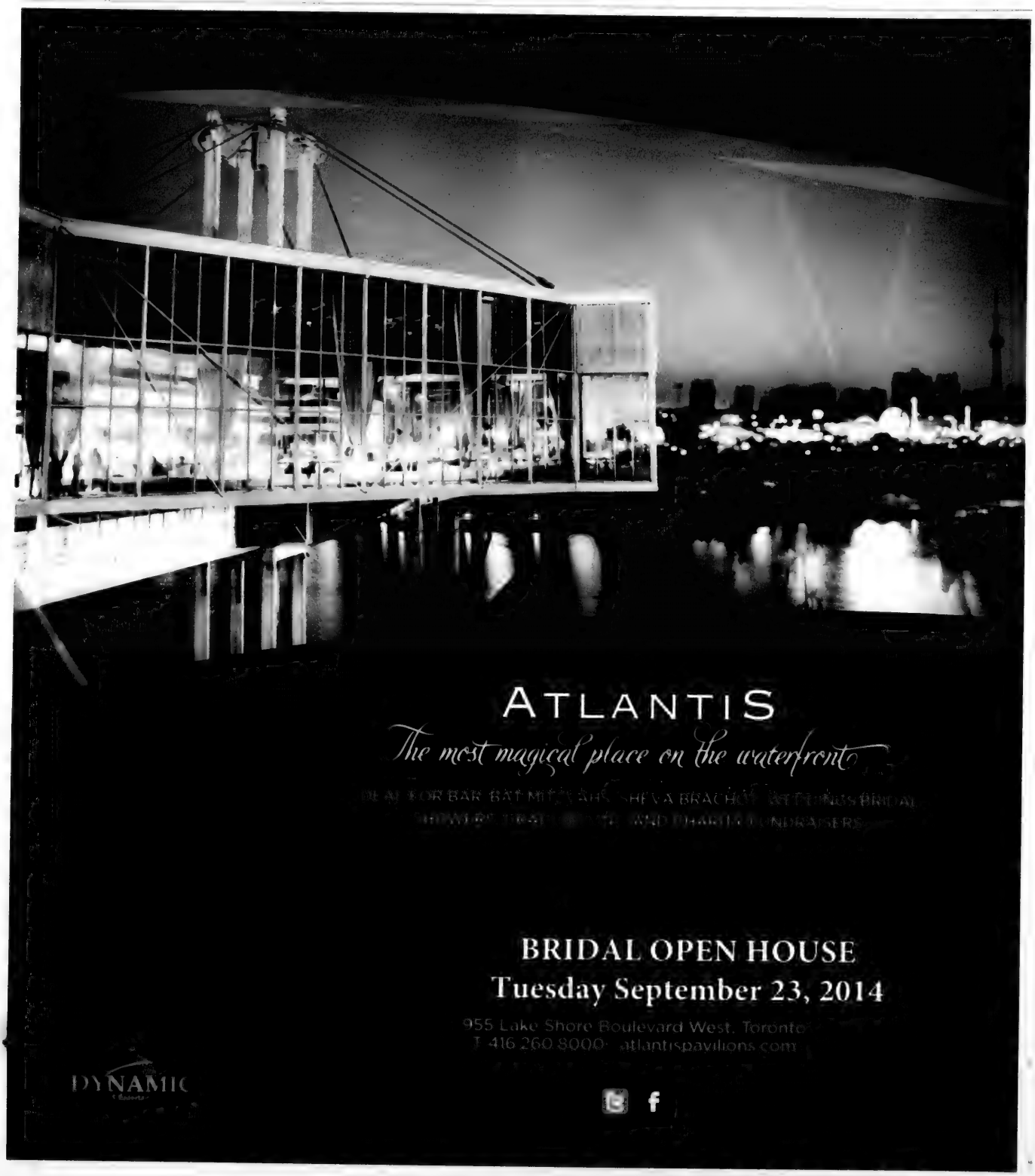
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Windsor Arms has an old world charm

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VICKY TOBIANAH
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The old world charm coupled with modern amenities makes the Windsor Arms Hotel (416-971-9666, windsorarmshotel.com) a popular venue to host your next celebration.

The building dates back to the 1920s, but was completely rebuilt to create a modern space infused with the history of the Toronto community.

In addition to its convenient location – near Bloor street – the Windsor Arms features different rooms depending on the event you're hosting. Its legendary tea room is perfect for private dinners, anniversary parties or small gatherings, while its lounge bar is great for an event that is less formal than a big party, and its courtyard café is perfect for a formal affair, holding up to 500 people standing or 250 seated.

"The room is extremely flexible with great acoustics," said George Friedmann, president of the hotel.

"You can literally walk in. If you want to transform it you can, but you can simply come in and spend nothing on the décor."

If you do book an event at the hotel, be prepared to see celebrities or political figures walking through the lobby. The hotel has featured the likes of Elton John, who hosted his engagement party there, and performances by Andrea Bocelli.

While many other venues restrict you to use their own preferred vendors, the Windsor Arms has no such policy. "Our clients are open to bring in their own florists or vendors, anything other than food and beverages," said Friedmann.

Their world-class kitchen will custom create the menu you're looking for, which can be anything from a Russian-themed menu to a traditional Jewish meal.

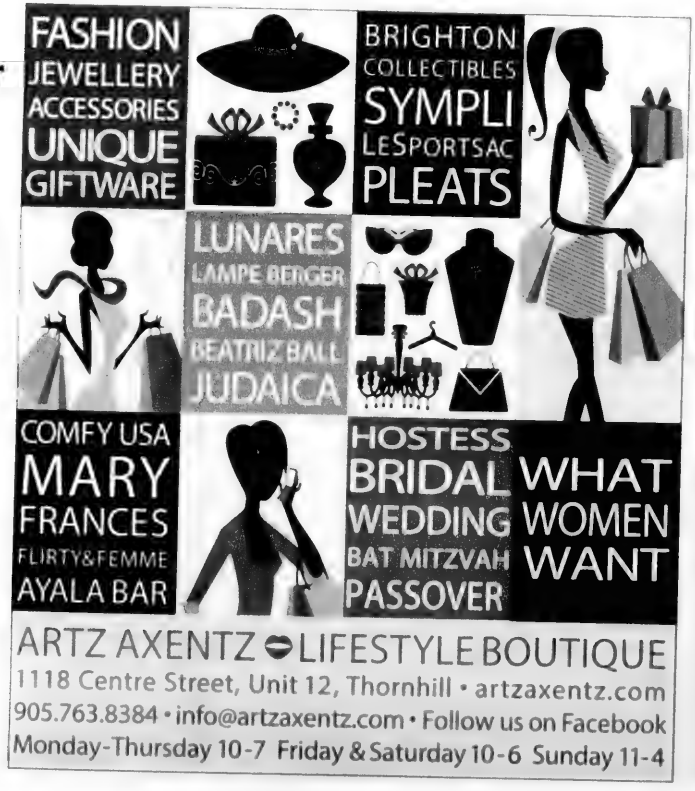
The venue has both kosher and non-kosher kitchens. If you don't wish to contract many suppliers, everything can be done in-house – they have their own dishes, cutlery, tables, chairs and staff to help event organizers create the ambience they're looking for without running around searching for the perfect vendor.

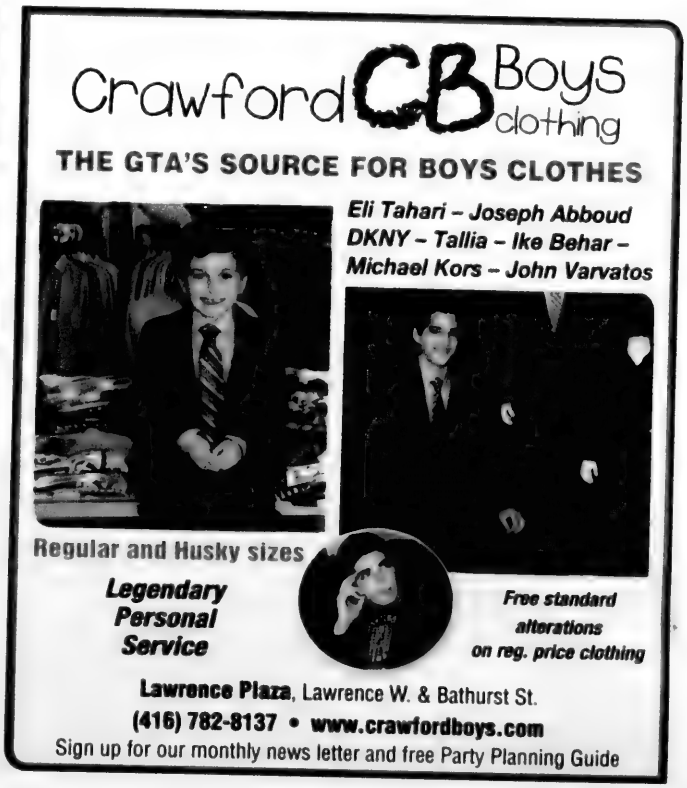
By hosting your event in a hotel, you also save yourself the hassle of finding hotel rooms for out-of-town guests, as everything can take place in the same venue.

The venue also has valet parking on site, with no need to contract someone else or guarantee a certain number of cars.

But one of the biggest benefits to hosting your event at the Windsor Arms is that once the night is over and the guests have gone home, you can recreate the memories you shared with your loved ones. The hotel offers kosher, à la carte dining on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, made in their in-house kosher kitchen (as well as non-kosher dining).

"You can return to the Windsor Arms and relive that experience, whereas you're not able to do that if the event is at a rental banquet hall," said Friedmann. ■

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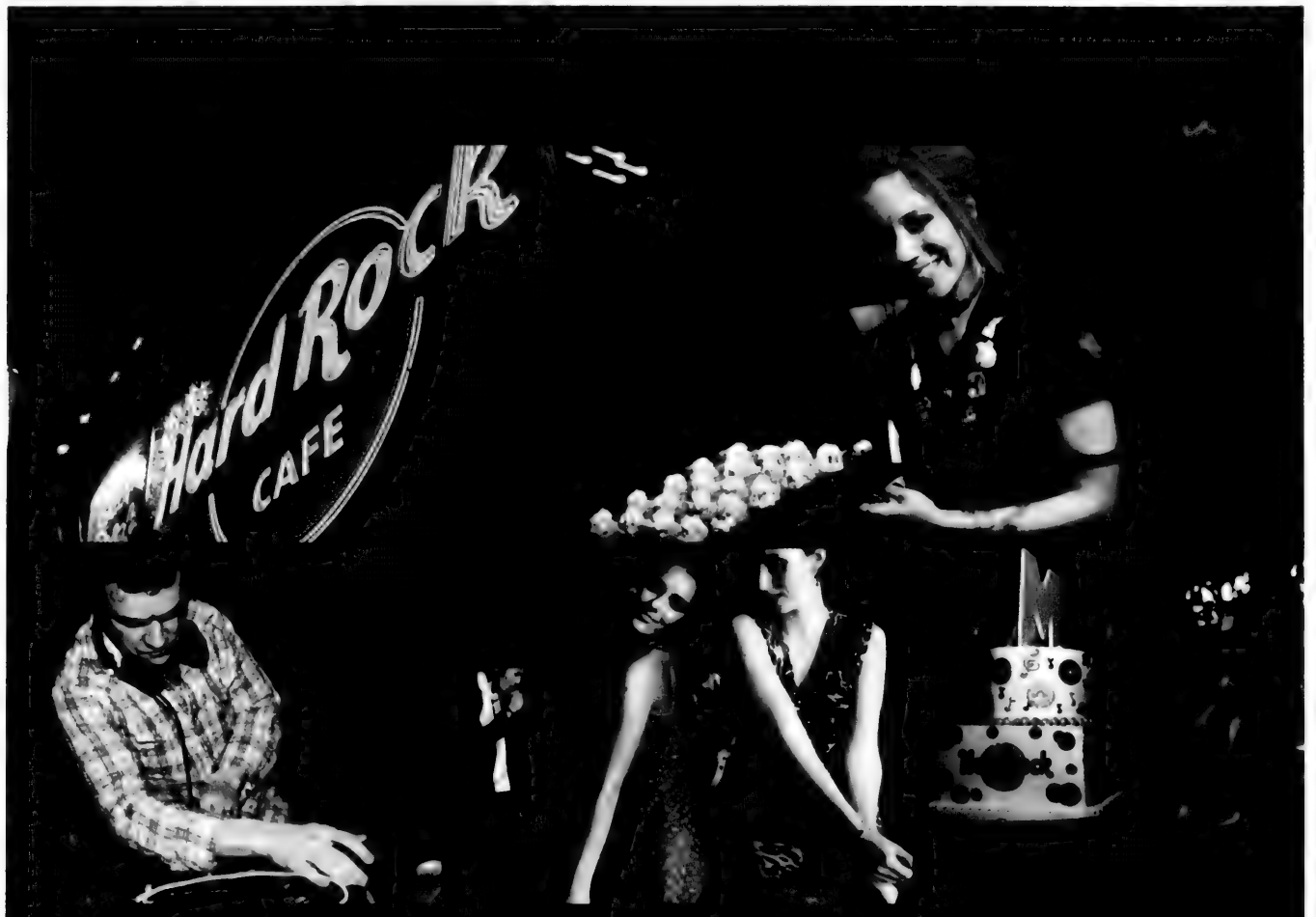

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Cupido a leader in moderate priced jewelry

LAUREN KRAMER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Sometimes, best friends can make the best business partners.

That's what Jeff Karadkjian and Haigo Derian discovered when the lifelong friends opened the jewelry store, Cupido (cupidodesigns.com) in 2007 at Vaughan Mills shopping centre in Concord.

Derian's family-owned business, L'Oro Jewellery, had given him a strong background in the industry and with their solid partnership, the two friends' goal was a store that provided affordable luxury for both men and women.

Fast forward seven years and Cupido has distinguished itself as a leader in the moderate-to-mid-priced jewelry and watch industry, with new locations in Bayview Village and a third soon to open at Kitchener's Fairview Park this summer.

"It's our job to find you a piece of jewellery that you will fall in love with," says Christina Patriarca, Cupido's public relations manager. "Every year, Jeff and Haigo travel to numerous watch and jewelry conventions where they select brands that reflect a certain degree of quality, aesthetic appeal, comfort and practicality. This allows us to expose our customers to various trends."

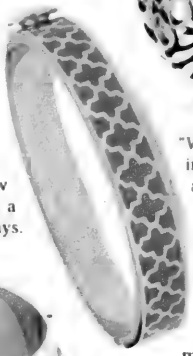
Jeff and Haigo are fabulous when it comes to spotting product trends and bringing flare and uniqueness to their store shelves, she adds. "The brands we carry have culture, and expose consumers to new design concepts."

Browse in one of Cupido's stores and you'll see products by a wide range of designers. There's Pandora, best known for its charm bracelets, and Canadian designer Hera, whose designs are inspired by nature and the ocean. Judith Ripka's gemstones, rich textures and fine craftsmanship are on display as are watches by Oris, the Swiss manufacturer with a distinct red rotor.

Watches by scientist Philip Stein use natural frequency technology which channels frequencies that are beneficial to mind and body, while the watches of Frederique Constant have become desirable collectors' pieces. Two designers new to Cupido are Oscar de la Renta and Halcyon Days, the latter known for its bangles.

As a result of the sheer diversity of designs, Cupido has become known for its striking array of jewelry and watches. "We like to think of ourselves as a boutique-like shop, where you can find the most interesting pieces," Patriarca says. "Our products are constantly on trend, new, exciting, and pieces that will last."

Some shoppers are looking to treat themselves to something new and exciting while others are shopping for gifts. They choose Cupido because they know they'll find a quality product at a comfortable price, Patriarca says.



"We understand budgets are important, so we try to give as many options as possible to fit clients' needs. But shopping for a gift in our stores makes it difficult to resist picking up a little something for yourself, too."

The Kitchener location marks the continuation of exciting growth for the company, and will bring new brands to Cupido, she says. "We're looking forward to getting to know customers in this location and offering them a 'shop-in-shop' branded experience." ■

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AGO – an exquisite venue for every type of party

LAUREN KRAMER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

One of Toronto's most unique party venues is the Art Gallery of Ontario (416-979-6634, www.ago.net/venue-rental, email events@ago.net) located in a stunning building designed by Frank Gehry, and filled with an incredible collection of art.

The 20,000-square-foot gallery has hosted a wide range of events including galas, weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, fundraisers, birthdays and celebrations of life.

There are several choices for party planners within the AGO. Baillie Court, the dedicated event space, boasts Douglas fir walls, floor-to-ceiling windows with incredible views of downtown, and a capacity of 300 guests for sit-down dinner-dance celebrations.

"A typical dinner reception starts at $250 per person and includes the venue rental, tables, chairs, linens, staff, rentals and food and beverages," says Beth Bruno, AGO's sales and events manager.

The historic Walker Court is another potential venue, a space embraced by marble archways, a soaring 40-foot atrium ceiling and glass mezzanine arcades – perfect for a full event of up to 400, or a cocktail reception.

ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO

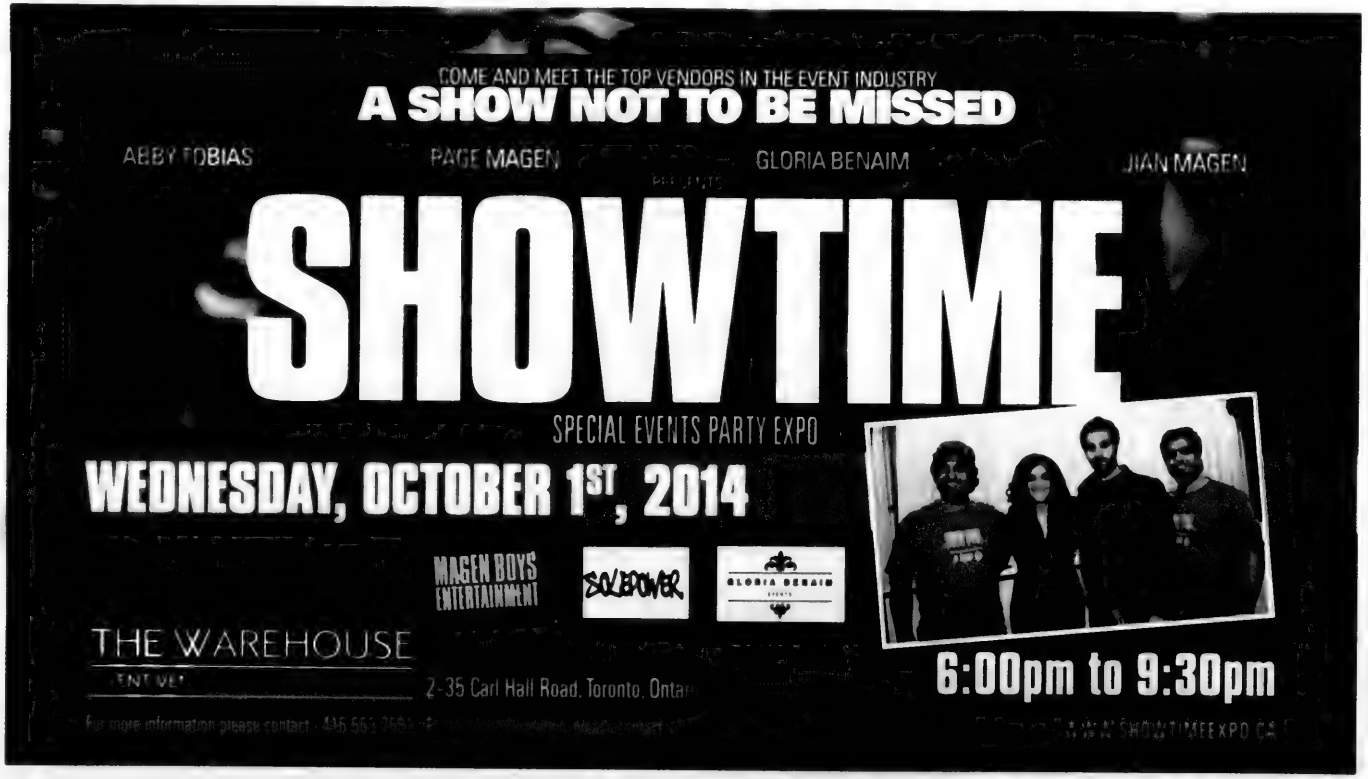
For smaller events, the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Sculpture Atrium comfortably accommodates 40 and overlooks the Grange, a historic, ivy-covered mansion. Galleria Italia, overlooking Dundas Street, is a grand place to view sunsets through the 40-foot wood and glass ceiling wall.

The AGO has a full event planning department staffed by resourceful specialists. "There's a designated co-ordinator to ensure seamless execution of every event," Bruno says. "The co-ordinator provides connections to preferred suppliers and offers a wealth of creative ideas that add value."

The culinary team at the AGO is nothing short of incredible, she says. "We offer completely customized menus based on the personal taste of the host, with a focus on local, organic and in-season produce, and we produce pretty much everything within the walls of the gallery," Bruno adds. The AGO also works with two kosher caterers: the Park Hyatt and PR Creative.

Feedback from guests at the events hosted at the AGO has been amazing, says Bruno, but the best compliment is from those who ask if the gallery will do off-site catering. "There's a lot of competition in off-site catering in the city of Toronto and we've not really gone in this direction yet," she says. "But when you hear people asking this, you know it's not just the location they're after, but that the food, service and planning was top notch."

The spaces at the AGO can be customized for events as private as 10 guests up to 2,000, with themes often inspired by art. "Some of our clients really go [all out] with their theme and others let the beauty of the gallery shine through and keep things simple and sophisticated," Bruno says. ■



Bat mitzvah girl donates hair

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Teaching children to give back to the community is a goal for many parents.

One way for the kids to do this is through an act of tzedakah, a major tenet of Judaism, by offering a gift or otherwise helping another person.

Maddy Thaller

Maddy Thaller chose to grow her hair and donate it to be used for a wig for a cancer patient. It took her a long time to grow her hair to a length of 10 inches, which was her goal, but she was determined.

"The cut" took place before her bat mitzvah ceremony on May 24 at the Danforth Jewish Circle.

"I know people inside and outside of my family who have been affected by cancer or who have had cancer. I have always wanted to cut my hair for cancer, and I thought this would be a good time because of the tikkun olam factor of my bat mitzvah," said Maddy.

Maddy used social media to create a page at cancer.ca for family and friends to donate to her cause.

When this article was written – before her bat mitzvah – she had raised $1,050 and the donations were still rolling in, she said with pride.

Proctor & Gamble Canada, in partnership with the Canadian Cancer Society, launched the Pantene Beautiful Lengths campaign in 2007. The partnership encourages Canadians to donate their hair to create real-hair wigs for people who are undergoing cancer treatment.

"You can choose where you want the funds to go and we chose 'wherever it was needed most' at the Canadian Cancer Society," Maddy said.

Pantene has received over 40,000 ponytails for real-hair wigs that the Canadian Cancer Society distributes across the country.

The program accepts donations of hair, then creates, ships and donates the wigs to Canadian Cancer Society wig banks across Canada. There is no cost to the society or to the individuals who receive the wigs.

"In donating my hair, I will be helping someone build more confidence and be more comfortable. It's not a hard thing to do to cut your hair for cancer," Maddy said.

A talented musician, Maddy is carrying on her family's passion for the arts.

"Both of my parents are musicians. My mom [Joanna Reynolds] is a jazz musician and a band teacher. My dad [Rob Thaller] is a pianist and plays with the National Ballet School, and my younger sister is also a musician and dancer."

She began playing piano at the age of four, and switched to violin when she was seven. The following year, she started bass guitar in school and then began private bass lessons last year.

"I love to sing, dance and act, and I performed at my bat mitzvah party, sitting in with the band."

Her parents are teaching her to perform good deeds by setting the example. Leading up to Maddy's big day, she and her father volunteered at the Good Shepherd Shelter. "We helped in the kitchen, preparing food." ■

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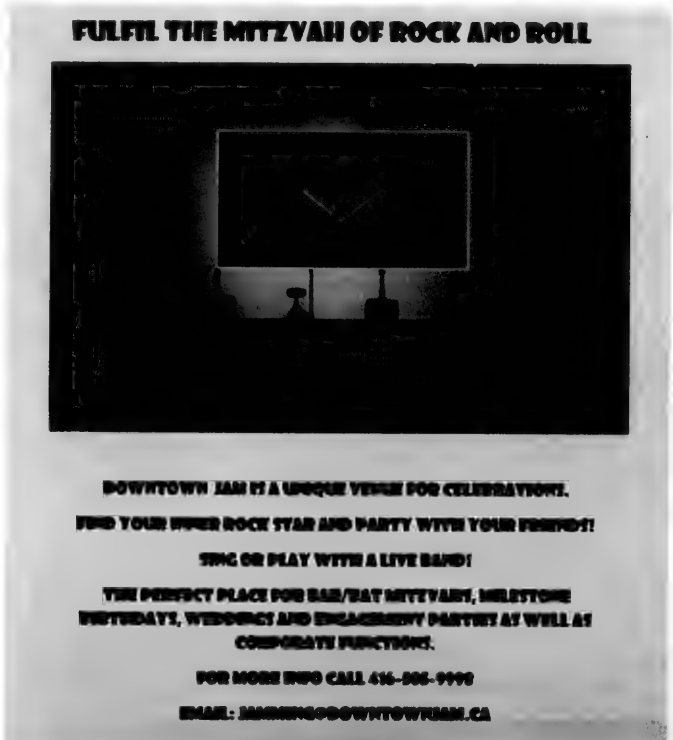
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Kosher caterer cooked

BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Mitchell Lipperman may not be a celebrity chef, but he has cooked for many celebrities.

He was the executive chef at various hot spots where Matthew McConaughey, Sally Field, Courteney Cox, Tim Allen and other Hollywood stars have dined when they visited Toronto.

Cox and Allen were regulars when they were filming in Toronto, Lipperman recalls. "They could go anywhere. The fact that they came back to my dining room multiple times was tremendously gratifying."

He has even part of the team that cooked for Queen Elizabeth II when she stayed at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in 1997.

Lipperman, 42, the executive chef of Exquisite Gourmet (416-356-5987), may have few encounters with celebrities now that he is shomer Shabbat, but he brings all his skills as a classically trained chef to the kosher (COR) catering company he has founded (www. exquisitegourmet.com) following the encouragement of his wife, Kelly.

He says his apprenticeship at the Royal York with master chef George McNeill, was "superb training." In fact, thanks to that training, Lipperman was a gold medalist in the World Junior Culinary Olympics.

He insists that the quality of his cooking has remained as high as ever. "Proper classical cooking can be done within kashruth. My raison d'etre is to show people that kosher cuisine can be as good and creative as non-kosher cuisine."

The key to fine cuisine is to use high quality ingredients and prepare them in a simple way, or as he puts it, "do the least amount to it."

Italian cuisine epitomizes this type of cooking, because the number of ingredients is minimal, he explains. "It's all about the quality of the products and the cooking technique."

These days, Lipperman works out of the kosher kitchen at La Gondola, a banquet hall at Highway 7 and Bowes Road in Concord. "It offers great value for bar and bat mitzvahs and weddings."

He can also cater parties and simchahs in private homes and banquet halls like the Warehouse, a generic venue without ties to a specific kosher caterer.

He does many barbeques and special dinners and he runs cooking classes, as well.

Lipperman does not work with set menus. "Ninety-five per cent of the food I prepare is customized."

He suggests that people consider increasing their budgets slightly to get the best food possible.

"For an extra $2 or $3 you can get a better cut of meat, and get it fresh instead of frozen. People will pay for value and quality."

He is also a meat specialist. "I studied meat. If I'm going to prepare steak, I use sea salt to enhance the flavour, along with olive oil and fresh-ground pepper. I let the product shine and showcase it. It's not about being fancy."

And it's also not necessary to spend a lot of money, according to Lipperman. "My classic roast chicken is very much in demand."

So are his salad dressings, which can be ordered by the litre, he adds.

He is also trying to educate the public on

for royalty

eating wild-caught fish. "I'm on a serious mission to teach people to choose fish other than salmon and tilapia. There's lots of good wild fish out there."

He likes Pacific halibut and Atlantic cod, but he also works with red snapper, sea bream and specialty fish like boca negra. His training enables him to fillet the fish, which is required for kashrut.

After his apprenticeship at the Royal York, Lipperman trained under Brad Long (now his mentor) at the Air Canada Centre, before working as executive chef for a number of trendy restaurants.

Some readers may be familiar with Lipperman's kosher cooking during his 1 1/2 year stint as executive chef of 398 West, the now defunct gourmet kosher restaurant on Eglinton Avenue. "It was a tremendous experience, but the business could not sustain its overhead."

For a bar mitzvah held on Lag b' Omer, Lipperman, who is a trained pastry chef, created a bonfire cake for the holiday theme. There were air-brushed burning logs and an edible flame of poured sugar.

For a Shabbat kallah, Lipperman designed a three-tier, multi-themed chocolate pound cake with Belgian chocolate mousse and strawberry cream made with fresh berries. One tier was the night sky with shimmering stars and a dolphin; the second tier was an ombre – one colour fading into the next – to represent sunrise and the dawn of a new marriage; and the top tier with its two tablets, symbolized the bride and groom becoming an integral part of each other.

Whether he's preparing desserts or full meals, Lipperman says he abides by one main philosophy:

"Good cooking is not about fancy or expensive. Rather it's about quality and integrity." ■

Serve it with everything

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

When it comes to pairing Rodrigues Blueberry Wine, once again, there are many options in doing so.

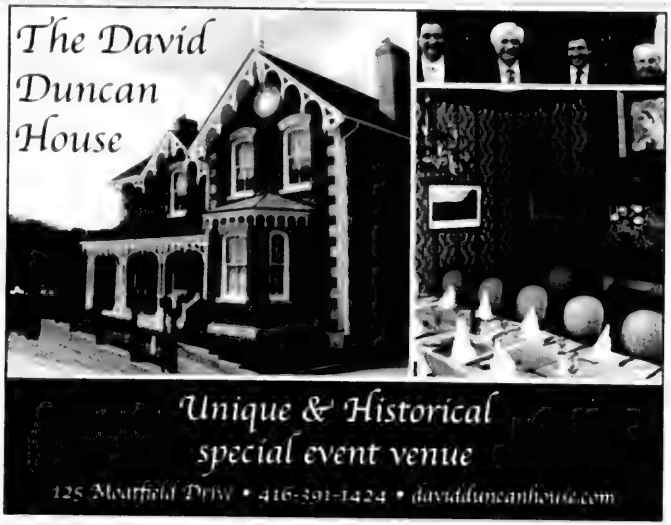
"You can have it as an aperitif, you can have it as a dessert wine, but if you plan on serving it with an entrée, there are some soft cheeses with cranberries or blueberries in them," Higgins said. "The bit of sweetness in the wine pairs nicely with the bit of sweetness in the food.

"[Other] entrees that work well would be turkey with cranberry sauce, foods with applesauce, sweet-and-sour items like chicken, or things that have soy in them."

But Higgins' personal favourite food with the wine is cheesecake.

"It's amazing with it," Higgins said. "If you drink a glass of this blueberry wine with even a plain piece of cheesecake, it tastes as though the cheesecake is smothered in fresh, wild blueberries."

Rodrigues Blueberry Wine is available at the LCBO and can be found online by searching product number 337824. ■



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The Pickle Barrel focuses on its customers' needs

BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Just days before the reopening of the Pickle Barrel restaurant at the Centerpoint Mall, Peter Higley, president and CEO of Pickle Barrel Foods (www.Picklebarrel.ca), is on site at this Yonge and Steeles location taking care of the last details.

Despite his hectic schedule, he's eager to talk about the renovations, because in the last 1 1/2 years, the restaurant chain has renovated all of its restaurants. "We're changing the design to keep up with the trends, he says.

Some examples of the updating include the new 80-seat patio at the original location (5941 Leslie St.) and the additional 3,000 square feet that has been added to the restaurant at Yorkdale, which now also has a private room for 60 to 70 people.

This private space is ideal for brunches, birthdays and dinners for out-of-town guests, he says. "It's great for an informal gathering."

The main dining rooms in most of The Pickle Barrel restaurants can often accommodate parties of 15 to 20, he adds.

The food at The Pickle Barrel has also been updated, says Higley. "We re-engineered the menu and transformed the restaurant from a deli. We keep modernizing. We don't keep still.

"Jewish people are health conscious, so the menus are always changing. We serve quinoa bowls packed with vegetables and fish or chicken. They're very popular. So are our innovative salads with mixed greens and cheese. We still have our old favourites, but we're also focused on healthy eating."

Food and lifestyle maven, Rose Reisman, has helped design the Art of Living menu. Her recipes appeal to diners looking for healthy menu options, according to Higley.

He also says the menus from the different restaurants vary. For instance, the restaurants at Centerpoint and Promenade malls offer soup in a pot with kreplach and chicken because that is a favourite of many of the Jewish clientele who frequent these eateries.

"We really look at our location," says Higley. "We let the customers tell us what's going to work for us. We keep tweaking the menu."

Despite the money spent on renovations, The Pickle Barrel aims to keep the menu prices from rising. "Value is close to our heart all the time. We're always looking to charge less."

He points to the well-priced all-inclusive party packages (416-984-5348) at the Pickle Barrel's Rose Room (5941 Leslie St.) and the banquet hall located at the shopping centre at Highway 7 and McCowan Road.

The Rose Room can accommodate 75 guests, and the banquet hall holds 210 guests for sit-down dinner and dance events.

Higley says these venues are ideal for bar and bat mitzvahs, and the brunch package is well suited to showers, special birthdays, baby namings, anniversaries and other events.

The Pickle Barrel offers one-stop shopping for bar and bat mitzvahs. Packages include the DJ, invitations, linen choices, menu selections, celebration cakes, centrepieces and giveaways.

The company also has a large catering arm, he says. People can choose from a comprehensive menu and they can get all their party rentals, as well.

In its more than 40 years of operation, The Pickle Barrel restaurant's philosophy has remained unchanged, says Higley. "We offer a comfortable, fun atmosphere with quick, efficient and friendly service, fantastic food and unbelievable value.

"We really focus on our customers. That's what we've done for the last 43 years." ■

Pickle Barrel Yonge/Eglinton

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DANIELLE KUBES
Special to The CJN

Wax Hands Fun Zone offers a creative and unique touch to any party, especially children's parties, bar and bat mitzvahs and sweet sixteens.

A fixture at Canada's Wonderland for three years, Wax Hands now travels to private parties to create hand impressions made out wax.

"The whole process itself is very fascinating, because it really is kind of magical," says Ilona Petrenko, owner of Wax Hands.

Petrenko and her team brings a special machine to parties and can individualize each hand according to the client's specifications.

"We can personalize the hand so they can do a sign that means something to them, like 'I love you' in sign language," she says.

They can also use different colour combinations and motifs. For example, for Canada Day, they designed a hand that was red and white with a leaf in the middle.

For the romantics among us, couples can clasp their hands together and use it to decorate their house.

They also make good presents for Mother's and Father's Day. "What parent wouldn't adore an impression of their little one's hand?" she asks.

"At the end of the day," she says, "For the guest who books us for the party it's a great thing to take home to remember that event." ■

Ilona Petrenko with one of her team members

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Avenue Banquet Hall offers one-stop service

The Boulevard Room

VICKY TOBIANAH
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

When clients come to the Avenue Banquet Hall (905-669-0777, theavenuebanquethall.com) to host their event, they get more than just an elegant, spacious venue.

Before owning the hall, Marla Kay was a wedding and party planner for 30 years, and she utilizes her expertise to help clients organize their events.

"I have knowledge on how to put together your function. It always puts the client at ease because they're speaking to someone who has experience. They're able to ask me questions about itineraries, how the day will go, and what they need beside venue and catering," said Kay.

Kay is also proud to offer her clients at the Avenue Banquet Hall a unique experience: an exclusive single event venue that can hold up to 400 people, and is the one-stop-shop you need to make your night one to remember.

The elegant hall features high ceilings, crystal chandeliers and marble flooring and can service kosher and non-kosher functions.

If planning a wedding, the banquet hall has a separate room for the ceremony so there is no need to wait for the staff to flip your room. As a single event venue, your party won't be colliding with others on your special day, ensuring that the staff is focused on your affair.

"The Avenue staff only services one function per day so everything is concentrated on you rather than spread out to four or five parties," she said.

The venue is also well known for its superb food – the chefs can create unique menus for your party, from East or West Indian to Russian to Italian or Portuguese.

"One of my chefs is from Barbados so you're eating authentic West Indian food. We've been doing it kosher and the reaction has been amazing because everyone is tired of chicken and beef. It's nice to offer them something different for a change," said Kay.

This also comes in handy for couples merging two different cultures.

"I had a multicultural couple – Russian and Canadian – so we tailored the menu to please both cultures and it worked out so beautifully."

After hosting so many functions at the Avenue Banquet Hall, Kay realized there was a hole in the market place – many clients she met wanted to host formal parties but with about 100 guests, something most banquet halls won't accommodate.

To meet this demand, she opened the Boulevard Room, also a single event venue located next door, which can fit 120 guests.

"At the Avenue, we were bombarded with people trying to book smaller parties and we couldn't accommodate them because the room is too big. Now having the Boulevard has opened up the floodgates," she said.

"We're booking by word of mouth because it's hard to find a smaller venue. Everyone loves that they're eating the Avenue food."

Both venues are serviced by Mitzuyan Kosher Catering, which has kosher kitchens on site.

The room has beautiful flooring with drop-down chandeliers and high, open ceilings, but is more laid back and funky than the elegant Avenue hall.

"Some of my brides are now doing bar and bat mitzvahs for their children. Now, some of my bar and bat mitzvah children are getting married and are so excited to come and get married here," said Kay.

"It's such a nice feeling and that's the service we generate. It's a nice warm feeling and good for the community." ■

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Brunch for 40 can be easy as pie

RANDY FINGRUT
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

My precious and adorable grandson Lincoln turned one in January. My son, Ariel, and daughter-in-law, Angeleka, planned to throw him a birthday lunch.

My son called to tell me, and the second thing he said to me was, "you are going to cook aren't you?"

Of course, I said. What else am I here for?

For the venue we decided to use my friend Sheila's spacious and beautifully appointed condominium party room. Angeleka and I had a planning meeting and decided to serve a buffet dairy lunch followed by a sweet table. There would be about 40 people and some children.

We started to draw up lists. Angeleka was in charge of choosing all the paper goods, plates, napkins, disposable cups for cold and hot drinks as well as plastic flatware. She decided on a rainbow theme and made the appropriate choices.

Ariel and Angeleka ordered the bagels, four dozen assorted, as well as two double breads, one rye with seeds and the other pumpernickel. They bought three very large frozen packages of lox, two large tubs of cream cheese and prepared a plentiful platter of cheese and crackers. They also bought and cut up the tomatoes, onions and cucumbers to go with the lox.

My task was to prepare the egg salad and the tuna salad. I also prepared a very large crudités platter (veggies to dip) with several bowls of dip.

Both Angeleka and I baked an assortment of desserts, cakes, cookies, cupcakes and squares. Ariel and Angeleka also prepared several large fruit platters for the sweet table and also ordered an adorable rainbow birthday cake which was the centrepiece of the sweet table.

Ariel and Angeleka arrived early and decorated the room with rainbow streamers and balloons. Loads of nostalgic candy all in rainbow colours, as well as rainbow party whistles and carnival masks decorated the buffet and tables around the room. One section of the room was dedicated as a play area for the children. A blanket, printed with a city design complete with roads for cars to run over, was put down on the floor with an assortment of toys. The children were 'good to go'; my grandson's favourite thing to say. On the opposite side of the room we set up assorted drinks. I brought a 30-cup percolator for coffee, a kettle and a thermos carafe for tea. Cases of water and assorted cases of pop ensured that no guest would go thirsty. The most challenging part of the party was the schlepping of all the serving pieces, platters, bowls and food from our homes to the party room. But once everything was in place it was magic. The perfect party for our amazing one-year-old boy.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Egg Salad For 40

- ❑ 4 dozen large eggs
- ❑ 1 1/3 cups Miracle Whip Light
- ❑ 1 cup sweet pickle relish
- ❑ 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. pepper

Divide eggs between two large pots. Cover eggs with cold water and place on stove over high heat. Bring the water to a rolling boil then place lids on the pots and turn off the heat.

Set timer to 20 minutes and let the eggs remain in the hot water. When the time is up, carefully drain the water off the eggs using the lid to hold in the eggs. Cover the eggs with cold water and drain again. Cover the pot again, holding the lid on with your hands and shake the pot several times so the eggs will hit the lid. This will crack the eggs and make them easy to peel.

Cover with more cold water. Carefully peel the eggs, checking to make sure there is no remaining shell, and place them in a large bowl. When all the eggs are shelled, drain off any excess water from the bowl of eggs and begin to mash them with a potato masher. Mash until there are no longer any large chunks of egg. Add in the remaining ingredients and combine well. Line a large bowl with plastic wrap and fill with the egg salad. This will create a decorative mould for the brunch. Cover and refrigerate until cold before serving. To serve place a platter over the bowl and turn bowl over onto the platter. Remove plastic wrap. ■

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Treat guests to a simple, yet elegant brunch

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Tuna Salad For 40

- ❑ 10 cans of white tuna in water
- ❑ 2/3 cup of Miracle Whip Light
- ❑ 1 jar sliced green olives

Drain off water from each tin of tuna. Place tuna in a large bowl. Combine in the remaining ingredients. Line a medium-sized bowl with plastic wrap and fill with the tuna salad. This will create a decorative mould for the brunch. Cover and refrigerate until cold before serving. To serve place a platter over the bowl and turn bowl over onto the platter. Remove plastic wrap.

Cumin Dip

- ❑ 1 cup low fat or fat free sour cream
- ❑ 1 cup shredded cheese, cheddar, Tex Mex or assorted cheeses
- ❑ 1 1/2 tsp. dried cumin
- ❑ 1/4 tsp. salt
- ❑ 1/8 tsp. pepper
- ❑ zest of one lime
- ❑ 1 tbsp. fresh lime juice

Combine all the ingredients and keep refrigerated until serving. ■

Charming Cherry Chocolate Cake

- ❑ 1 1/2 cups sugar
- ❑ 2/3 cups canola oil
- ❑ 2 eggs
- ❑ 2 tsp. pure vanilla
- ❑ 2 2/3 cups flour
- ❑ 2/3 cup cocoa
- ❑ 2 tsp. baking powder
- ❑ 2 tsp. baking soda
- ❑ 1/2 tsp. salt
- ❑ 2 cups boiling water
- ❑ 2/3 cup chocolate chips
- ❑ 1 can of cherry pie filling
- ❑ 1/4 cup cherry brandy

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 9-in. spring form pan with canola oil and line bottom with parchment paper.

In food processor blend sugar, canola oil, eggs and pure vanilla. Run the processor for about one minute. Add in flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Pulse once or twice. Run processor adding in one cup of the boiling water.

With a spatula, scrape down sides and bring up mixture from the bottom breaking up any lumps and making sure it is smooth. Run processor again adding in the remaining boiling water. Add in the chocolate chips and pulse once or twice. Pour batter into the spring form pan and place on a baking sheet. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean and the cake springs back when touched. Cool.

Remove cake from the pan and split cake horizontally into two sections. Separate the layers. Mix cherry pie filling with cherry brandy. Spoon one half of the cherry mixture over the bottom layer. Replace the top layer and spoon remain cherry mixture over the top of the cake. ■

Magen brothers go back to their roots with Uptown Loft

Jian and Page Magen

DANIELLE KUBES
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The Magen brothers' newest venture is a full service venue at Yonge and Eglinton, Uptown Loft.

The 3,000-square-foot venue is a blank space – with white walls, hardwood floors and a state-of-the-art lighting system – that's able to convert seamlessly to suit a wide variety of functions, from cocktail parties, to corporate conferences, to weddings.

"From a décor point of view, it's such a blank slate. There are so many different looks and visual effects that you can create in this space. Because when Page [Magen] – a last name familiar to anyone on the bar mitzvah circuit since the late '90s – took it over he did something very smart and made it very flexible. Everything is white so you can create any sort of look you want, " Sarah Feldberg, general manager of Uptown Loft, says.

And just because it's owned by the Magen brothers, Page and Jian, doesn't mean you're limited to using Magen Boys Entertainment services. In fact, Uptown Loft allows clients to use any vendor they choose while still providing the option to do everything in-house.

"We're all about sharing the business to do whatever is best for clients," Page says. "We're totally cool with all of that – we love that, we want that."

That's a rarity in Toronto where, usually, one has to use all the venue's own services, or hire solely outside vendors.

That means Uptown Loft caters to both exhausted working mothers and picky bridezillas.

"We think that sets us apart from other venues. We can do everything start to finish and make it turn-key, or we can take a step back and let clients do their own decision-making and bring in their own vendors as they choose," Feldberg says.

The loft also holds a special place in the Magen brothers' hearts.

"Well it's funny because our first bat mitzvah, our first event that we ever produced, that we ever worked, was at this venue 13 years ago," Page says.

When the opportunity came up for them to take ownership of the venue, they jumped at the chance.

"We felt like this was a really special place," Page says, "that allowed clients to do the ultimate tailored party." ■

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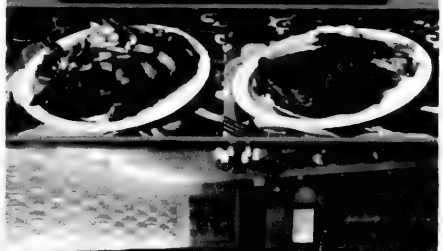
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Fighting Hunger

Students at Westmount Collegiate unite for 30-Hour Famine. **PAGE 17**

Opinion

Referendum should be held on any two-state solution, says Arie Raif. **PAGE 30**

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:42 p.m.	9:58 p.m.
Montreal	8:25 p.m.	9:43 p.m.
Toronto	8:42 p.m.	9:56 p.m.
Winnipeg	9:20 p.m.	10:48 p.m.
Calgary	9:33 p.m.	11:06 p.m.
Vancouver	9:00 p.m.	10:27 p.m.

Life after JDate

Writer Bruce Freedman on the agony and ecstasy of Jewish online dating: "In the beginning, I felt invincible, omnipotent, like I was the king of the world... But now even that feeling was gone. JDate left me broken, a shadow of my former self." See story **PAGE 8.**

Time to talk about Muslim Brotherhood

We need a national discussion on the group's activities in Canada, says author of new report. **PAGE 12**

Entrepreneur develops plastic currency

David Katz wants to help the environment.
PAGE 21

Early intervention key for children with special needs

The CJN wraps up its series on inclusion in the community.
PAGE 24

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Stones give Israel satisfaction, and neighbour congratulates neighbour

Fans get what they need

They may be almost as old as some of the country's famed sites, but after 50 years, the Rolling Stones finally played Israel. The legendary band performed 19 songs over two hours on June 4 for 50,000 fans at Hayarkon Park in Tel Aviv, despite calls by boycott, divestment and sanctions activists to cancel the show. Most notably, Pink Floyd front man Roger Waters had publicly urged the band not to play Israel. The concert's start time was pushed back to allow those observing Shavuot to arrive comfortably after the holiday ended that evening. Prior to the gig, the band visited the Kotel and placed notes in the wall.

Mick and Keef rock Tel Aviv.
ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

Peres offers mazal tov to al-Sisi

Israeli President Shimon Peres congratulated newly elected Egyptian President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi June 6. During Peres' phone conversation with al-Sisi, Peres stressed "Israel's commitment to maintain the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt and strengthening the co-operation between the countries," Peres' office said. He also wished the Egyptian people "prosperity and success." It didn't say what al-Sisi said in reply, except that he "thanked President Peres for his warm words." Al-Sisi was confirmed June 4, after winning a reported 96.1 per cent of this month's runoff vote. He was to be sworn in Sunday.

Germany approves pension payments

Germany's Bundestag has unanimously passed a law approving back payments of so-called ghetto pensions for Jewish survivors. The law, reflecting years of negotiations, was approved by the federal cabinet in April. It requires retroactive payments of a few hundred euros per month going as far back as July 1, 1997. Some 50,000 people are eligible for the pensions, including 13,000 in Israel. Survivors forced to work in Nazi ghettos had to wait until 2002 for any kind of pension at all. Once these were granted, applicants could claim only a maximum of four years in back payments from the time of filing. ■

Gematria

$250,000

The amount the International Olympic Committee will give to the $2.3-million Munich Olympics memorial, set to open in September to remember the nine Israelis killed at the Games in 1972. German taxpayers will fund the bulk of the cost.

$6.7 million

The amount Israeli promoter Shuki Weiss reportedly paid the Rolling Stones for their first and only concert in Israel last week.

Quotable

There is more anti-Semitism today in Arab countries than when there were 850,000 Jews living among the Arabs.

— Gina Waldman, founder of JIMENA, Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and Africa. **See full interview on page 42.**

Inside today's edition

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Letters to the Editor

Times are changing

I read with great interest the article written by Talia Soberano ("The Inclusion Project," *The CJN*, May 22).

Times have changed with help coming from many sources. A child with a learning disability has a good chance to succeed in life.

I was also told to leave school and became a server or cleaning woman. That was 60 years ago, and I definitely fell through the cracks.

My late husband and children helped me get through many difficult years, with my math, writing and reading skills. Organizations like Literacy Unlimited helped me much later in life. I only wish there were the resources around when I was growing up. Bravo Talia Soberano.

Bernice Rosemarin
Dollard des Ormeaux, Que.

Rudeness and tolerance

The May 29 Rabbi 2 Rabbi column ("Testing the limits of tolerance") leads me to the following conclusions.

Firstly, Jews on the far right are not taught tolerance. (I say this at the risk of some controversy). By definition, their beliefs are at the extreme, radical end of the spectrum and for self-sustainability alone, their pronouncements cannot afford officially to recognize Jews located elsewhere on the spectrum.

Modern Orthodoxy seems to have figured it out. I have seen no evidence of intolerance here. Modern Orthodox Jews I know attend celebrations or funerals and shivahs wherever necessary and work in Conservative shuls and teach in mixed environments, with a kippah the only obvious, visible evidence of their affiliation.

The "*New York Times* man" was a rude, ignorant and inconsiderate individual who just happened to be observant as well. I cannot imagine any other Orthodox individual who would condone such conduct.

Ron Hoffman, *Toronto*

Recognizing Herb Gray

I was saddened to read Michael Taube's apologia for Prime Minister Stephen Harper's poor decision not to grant Herb Gray a state funeral ("Why Herb Gray didn't have a state funeral," *The CJN*, May 15).

Taube defends the prime minister by denigrating Gray's accomplishments and suggesting that Gray's Jewishness was a factor – which he dismissed – in considering whether to grant him a state funeral.

The Jewish community is rightly proud of Gray's accomplishments, but this is hardly the reason why he should have been granted a state funeral. Taube's suggestion to this effect smacks of tokenism.

Gray served the people of Windsor and of Canada with dedication, desire and with wit for more than four decades. He was a role model and a mentor to many Canadians, attracting many into public life.

He practised politics of a different sort than those of today. If you want to know why he deserved a state funeral, read the tributes by ordinary Canadians to him in the pages of Canada's newspapers. That the Governor General of Canada, the Chief Justice of Canada and four former prime ministers, including Progressive Conservative Joe Clark chose to attend his funeral, and the prime minister and leading figures in the Conservative Party did not, speaks for itself.

Harper had an opportunity to make a generous and statesmanlike decision. Instead, he chose the path of partisanship.

Adam Dodek
Vice-Dean research, Faculty of Law
University of Ottawa

From the campaign trail

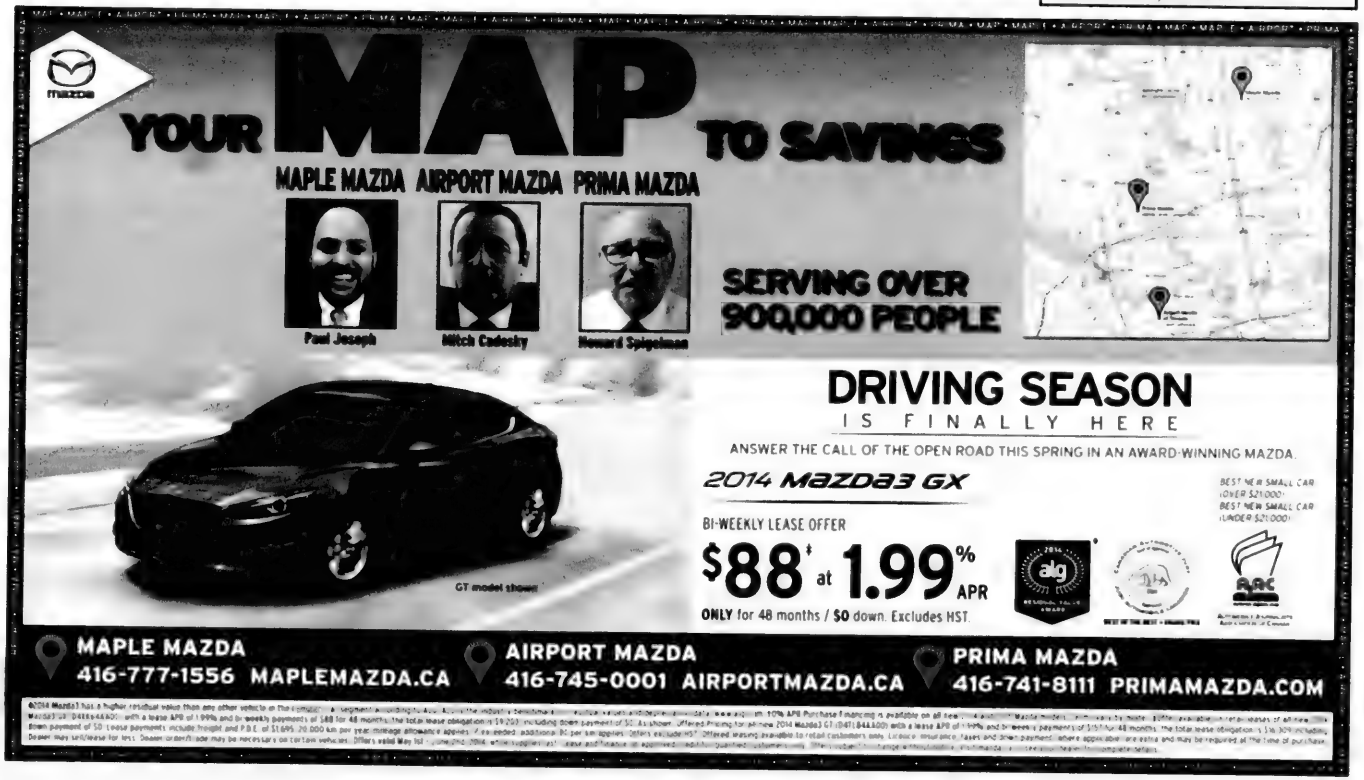
I have spent the last 30 years as your MPP and have served in five ministerial portfolios, including Solicitor General. I have worked hard in York Centre to strengthen and improve your community.

Ontario's economy is strong; more than 459,000 net new jobs have been created since June 2009. But we need to continue to invest in people and partnerships, and not slash services and cut jobs. We need to make sure our healthcare and education systems remain among the best in the world. I will advocate for projects such as the new Humber River Digital Hospital, slated to open next year.

I was born in Toronto to Jewish-Polish immigrants and have spent a lifetime building bridges between Ontario and Israel. I am proud to have led many missions to Israel. I was the founding president of the Toronto regional council of B'nai Brith, and initiated the Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony at Queen's Park two decades ago. I bring this wealth of experience in public service, as well as my wisdom, humility and work ethic. If re-elected, I will continue to work hard on behalf of all constituents. ■

Monte Kwinter, *Toronto*

Letters to the editor are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address or to **cjninfo@gmail.com**. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*



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RABBI-2-RABBI

Educating the modern rabbi

Do seminaries give graduates the skill set required to thrive in the pulpit? What's the balance between the mastery of text and practical skills?

RABBI ADAM CUTLER
BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION, TORONTO

RABBI ARI ISENBERG
SHAAR SHALOM CONGREGATION, HALIFAX

Rabbi Cutler: Recently, as my Facebook news stream has been lighting up with pictures of friends at their ordination ceremonies, I've been thinking a lot about my own rabbinic education, which concluded five years ago. Rabbi Isenberg, though we are a few years apart, we are both graduates of the rabbinical school of the Jewish Theological Seminary. I wonder: what education is needed to be a successful modern rabbi? What is the balance between the mastery of text and practical skills? In what situations have you felt adequately trained? And as a relatively freshly ordained rabbi, have there been moments when you feel that your formal education was lacking? I'm curious to know if in serving our communities we've encountered the same moments of, "Why didn't they cover that in rabbi school?"

Rabbi Isenberg: It's funny: When people learn that rabbinical school is generally four to six years, I tend to encounter two distinct responses. Some people are shocked and surprised by the length of the program, while others wonder how we could fit everything in.
I recall a teaching once given by Rabbi Danny Nevins, who serves as dean of the rabbinical school you and I attended. When speaking about length of our program, he noted that the Levites weren't asked to serve in the military. Rather, they were to work in the Temple. Unlike the other tribes, who enlisted their sons in the military at age 20, the Levites were enlisted for service in the Temple at the age of 30. What was the benefit of waiting another decade before serving? Perhaps they needed a degree of life experience before beginning training. What's more, once the Levites turn 50, they learn an entirely new skill set in Temple maintenance. Maybe the same is true of rabbis. As we progress and evolve in our roles, we continue to refine our skills, learn new ones and identify renewed ways of serving our people.

Rabbi Cutler: As students, we both participated in required internships that entailed oversight by experienced rabbis. Just as prospective doctors have clerkships and residencies, many rabbi schools mandate supervised internships.
I am blessed with serving alongside a fantastic senior rabbi, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, who is my first consultation for difficult cases. There are a few very talented "rabbis' rabbis" who serve as mentors to those in the field. Certainly within the area of Jewish law, there have always been rabbis' rabbis. It is reported that among certain Orthodox institutions, the phone number of the great halachist Rabbi Moshe Feinstein was written on the back of every ordination certificate.
While many people think of pulpit rabbis as being specialists, we know that we're generalists. While we have particular knowledge of a body of literature and sets of traditions, those of us who serve in the pulpit must possess a massive array of skills: programming, preaching, organizational leadership, teaching, counselling, legal decision-making, outreach, etc. None of us, whether after four, six, or 15 years of formal training, can master it all. Rabbi Isenberg, as a lone rabbi, where do you turn for guidance? In what areas of practice do you feel you were well trained and in what areas could rabbinical training be improved?

Rabbi Isenberg: I love the prescription in Pirkei Avot: Acquire a rabbi, it says, and obtain a friend. Even as a rabbi, it's wholly beneficial to have your own rabbi (not dissimilar from a therapist having a therapist). There are several rabbis with whom I consult on a regular basis, including some I've known since my childhood in Montreal.
As the role of a rabbi continues to evolve, the curriculum in rabbinical school has adjusted. While some staples of rabbinic training remain (sacred text study, for instance), there are now emphases placed on new aspects of the job. In my case, being a rabbi in Halifax, I find myself assuming responsibilities that larger shuls in larger centres delegate to an executive director and support staff. As such, I rely heavily on the courses I took in non-profit management. Decades ago, who would have thought that rabbi school curriculum would include courses like that?
I'll conclude with this question: many universities have invested in online learning. Would this model be possible in the rabbinic world? ■

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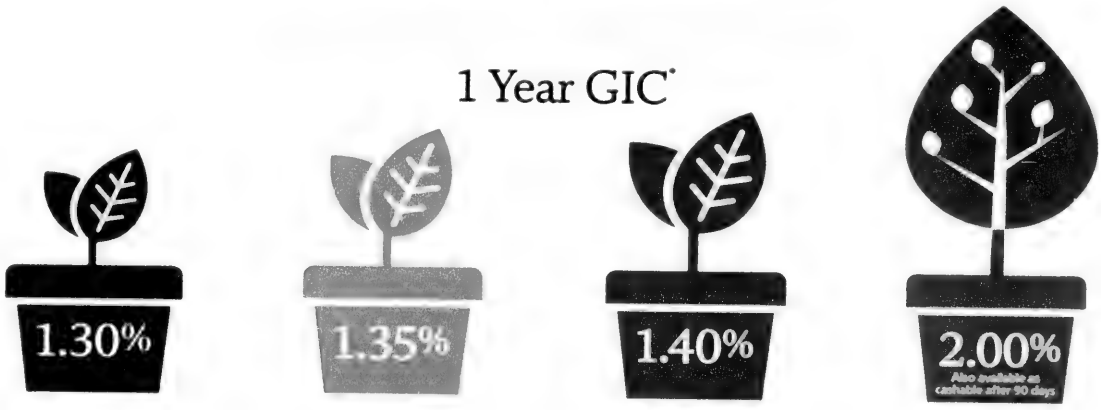

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From the archives | Campaign trail

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES, BLANKSTEIN FAMILY HERITAGE CENTRE PHOTO

Then Ontario premier John Robarts visited the Jewish Home for the Aged in Toronto with other Conservative Party candidates during the 1965 provincial election campaign.

SeeJN | Baseball champs

The varsity boys baseball team from the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel Centre completed a perfect season on June 3 by winning the York Region Athletic Association Tier 2 baseball championship. After going 6-0 in the regular season and winning two playoff games, the Cougars defeated Thornhill Secondary School 7-6 in the title game.

From Yoni's Desk

My Jewish playlist

As Jewish holiday after-parties go, the one the Rolling Stones threw post-Shavuot has to rank right up there (though Mimouna probably still tops it). Ha'avanim Hamitgalgalot, as Mick Jagger dubbed his band, brought much-needed levity to 50,000 in Tel Aviv, and in a greater sense to all of Israel. And they inspired me to compile a playlist of my favourite songs by Jewish artists:

- *Sweet Jane*, Lou Reed: In my mind, there are two kinds of Velvet Underground songs: the subversive tracks that require listeners to be in a very specific mood to "get," and *Sweet Jane*, which is always just right.
- *Ophelia*, Robbie Robertson: My father has probably bought fewer than 10 albums for himself since I was a kid. But one of them was The Band's *Greatest Hits* (a double-tape). People say all kinds of things about Robertson as a band mate, but no one denies his musicianship. To understand why, just watch him rock this song in *The Last Waltz*.
- *(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman*, Carole King: Aretha Franklin made it a hit, but I prefer the songwriter's stripped-down, piano-only version. King's voice adds an entirely new layer of vulnerability to Aretha's interpretation.
- *Started From the Bottom*, Drake: I'm not ashamed to admit I think this is a cool track. I am, however, a little ashamed to note it took me a while to realize I was listening to the edited-for-radio version.
- *A Long December*, Adam Duritz: One Friday afternoon in 1997, a pre-Shabbat entertainer cancelled his scheduled appearance at Baycrest hospital in Toronto, and a group of students from Or Chaim high school was thrust into emergency duty. This is what we sang.
- *Stay (I Missed You)*, Lisa Loeb: It's the song my daughter falls asleep to every night. Enough said.
- *Last Nite*, The Strokes: Guitarist Nick Valensi sets the tone with the opening double-C riff (and he's Jewish). The Strokes' debut album saved the world from bubblegum-pop overload in the fall of 2001.
- *The Ballad of El Goodo*, Alex Chilton: The eponymous protagonist affirms life gets tough sometimes, but ultimately it's what you make of it – and that God will help you out. By the end of the song, you can't help but feel at least a little bit better.
- *You Know I'm No Good*, Amy Winehouse: The British singer-songwriter was a phenomenal talent and never shy about her personal demons. This song is a case in point: A catchy, neo-soul number with the chorus "I cheated myself, like I knew I would. I told you I was trouble, you know I'm no good."
- *I am Trying to Break Your Heart*, Jeff Tweedy: Wilco's lead singer and songwriter told The A.V. Club in 2009, "I wish I was Jewish," so I'll allow this one. When Wilco streamed this track and the album it opens online for free in 2001, it signalled a coming change to the way we consume music.

So there you have it, my 10 favourite songs by or featuring Jewish (and "Je-wish-ing") musicians. Obviously, I left out a lot of great talent – Bob Dylan, Joey Ramone, The Beastie Boys, Leonard Cohen, Steven Page, Miami Boys Choir and so many more. Share your list at cjninfo@gmail.com. ■ — YONI

ESSAY

Muriel Rukeyser: *Centennial of a Jewish poet*

Robert Hirschfield

To be a Jew in the twentieth century
Is to be offered a gift. If you refuse,
Wishing to be invisible, you choose
Death of the spirit, the stone insanity.
(from *Letter To The Front*)

It bears mentioning on her centennial that those words of Muriel Rukeyser (Dec.15, 1913-Feb. 12, 1980), written in 1944 of all years, were installed in Reform and Reconstructionist prayer books. A radical feminist and leftist, the poet was amazed but also delighted.

The daughter of well-to-do, Yiddish speaking, Reform Jews in New York, Rukeyser at age 20, drove down to Alabama to stand with the Scottsboro Boys, nine black youths unjustly accused of raping two white women. After Scottsboro, it was Gauley Bridge, W.Va., where she wrote about the unsafe labour conditions responsible for the widespread cases of silicosis among the miners. In 1936, she was one of many Jewish radicals to travel to Spain in support of the anti-fascist Republicans fighting Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Years later, as a middle-aged woman, she would get herself arrested protesting the Vietnam War on the Senate steps.

Jan Heller Levi, who served as Rukeyser's last assistant, and who along with her husband, Christoph Keller, is authoring Rukeyser's biography for Knopf, traces the poet's interest in politics back to when she was a four-year-old. "The first newspaper headline she taught herself to read," Heller Levi recalls with a hearty laugh, "was 'Allies Advance Six Miles South of Soissons.'"

Rukeyer's revolutionary zeal was the cause of parental rejection. Her father,

Muriel Rukeyser, 1962. LIDA MOSER, PARIS PRESS

> *To a generation steeped in tweeting, Rukeyser must seem an archaic figure*

the owner of Colonial Sand & Stone, was particularly incensed by his daughter's staunch anti-capitalism.

Her family featured a mythological anomaly that would affect her poetry. Her mother claimed a putative ancestral relationship to the great scholar and martyr Rabbi Akiba.

Ironically, Rukeyser's poetic references to Akiba were almost devotional. ("She was not," emphasizes Keller, "an ideologue.")

In her poem, *Trinity Churchyard*, she lauded Akiba as freedom fighter and ecstatic.

Mother I walk, going even here in green Galilee
Where our ancestor, Akiba, resisted Rome
Singing forever the Song of Songs
Even in torture knowing.

The poet, whose commanding size was undercut later in life by strokes and diabetes, was typical of a certain kind of 20th century Jewish radical: inordinately sensitive to social inequality and minority harassment, drawn to big ideas, but keeping to the margins of the gatekeepers of those ideas; in Rukeyser's case, the Communist Party. She was too free spirited and doctrine intolerant to ever be a good communist.

To a generation steeped in the disembodied engagement of tweeting, Rukeyser must seem an archaic figure. To the second wave, feminists of the late '60s (the suffragettes being the first wave), especially poets such as Adrienne Rich, Alicia Ostriker and Ann Sexton, to whom she was "Muriel, mother of everyone," Rukeyser was a hero who wrote her feminist poetry before there was a feminist movement. She also lighted one of the literary fires of that movement's with *The Poem As Mask*. It begins:

When I wrote of the women in their dances and wildness,
it was a mask,
on their mountain, god-hunting, singing, in orgy,
it was a mask...

Two stanzas later, comes her cri de coeur:

No more masks! No more mythologies!

From Rukeyser's first volume, *Theory of Flight* (1935) to her last, *The Collected Poems of Muriel Rukeyser* (published in 1978 by McGraw Hill,and updated by The University of Pittsburgh Press in 2005), what is a constant is her penchant for long narratives, their aching for humanity, their longing to tell humanity's story. Virtually all the poetic forms make their appearance in these works: free verse, sestina, sonnet, elegy. She recorded her time with an urgency and density (there are short poems as well, no less lacking in substance as the long ones), rare for a poet of any age.

In the revealing essay on her Jewishness that appeared in the *Contemporary Jewish Record* symposium titled *Under Forty* (1944), Rukeyser writes bitingly of her Reform origins: *I grew up among a group of Jews who wished, more than anything else, I think, to be invisible.*

Jews to whom she acknowledged a great debt: *I sat under the shadowy dome during the drone of the watered-down sermon and the watered-down liturgical music, and I read the Bible. Its clash and poetry and nakedness, its fiery vision of conflict resolved only in God, were true to me, no matter what I was coming to believe about the reality of the world or power or divinity or death or love.*

She would candidly admit: *I don't know how far I am representative of any group in Jewish life.*

No established group perhaps. But one can say a hundred years after her birth that she is still recognizable as a Jewish radical archetype, with the untamed energy that spills beyond a single allegiance, beyond the harness of a single place.

In her poem, *For My Son*, we hear the rich tumble of a voice that has no double in contemporary poetry.

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There's life after JDate

Encounter with dating site was similar to an episode of *The Twilight Zone*

BRUCE FREEDMAN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

When I moved to Toronto, divorced and delighted, I initially stayed with my brother's family. It was wonderful. I got to spend some quality time with my nephews. But it wasn't enough. After a few weeks, I realized I needed to get out. I needed to meet grownups, people who would agree that six hours of Guitar Hero is excessive. And preferably people with long legs, flaming red hair and tattoos on the smalls of their backs.

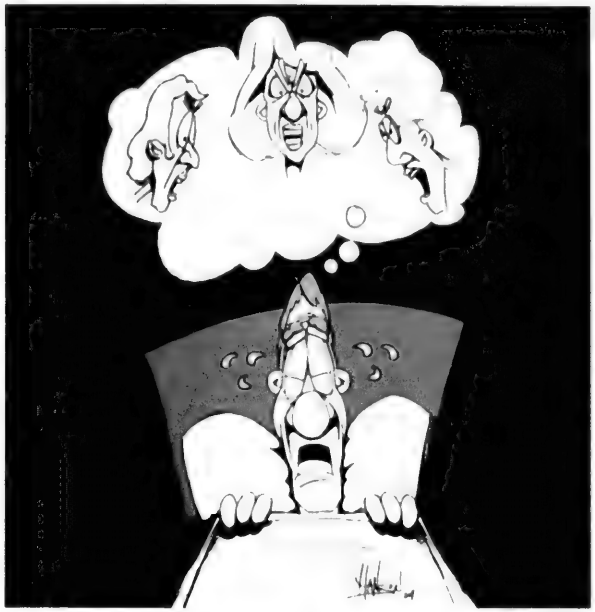
I'd heard about Lavalife and Matchmaker and this Internet dating phenomenon, but I'd never been on any of the websites. I met my future ex-wife back when Internet dating was still a novelty. I'd been told that Internet dating was no longer an embarrassment. Sure there were disaster stories, but there were success stories too. And one of my closest friends married the woman he met on JDate, an Internet dating site that caters to Jews. It seemed like a lot of harmless fun to me.

Now, I'm not a particularly good Jew. I'd dated only one Jewish woman in my life. So I figured that if I'm going to try Internet dating, I owed it to my mother to do it through JDate. So I set up an account, uploaded a couple of pictures of myself, and what happens? You know that old episode of *The Twilight Zone* where an entire town wakes up to discover they've lost a week of their lives because some aliens had kidnapped them and placed them in suspended animation?

That's what JDate did to me.

You may as well have removed that week from my life, because I can barely remember it. All I know is that during this period, I did not work, I did not go to the gym and I did not leave the house. I did not even go on any actual dates. I just sat in front of my computer reading Jewish women's profiles, responding to emails and eating too much cereal.

Have you ever played a video game for the first time against a friend who's been playing it for weeks? You know that moment where the game has just begun – and you're trying to figure out which button does what – and suddenly your friend comes running up behind you and blows you up with a rocket launcher? You're pleading for a grace period to learn how the controls work but every time you're reborn, he immediately shoots you. That's what JDate is like for the uninitiated. Within seconds of activating my profile, I was attacked. Instant messages were popping up like Bouncing Bettys. By the end of the first minute, I'd received three "flirts" and been "hot-listed" twice. I was overwhelmed with the attention.



I received over 50 emails in that first week

I received over 50 emails in that first week. I didn't actually have time to meet any of the authors, because I was too busy writing back. I had not yet learned the appropriate etiquette so I was responding to all inquiries – and I do mean all. I exchanged flirty email banter with everyone from a 54-year-old divorcée with two 17-year-old twins to a 290-pound student who was trying to decide her major. I just didn't know how to say no.

By week two, I had learned that I didn't need to know how to say "no" – not when I could simply ignore the email. This freed up some time for me to actually go on dates.

One thing I can safely say I have learned from those first few dates is that everybody has at least one good photo. Another thing I learned is that this is usually the photo that is shown on JDate. Some of these photos can be a bit dated. I learned this the hard way, when I sipped coffee one afternoon with a 65-year-old retiree. I really should have said no, but she looked so cute in the photo. I hadn't noticed the horse and buggy in the background.

My initial dating experiences were also tarnished because it took me some time to learn that there was a completely different language used among online daters. For instance, in the world of JDate there is no word for "fat." In each member's profile, there is a scroll-down menu with several possible descriptions for body-type, none of which actually reads "fat." Once you understand this reality, and have taken the time to learn the appropriate JDate diction, then you will do just fine. My tastes gravitated towards women who had selected lean/slender, athletic/fit or firm & toned. Even then, I had some surprises. Athletic/fit for the typical Jewish girl means she wears Lululemon when she's shopping.

There were also distinct rules of engagement, specific to Internet dating. One lesson I learned quickly is that you had better want to be a father. When filling in the profile, I was asked if I planned to have children? I mistakenly chose "maybe." I learned afterward that this was the wrong answer. One aspiring mom told me she could not go out with me unless I was more certain. I vehemently defended my "maybe," because how could I "plan" to have children if I had not yet met the right

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

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Can Israel be both Jewish and democratic?

Gil Troy

I am consistently astounded by the simplistic slogans, the false polarities, the epidemic of idiocy that distorts discussions about Israel. In the 1970s, the Soviets and the Palestinians improvised what Daniel Patrick Moynihan called "the Big Red Lie," framing the national conflict between Jews and Palestinians as a racial one, claiming that Zionism is racism and that democratic, colour-blind Israel is somehow similar to racist, colour-obsessed South African apartheid.

The latest propaganda line has people debating another false choice: "Can Israel be both Jewish and democratic?" fools ask – and demagogues then try robbing Israel of its right to exist by catching Israel in some contradiction.

On one level, the answer is "of course not." If the question means can Israel be both completely Jewish – adhering to every minute medieval Jewish law – and completely democratic – following the purest, simplest form of a town meeting democracy – the answer clearly is "no."

This is partially because all countries combine ideas, structures, and systems, putting them in healthy tension. Canada does fully empower both the federal government and the provinces – but navigates between the two, sometimes artfully, sometimes awkwardly. The United States does not always honour majority rule nor does it always honour minority rights. However, by cherishing both values it charts its own path, for better and worse.

Moving beyond the rhetorical framework, realistically, the answer to the question is "of course." Israel is a state with a Jewish majority and certain Jewish characteristics that is also a democracy. Acknowledging those categories' fluidity, and the constant tensions inherent involved in governing, we can see many elements of "Jewish" and "democratic" shaping Israeli life.

That Israel even aspires to be democratic puts it in an exclusive club, which the Palestinians and most Arabs do not even try joining. It is impossible to read Israel's Declaration of Independence fairly without seeing a country that is deeply Jewish, rooting its legitimacy in the Bible and Jewish history, but also deeply democratic, offering civil rights to all its "inhabitants," aware that not all of them were Jewish – or even friendly and loyal to the new state in 1948.

So, let's move beyond demagogic debates. Let's stop trying to magnify whatever imperfections one finds in order to question Israel's very right to exist. Instead, let's ask the question more fairly, more elegantly. The proper question is, given Israel's aspiration to be a democratic Jewish state, what resonances does it experience and what shortcomings does it endure?

That kind of question opens up a fascinating inquiry rather than a hostile inquisition. My short answers would be:

1. Israel is clearly on the democratic spectrum, providing a stable civil society, rule of law, free elections, basic civil rights, freedom of speech and religion, independent courts, and an aggressive press – all of which allow for democracy's most miraculous asset, its self-correcting mechanism.

Israel is also clearly a Jewish state, living in a Jewish space, on Jewish time, with a public space that is deeply Jewish and not neutral, while trying not to be hostile to others. Of course, given that the Jews are a people, a Jewish state is like a French state, not a theocracy but the expression of a people with a particular language, culture, and yes, a religion too. It is perfectly valid for a majority in a nation-state to express some of its cultural and even religious heritage in public.

2. Nevertheless, there are tensions, contradictions, and shortcomings. The rabbinate is too intrusive regarding marriage and divorce. Israeli Arabs should feel fully equal as citizens in the Jewish democratic state of Israel. And the ultra-Orthodox minority should not use democratic interest group politics to demand too many rights – and subsidies – without fulfilling democratic responsibilities. But, unlike most, I see progress on all three major issues -- and I retain my deep faith in Israel's vibrant, sometimes exhausting democracy, to find the right balance… eventually. ■

Travelling Jewish and bumping into history

Sara Horowitz

As an adult, I bear a different kind of burden in travelling as a Jew, and no more so than when I travel to Europe. I experience travel in two different and sometimes discordant ways. On the one hand, I'm drawn to the same things that attract most travellers – cultural riches, breathtaking landscapes, culinary treats, architectural wonders and a sense of history. The last item – history – snags me, and brings up the other hand. Because on the other hand, I see places through Jewish eyes as well. Did Jews live here? Do they still? What intellectual, cultural, literary heritage did they create here? What happened to them? Sometimes the Jewish experience of place adds to and enriches the more general experience – in New York, for example. But in other places, the two sets of perceptions are at odds with one another.

I felt this doubleness acutely on a recent visit to in southern France. My husband and I were enjoying the pleasures of Aix-en-Provence, a charming city about a half hour north of Marseille, and a well-situated base for day trips to other charming places. Although we hadn't planned this as a Jewish trip, the historian in my husband couldn't be in proximity to such places as Avignon, Carpentras and Cavaillon without following the traces of Jewish history.

As he explained to me, during the period when Avignon became the alternate home for popes, Jews were invited to live there, even though they weren't welcome elsewhere in France. Referred to as "the Pope's Jews," they lived under papal protection. Their occupations were restricted, they had to wear distinctively marked clothing, they lived in restricted areas – but they could stay. Traces of their lives can be found in nearby Carpetras and Cavaillon, where 14th-century synagogues have been preserved. Early in the 16th century, Jews were expelled from Provence. Because of this, the buildings contain few artifacts. As in the rest of France, Jews began to return to Provence in the 17th century, and after the French Revolution, were accorded the rights of citizenship.

We thought we had covered "Jewish Provence," when we came upon a reference to a deportation camp in Provence itself. Established on the site of a former brick factory, Camp des Milles opened in 1939, first as an internment camp for anti-Nazi artists and intellectuals. By the early 1940s, it was a transit camp for Jews awaiting immigration papers to somewhere safe, and as that became increasingly difficult, as a deportation camp pending transportation to Auschwitz.

After the war, the family who owned the factory reclaimed it and resumed manufacturing. As part of the process of making the facility operational again, many traces of its function during the war were destroyed or obscured. There are, for example, no barracks to be seen. And most people seemed to have forgotten about the camp on a street right in town.

But in preparing it for its opening as a memorial site in 2012, its developers took pains to find traces of its former inmates – drawings or lettering on the wall, for example – that survived its postwar use as an active manufacturing plant. There is, as well, a memorial to the Jewish children deported from France. Camp des Milles is the only internment and deportation camp that is set up as a memorial site open to the public. Drancy, the transit camp just outside Paris, is now used as housing in a somewhat seedy neighbourhood. There's a memorial nearby. Of the three labour camps that existed in Paris itself during the war – a forgotten piece of history documented by French historian Jean-Marc Dreyfus – little trace remains.

The signage in Camp des Milles is in French only, an indication that the site is intended as a place of education and contemplation for French visitors. We saw school children and adult groups there. It speaks to a return to memory and conscience. ■

Just ignore Queers Against Israeli Apartheid

Adam Goldenberg

A few weeks ago, a guy I used to work with wrote a blog post comparing me to Holocaust deniers Ernst Zundel and David Irving.

I had just published an op-ed defending a woman's right to choose, in which I criticized the Catholic Church for meddling in Canadian politics. My ex-colleague apparently was not amused. He accused me of bigotry and hissed that I reminded him of neo-Nazis.

My grandparents are Holocaust survivors, and so his screed, as comically hyperbolic as it was, hit a nerve. I was annoyed, upset, outraged even. I wanted desperately to respond.

I didn't. In the end, I listened to friends who are much smarter than I, and kept my powder dry. The shmuck obviously wanted to make me mad – why else would he compare a Jewish writer to Holocaust deniers and neo-Nazis? – and fighting back would only have given him the attention that he evidently craved.

"I learned long ago, never to wrestle with a pig," George Bernard Shaw once reportedly said. "You get dirty, and besides, the pig likes it."

Enter Queers Against Israeli Apartheid. QuAIA has in recent years caused more controversy than any other participant in Toronto's Pride parade – which, for an event that includes a whole lot of naked people, is really saying something.

The group's message is painfully unsubtle. Israel, it asserts, is an apartheid state. It's offensive. It's ignorant. It's wrong. And, as Toronto prepares for this month's Pride festivities, it's not worth anyone's time.

In 2010, Toronto Pride organizers voted to ban the slur "Israeli apartheid," but later reversed course and allowed QuAIA to march. QuAIA then boycotted the parade in 2011. When they returned in 2012, B'nai Brith Canada filed a complaint, to no avail. Last year, Toronto city councillors devoted yet more hours to debating QuAIA's participation in Pride. The group marched anyway.

Genug shoyn. What's the point?

I admit, I've written before that QuAIA – whose message has as much to do with gay rights as an anti-abortion "Queers for Life" float would – has no place in Pride. I still think that's true. But I'm done arguing about it.

As threats to the Jewish people go, this one's fairly benign. Every year, our community's leaders go to the barricades to keep a few dozen activists out of a parade that's so crowded, it can be difficult to find one's own friends among the rainbow festoonery and rogue genitalia. Our well-intentioned defenders look like censors, and give QuAIA a taste of the free-speech martyrdom that, make no mistake, is their true objective.

Like an angry blogger who compares a Jewish columnist to neo-Nazis, a group whose name accuses Israel of the crime of apartheid isn't asking to be taken seriously. It's begging to be noticed.

And yet, year after year, we oblige. "The Pride event should not introduce hate and hate speech," B'nai Brith Canada CEO Frank Dimant told *Xtra*, an LGBT community publication, last July. "Saying 'apartheid' is anti-Semitic. It's vile."

Even if it is, Dimant and others ultimately do Jews no favours by trying to turn their overt disgust into an outright ban: "The gay parade was initially conceived as a celebration. I don't think it should be politicized," Dimant said last year.

First of all, nobody calls it "the gay parade." Second, Pride has always been political. Its origins have less to do with "celebration" than with defiance. And, just like that, what should be a simple, one-sided condemnation – "demonizing Israel is ignorant and intolerant," and so forth – becomes a pointless debate about free speech and the history of the LGBT-rights movement.

QuAIA and its allies win that fight just by having it. For the Jewish community, meanwhile, the cure – repeated failed attempts at censorship – is ultimately worse than the disease.

So, if QuAIA claims a spot in this year's Pride parade, ignore them. Nothing will do more to provoke their outrage than denying them ours. ■

Jews, Tories and tikkun olam

Michael Taube

I've been writing columns since 1996. There are certain tricks of the trade when it comes to crafting a piece. Two of them are to be provocative and controversial.

This particular column will likely be one of the more provocative and controversial you're ever going to read in *The CJN*. It might make you angry, but I also hope it makes you think about preconceived notions and long-standing positions.

One of the first op-eds I ever wrote was for the *Globe and Mail* about the Jewish bias against political conservatism. It frustrated many left-wing Jews (which I had expected) and led to a barrage of letters to the editor and media requests (which was unexpected).

A couple of those letter writers caught my attention. They claimed it would be impossible for Jews to support right-leaning political parties in Canada. Why? Due to the principle of tikkun olam.

This Hebrew phrase from the Mishnah is roughly translated as "repairing the world" or "healing the world." While it represents different things to the Jewish community, tikkun olam has gradually become a battle cry for left-wing Jews. They interpret it as the need for social justice, and a requirement to help the needy and feed and clothe the poor.

In a Jewish left-winger's view, the only way to supposedly follow tikkun olam's principle is to support progressive ideas – and vote for progressive parties. Left-leaning parties such as the Liberals and NDP should be the only acceptable choices for all Canadian Jews. The right-leaning Tories, who oppose social justice and progressivism, were verboten.

I've seen this argument made many times since. Some comments were either in response to pieces I've written or attacks on many other right-leaning Jewish writers and pundits.

Enough is enough. Let's put an end to this train of thought.

I don't have an issue if Jews want to follow tikkun olam for personal reasons. If that's what they feel will make the world a better place, fine. I certainly don't believe in this principle, but I'll defend your right to support it.

At the same time, please stop this juxtaposition of tikkun olam with left-wing voting behaviour. Don't suggest or infer that Judaism commands you to vote for the Liberals, NDP, Greens and others. It doesn't.

For what it's worth, our Christian brethren also believe in charity, helping the poor and the needy. Somehow, they've voted for right-leaning political parties without being consistently reprimanded for not following biblical writings and traditions.

Do left-wing Jews really think their religion is unique in this fashion?

Meanwhile, using an ancient Hebrew phrase from the rabbinical period as a personal defence for modern voting patterns is preposterous. The first political parties originated in 17th-century England. Trust me, tikkun olam was the furthest thing from their minds – and there simply isn't any association, past or present.

Canadian Jews are therefore free to believe in whatever they wish, and support whomever they choose. In the 2011 federal election, more than half voted for the Tories. You know, the ones who don't believe in tikkun olam.

Contrary to popular left-wing myths, many small "c" conservatives want to help the poor and disenfranchised. Not by paying lip service to social justice, mind you. Rather, by giving society a hand up, and not a hand out.

That's why conservatives champion the free market and personal liberty. That's why they support tax credits and broad-based tax relief. That's why they believe in maintaining public social services and balancing them with private initiatives. That's why they endorse programs such as workfare and school vouchers. The list goes on.

Hence, a conservative's ultimate goal is to improve society and repair the perceived political and economic damage left behind by previous progressive governments. To take a page from tikkun olam, that's the way we want to heal the world. ■

News GTA

Guest Voice

The Muslim Brotherhood in Canada: the next steps

TOM QUIGGIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The recent report titled *The Muslim Brotherhood in North America* began as an examination of extremist views spreading in Canada. The Muslim Brotherhood is perhaps the most effective of such organizations in Canada.

We require a national level, intelligent discussion in Canada on the role of the Muslim Brotherhood and similar extremist groups. The federal government bears this responsibility. The United Kingdom is currently having a similar inquiry.

Should this group be allowed government accreditation? Should it get public grant money? Can it lobby the government or should it be allowed to have charity status for its multiple organizations? Once one charity has lost its charitable status for funding terrorism, should those charities having common board members be delisted as charities? Should the Muslim Brotherhood be allowed to run schools?

These questions should be raised as individuals such as Muslim Brotherhood "Masu" (leader) Jamal Badawi advocates wife beating in Canada as an acceptable practice. CAIR-CAN (now the National Council of Canadian Muslims) founding board member Shahina Siddiqui has argued that polygamy is acceptable and advocates for it in Canada. While the majority of Islam has been working to eradicate the practice of female genital mutilation, the Muslim Brotherhood has consistently supported it and organized against the criminalization of the practice in 2008. It advocated for it when elected in Egypt 2012.

Palestinian demonstrators shout slogans during a protest in support of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt last August. FLASH 90

Additionally, charities with Muslim Brotherhood connections such as IRFAN (the International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy) and the Islamic Society of North America's Development Foundation lost their charitable status for funding terrorist groups in Kashmir and the Middle East, despite being warned against such practices. In addition to terrorism funding, IRFAN defrauded Canadians by raising money for natural disasters (such as the South Asian tsunami of 2004) and then sending the money to Hamas.

Why has London, Ont., among other cities, become a radicalization point where young Canadians set off to kill and be killed in foreign lands to serve extremism? Is there a strong Ikhwani (Brotherhood) connection to this city?

The failure to examine political extremism is costly. The Air India disaster is one example, although it remains unclear as to what lessons have been learned. Charities of an extremist nature procure funds in Canada while groups still use Canada for weapons procurement.

The federal government needs to initiate an inquiry into extremist organizations. Outright bans may be effective, but that is questionable given that the Muslim Brotherhood's Jerusalem Fund for Human Services was blocked from charitable status in 1999, but then the Ikhwani simply set up IRFAN in 2000 as an alternative.

One useful side effect of an inquiry would be a closer look at who speaks for the majority of Canadian Muslims who do not support the Muslim Brotherhood. All too often, we are told that such-and-such group "speaks on behalf of Canadian Muslims" when it is clear that they speak only for their own cause.

As a court appointed expert on terrorism and intelligence in the criminal, civil and immigration courts, it is clear to me that defining extremism and identifying its adherents is a difficult but not impossible task. I have testified against those who have posed a security threat to Canada. Alternatively, my role in other cases was to defend Muslims in Federal Court and to the Immigration and Refugee Board Court when their statements or activities did not constitute a threat.

An effective approach would ensure that such groups do not get charitable status, nor should they get government accreditation or public funds. The government should also educate itself so adherents of extremist groups are not named to government panels or boards. In short, the government of Canada should not be plugging an amplifier into the propaganda of foreign extremist organizations, nor should it fund them.

Defining and defending Canada against extremist views is both a duty and responsibility of the government of Canada. A timely investigation into such matters is an absolute necessity. ■

Tom Quiggin is the author of the recently released report on the Muslim Brotherhood in North America. The report is available at www.tsecnetwork.ca

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 12, 2014

Swastikas spray-painted on home, community centre

SHAYLA GUNTER-GOLDSTEIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Two buildings in the Bathurst and Sheppard area were spray-painted with swastikas in separate incidents last week.

First, the Borochov Cultural Centre on Codsell Avenue was targeted with a swastika during Shavuot, then a private home nearby on Combe Avenue was violated in the same way.

Homeowner Beth Karstadt said she drove right by the graffiti on the side of her house without noticing it when she took her children to school June 6.

After she returned, a police officer knocked on her door and pointed out the swastika to Karstadt and her husband Jay Silverstein. The officer said a passing motorist had notified police about the vandalism. The officer also informed them of the Borochov Centre incident.

"My first feelings were absolute shock," Karstadt said. "Then, for a brief second, there was fear, because you don't know who's done it and if they know you. Then my emotions turned to anger. I am so angry that in this day and age, we still have to deal with this."

A Swastika was painted on a home in the Bathurst-Sheppard area. BETH KARSTADT PHOTO

The attending officer from 32 Division advised the family to cover up the swastika until it could be removed, in order to protect their own and neighbouring properties from copycats.

The Toronto Police Service publishes an annual hate crimes statistical report. The three most targeted groups since 2006 have been the Jewish, black, and gay and lesbian communities. In 2013, the Jewish community had the most incidents.

"Hate-bias crimes have a disproportionally greater impact upon their victims than other types of crimes, as they don't only victimize the individual, but the entire community," said Det. Const. Kiran Bisla, acting director of the Toronto Police hate crimes unit.

Police said finding the perpetrators won't be easy.

"It represents a challenge while investigating, because neither the victim nor any witnesses are present at the time the offence takes place," Bisla said.

"Mischief to property offences represent a significant portion of the occurrences reported and unfortunately, the perpetrators are not often caught," she added.

While the family is frightened, Karstadt said, "we are certainly not going to let the acts of a coward frighten us away." ■

To report a hate crime or incident of religious vandalism, contact the hate crimes unit at 416-808-2222, or B'nai Brith Canada at 1-800-892-BNAI or http://bnaibrith.ca/report-a-hate-crime/

Guest Voice

New single parent support group takes off

Erin Dym

When my husband and I first separated, I was in a state of shock. My seemingly perfect life was suddenly ripped apart by forces I never saw coming. I was 32 years old and had two toddlers. I didn't know how to change a light bulb, never mind pay the bills. How was I going to cope with the demands of work, put on a happy face for my little boys, make sense of legalese and – the biggest obstacle of all – learn to date? There were times I was so confused and lonely that I cried myself to sleep. When I'd wake up in the morning, I'd realize that I hadn't stopped.

But after a couple of months of allowing myself to wallow, I decided that enough was enough. Instead of asking, "Why me?" I began to ask, "Why not me?" I was not going to be a victim. My boys needed a happy mom, and I became determined to figure it all out. I made it my mission to rediscover myself, become more independent and self-sufficient, to live life, to take chances, and do whatever it took to make myself the best possible person and mom I could be. I wanted to become someone I could be proud of and admire – someone my kids would, too.

> *After a couple of months of allowing myself to wallow, I decided that enough was enough.*

I started seeing an outstanding therapist. I relied on my family and friends for support. I began taking boxing classes. Who knew that punching something could feel so therapeutic? I wanted to spend as little time as possible being angry or resentful. I mentally put all my bad thoughts on a piece of paper, scrunched it up and threw it to the back of my head. I just let it all go. I started fresh. I learned to hire and fire babysitters, manage money, get raccoons out of my garage, take my kids on road trips, deal with flat tires and walk in heels. It's been an amazing year. And I knew something good would come of it all.

Starting a support group with my friend Simone, also an amazing, inspiring single mom, was such a natural progression. Simone and I met early in our separations, and we became inseparable. When nobody else understood what it was like to deal with lawyers and finances and questions from our kids about divorce, we did. We were there for each other. We'd help one another pick out clothes for important dates, we met at the gym for stress-busting workouts, and had dinner play dates with our kids, dividing up the leftovers afterward so that we could each feed our little families the next day, too. We cried. We laughed. We laughed till we cried, and cried till we laughed.

Once we each had more than a year of experience as single parents, we felt ready to recreate this supportive environment for others. In April, our support group idea came to fruition as The Ex-Files. We decided that this wasn't the place to bash your ex or be depressed. It would be a cool, fun group where single parents and their friends could get together, meet others, have fun and be inspired by one another's strength.

We quickly got to work, planning a "whine and cheese" for May 13. We invited everyone we knew and immediately, the positive feedback started rolling in. There was no other group like it. It seemed we had found our niche. The cause really resonated. People donated food, drinks, prizes and helped make our inaugural event a success.

And was it ever successful. My therapist, Andrea Share, led a workshop for about 20 of us who gathered in my living room. Within minutes of meeting, there was an outpouring of raw emotion. It was like being in a reality TV show where everything was real, meaningful and gut-wrenching. I was amazed at how intimate and personal it became, how much we were able to listen and support one another. By the end of the evening, Simone and I were completely overwhelmed, but in the best possible way.

"I think that was really good," I told my friend.

Simone smiled back.

"It was amazing," she said. ■

Our next monthly event is a boot camp at Harmony Fitness on June 11 from 7 to 9 p.m. Visit our Facebook page for information about The Ex-Files, RSVP for boot camp, and stay tuned for details about exciting upcoming events.

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Four high-level players from the Israel Tennis Centers were in Canada and the United States over the past couple of weeks on a trip of a lifetime. Pictured in Toronto with coach and chaperone Asaf Yamin, centre, are, from left, Raz Hershkovitz, Yarden Simon, Yoav Nir and Muhammad Uthman.
PAUL LUNGEN PHOTO

Tennis centre brings youngsters together in Israel

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Little Muhammad Uthman doesn't speak much English, but he's got his shpiel down pat.

In it, he introduces himself, tells listeners where he's from and that he's as happy as can be to represent the Israel Tennis Centers' (ITC) branch in Jerusalem.

As a 12-year-old from the Israeli Arab village of Beit Tzafafa, near Jerusalem, he's on the trip of a lifetime, visiting communities in Toronto, New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia and Washington. Along with three other young tennis prodigies who train at the ITC, accompanied by their chaperon and coach Asaf Yamin, they put on tennis exhibitions and gave a human face to the statistics about the ITC which are formidable in their own right.

Some 20,000 Israeli kids, 16 and under, take advantage of tennis programs offered at the ITC's 14 locations each year. Since it opened its doors in 1976, 400,000 youngsters have benefited from its programs.

The ITC not only trains kids in the sport, but it has become an important community resource in helping youngsters prepare for adult life. It keeps youth at risk on the proper path, it gives immigrants an entry into Israeli society, and it provides help to children with special needs, such as autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and Down syndrome.

Helping build bridges through sport is another important function readily adopted by ITC. Kids from a variety of backgrounds, including Arabs, Jews, olim from the former Soviet Union and from Ethiopia, are brought together in an environment where they have fun.

Uthman, who studies at Hand in Hand, a school for Jews and Arabs, said people in his village admire the abilities he's developed as a member of the ITC's high performance program. And they have no problem that most of the kids he plays with are Jews. "I love playing tennis with friends," he said through a translator.

His older sister, Sewar, 13, preceded him in the ITC. Sewar is a nationally ranked player in her age group and Muhammad is in the top 40 or 50 in his age cohort.

Raz Hershkovitz, 12, plays at the ITC in Arad. "When I go to tennis, I feel so good," she said.

In playing at the ITC, Hershkovitz is carrying on a family tradition. Her mother, Leah, immigrated to Israel when she was eight, walking for a month from Ethiopia with her parents and grandparents. Beset by Sudanese bandits, her mother's grandmother and grandfather were killed on the way.

Leah took up the sport when she was eight. "I love the atmosphere, the way people treat each other with respect and dignity," she said.

Yarden Simon, 15, plays at the ITC in Be'er Sheva. Her mom, dad and grandfather all played there as well.

"It makes me feel confident in myself," she said. "The tennis allows me to be independent. I love to come to the ITC. It makes me happy with my life."

Yoav Nir is 15 going on 20. He trains at the ITC's high performance program in Ramat Hasharon. He lives in a dorm, prepares some of his own meals and already has his future planned out – at least for the next few years, including applying to the most elite unit in the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).

He's ranked first in Israel in the 16 and under category.

"His mental strength is amazing," said Yamin. "He's a big fighter. He's a typical Israeli for me."

As an elite athlete, he's got a schedule to match. Up at 5:50 a.m. each day, he trains for two hours before school. Then it's a shower and he makes his own breakfast. After school, at 1:15 p.m., there's another 2 1/2 hours of practice, followed by fitness training in other sports.

Nir doesn't mind the grind. Actually, he revels in it. He loves the tennis immersion and talking about the sport with other guys in the program.

It's also given him something he might not otherwise have. "It makes you able to deal with difficulties, set up a schedule and prioritize," he said.

These are important life lessons, said Yamin, 31. Himself a former elite player in his teens, he put that part of his life on hold when he joined the Israeli Defence Forces. He was a member of an elite unit – he won't say which one – and he feels the lessons learned at the ITC helped prepare him for that.

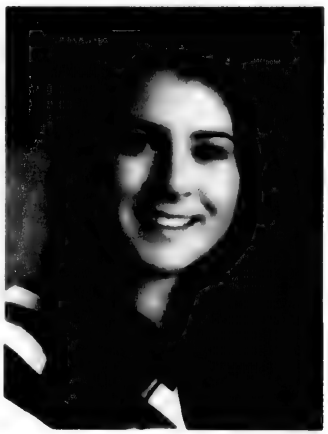
Not that there was any military training involved, but the development of good work habits, loyalty and discipline are important life lessons you get at the ITC, he said.

Last year's event at Maple Downs Golf and Country Club raised money to construct a bomb shelter at the ITC in Haifa. This year's visit included a fundraiser for shelters in Kiryat Shmonah and Sajur.

Israel's first tennis arena, the Canada Stadium in Ramat Hasharon, was built with funds raised by Canadian Jews. ■

Westmount students organize 30-Hour Famine

JODIE SHUPAC
jshupac@thecjn.ca



Rebecca Feldman had never given much thought to activism until several weeks ago when her world issues teacher at Westmount Collegiate gave her class an assignment called "Change the World."

It required the students to break into groups and choose a cause they considered important, as well as a method to raise awareness for it.

Now the Grade 12 student is excited about the campaign she and her five fellow group members are launching to teach their fellow students about world hunger: the 30-Hour Famine.

The awareness initiative is affiliated with World Vision, a non-profit Christian relief agency that works to overcome Third World poverty and injustice. Every year since the 1970s, students and youth across North America and elsewhere in the developed world have abstained from food for 30 hours to raise awareness for children struggling with hunger in developing countries.

After their class met the World Vision youth and student engagement leader for Ontario at a conference, Feldman's group decided to hold its own version of the 30-Hour Famine at Westmount on June 11. (The official World Vision event happened in April.)

Their plan is to set up a promotional booth in the school lobby and spend the two days prior to the initiative educating their fellow students about world hunger and encouraging them to make a pledge to fast. World Vision will support the group by providing it with educational posters and other promotional materials.

"We chose to focus on hunger, because we feel it's a big area of concern," Feldman says.

"We don't think many people know that, because we live in such a privileged area. So we want people to know that not everyone has the money to buy simple things like water and food. We wanted to bring awareness to our school."

She specifies that, though she and her group members will fast for the entire 30 hours, they're only asking that their schoolmates fast for the duration of the school day, from 8:40 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.

"It's easier for people to pledge just for the school day," she explains.

She also notes that fasting during a school day is significant, because, "for people all around the world – for example in Africa – that's one of their challenges, to travel for hours to get to school and sit in classes while constantly hungry. It's a daily struggle constantly on their minds."

> *We want people to know that not everyone has the money to buy simple things like water and food.*
>
> **Rebecca Feldman**
> Westmount Student

In addition to fasting, the group will co-ordinate a school-wide food drive, collecting non-perishable food items that they will later donate to a Toronto food bank.

Feldman says that in addition to co-ordinating and promoting the event, her group is expected to produce a video that endorses the 30-Hour Famine and gives background information on world hunger. Further, they will be graded on a social media campaign, which entails using Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to spread the word about their cause.

Feldman, who is planning to attend the University of Guelph to study public policy and criminal justice in the fall, said the project has piqued her interest in social justice and made activism seem more accessible.

"I've always wanted to get involved [in causes], but it was difficult because I didn't know how or what to do. Doing something like this really opens your eyes up and makes you want to help people." ■

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Brain trust gala commemorates Gerry Pencer

SUSAN MINUK
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust held its 14th Annual Brain Trust Gala on May 28 with 560 guests celebrating "A Night at the Castle" at Casa Loma and raising $800,000.

Gerry Pencer, philanthropist and CEO of soft-drink maker Cott Corporation, was diagnosed with a brain tumour in 1997 and died the following year at age 53.

During his illness, he searched for information, answers, treatment options and support for both himself and his family, all of which were hard to find. He set out to change that and was determined to do it big, the way he did everything.

"My dad, Gerry Pencer, was larger than life. He always thought outside the box, living 100 years in his 53 years of life," said Holly Pencer-Bellman, executive director of the Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust.

Before his death, Gerry pledged $4 million to finance what is now Canada's most comprehensive, multidisciplinary brain tumour centre, dedicated to revolutionizing the way patients are diagnosed, educated, informed, treated, and supported throughout their illness.

From left, Brain Trust president, Nancy Pencer and Stacey Cynamon, officer of the Brain Trust. DAVID LEE PHOTO

The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Tumour Centre (PBC) at Toronto's Princess Margaret Hospital was established in 1998 and has grown to become the largest multidisciplinary clinic in Canada, and one of the largest centres of its kind in the world, treating more than 200 patients weekly.

To date, the trust has raised close to $11 million to help find a cure for brain cancer and provide care and support for brain tumour patients and their families.

Every day, 27 Canadians are diagnosed with a brain tumour and an estimated 55,000 Canadians are surviving with one. There are over 120 different types, making effective treatment very complicated.

As president of the PBC, Nancy Pencer plays a hands-on role.

"It's really important to me to spend time talking with the families, and putting a face to a name. We've been through this. It's not easy. It's scary, and I feel I can contribute," she said.

"People have described Gerry as an entrepreneur and one of the great innovators in Canadian business, but what I saw was the impact that he had on his family. The way his family has come together and continues to with such passion and support is, I think, the greatest testament that any man or woman can leave."

Lynne Terry, a patient at the PBC, was diagnosed in 2006 with oligodendroglioma, a rare and incurable form of brain cancer.

"I was given five to 10 years, and here I am knocking on the door of eight years! When you walk into the PBC, there are smiling receptionists, there are doctors, nurses, volunteers and counsellors, all there to help. It changes lives for the better," she said.

"We are making progress in this disease. There has been a very significant change in outcome for patients with a variety of brain tumours in the last 15 to 20 years, and that has been very gratifying. People are living longer with this disease," said Dr. Warren Mason, the PBC's medical director.

The trust's annual galas are known for their uniquely themed events, raising both awareness and funds to help finance state-of-the-art treatment and research at the PBC.

Attendees were entertained by such things as the Jester's Cabaret, a casino where they were given a special currency to buy chips for the casino, raffle tickets or to bid on surprise pop-up items that were auctioned throughout the evening. Couples could also renew their wedding vows at the Cherub's Chapel of Love or have their fortune taken at the Mystic Lair.

"Gerry loved to party. He would have loved this gala and all that it represents," Pencer-Bellman said. ■

For more information visit www.pencerbraintrust.com.

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NATIONAL

Judge voids neo-Nazi sympathizer's will

CJN STAFF

An American neo-Nazi group cannot inherit the estate of a New Brunswick man, a court in that province ruled June 5.

In a 43-page decision, Justice William Grant of the Court of Queen's Bench invalidated the will of the late Harry Robert McCorkill, a retired chemistry professor, who bequeathed all of his assets to the National Alliance, a West Virginia-based racist and anti-Semitic group.

Grant ruled that such a bequest must be voided because the National Alliance "stands for principles and policies... that are both illegal and contrary to public policy in Canada."

Grant stated that the group's propaganda "would unavoidably lead to violence" because it "incites hatred of various identifiable groups which they deem to be non-white and therefore unworthy."

David Koschitzky

Its founder was William Pierce, who wrote the condemned novel *The Turner Diaries* in 1978, which advocated a race war to eradicate non-whites and Jews from the United States.

> *We are fortunate that the National Alliance is a severely diminished group, barely holding onto its shrinking membership.*
>
> **David Koschitzky**
> CIJA

McCorkill of Saint John, N.B., who died in 2004, became a National Alliance member in 1998 and lived in its compound. His estate is valued at about $280,000.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which was an intervenor in the case along with B'nai Brith Canada, commended Grant for his judgment.

"This was a strong statement indicating that it is against Canadian public policy to bequeath money to organizations that spread hate," said CIJA president David Koschitzky. "Today, we are fortunate that the National Alliance is a severely diminished group, barely holding onto its shrinking membership.

"The threat was that an injection of about a quarter-million dollars might have breathed new life into this dying organization. Let this decision stand as a stark reminder that we must remain ever vigilant in our efforts to not allow such hate mongers the oxygen to spread their toxic vitriol."

McCorkill's sister, Isabelle Rose McCorkill, had gone to court to block the inheritance. ■

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The following by-law will be presented for approval:

The Baycrest Centre Foundation By-law No. 20 - 2014

By-law No. 20 replaces the previous Foundation by-law and includes the following changes:

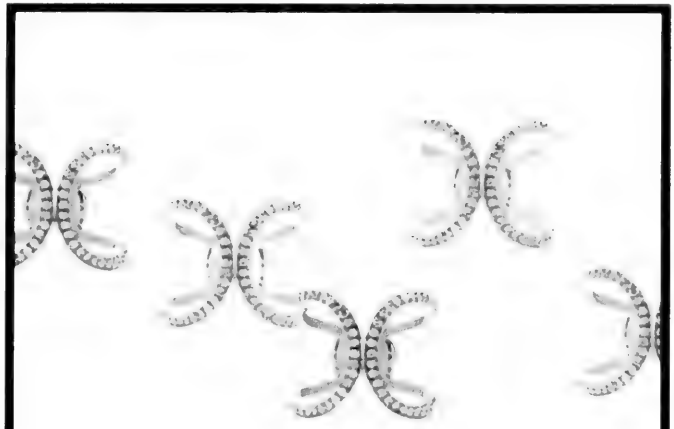
The Quorum for Meetings for members is reduced and a Director category for Emeritus is included.

Other changes of a non-substantive or minor nature have been made to correct grammar and to clean up language.

Baycrest

Copies of the amended by-laws are available by contacting Pam Isen at 416-785-2500 x3166 or pisen@baycrest.org

Baycrest.org



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Vancouver Jews celebrate eight over 80

LAUREN KRAMER
PACIFIC CORRESPONDENT

In the last week of May the Vancouver Jewish community gathered to honour the contributions of eight individuals who helped build the community to what it is today.

The honorees were selected based on a questionnaire that had been previously distributed among 6,000 members of the Jewish community. In it, respondents were asked to nominate individuals or couples in the 80-plus age range who they considered visionaries, achievers and role models.

"We thought it would be wonderful to honour people of this age," says Dvori Balshine, development director at the Louis Brier Aged Foundation, which oversees the Jewish seniors home and hospital in Vancouver. "It brings dignity and respect to these people."

The questionnaire generated over 92 nominations of 64 people, all of them worthy recipients, she says.

Reducing the list to eight took hours and hours of discussion, she admitted.

"We wanted to honour individuals who are vibrant to this day and still giving of themselves today," she says.

Those selected were individuals and couples whose work eclipsed the limelight as they built Jewish libraries, fundraised, established a University of British Columbia Judaic studies program, aided Jewish seniors, built a Holocaust centre and contributed in a number of ways to the vibrant heartbeat that is Jewish Vancouver.

The honorees included Stanford and Seda Korsch, Samuel and Frances Belzberg, Dr. Arthur and Arlene Hayes, Rita and Marvin Weintraub, Jimmy White, Rita Akselrod, Serge Haber and Chaim Kornfeld.

Once the board at Louis Brier had selected the honorees, Balshine and Mel Moss, event chairs, set about organizing an event that would be utterly different from the norm. "Usually I hate events because they're all exactly the same," Moss said. "Rubber chicken dinner, and 100 speeches and thank yous. I wanted to have a party that would entertain honorees and attendees, a fun event that would honour those people who made the community what it is."

The event on a Sunday evening at the Vancouver Courthouse was staged as a radio broadcast from the late 1940s with radio hosts, an orchestra and a trio of female harmony singers. During the meal waiters morphed into a flash mob, dancing and singing to popular 1940s music before an audience of 350. "People went crazy and the honorees loved it," says Moss.

The campaign's million-dollar goal was exceeded, and the money will support Louis Brier for the next two years, enhancing the lives of its residents. Moreover, the cost of the tribute event was entirely underwritten by sponsors, which meant all funds raised could go directly to the campaign coffers. The development company Ivanhoe Cambridge-Westbank was the largest sponsor at $75,000. Other sponsors included Global Securities, Montecristo Jewellers, ZLC Financial Group, Realteach and GFS.cc. ■

Funds raised

At the annual meeting of the Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn, funds raised were earmarked for the Kiryat Bialik Early Intervention Centre, which will serve people with disabilities in the Haifa region. Shown presenting a cheque for $36,000 to David Marcu, left, executive director of Israel Elwyn (Jerusalem), are Dayle Levine, centre, vice-chair of Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn, and Friends treasurer David Rechtsman.

B.C. entrepreneur develops plastic currency

LAUREN KRAMER
PACIFIC CORRESPONDENT

If there's one act of tikkun olam to which David Katz is dedicated, it's an effort to clean up the oceans and waterways of the world by recycling and reprocessing plastic waste.

The 45-year-old Port Moody, B.C.-based founder of The Plastic Bank just returned from Greece, where he was awarded the Global Citizen of the Year Award from the Entrepreneurs Organization. The award recognizes an entrepreneur who is making a mark on the global landscape, impacting communities, inspiring support and effecting positive change.

Katz's approach to the cleanup of plastic at the world's shorelines is innovative, and if it succeeds, its potential is huge. The idea is that waste pickers in the world's most poverty stricken countries will collect plastic garbage from their shorelines and deliver it to reprocessing facilities where they'll receive a credit at the Plastic Bank. They can then use the credit towards education, loans and access to 3D print shops where that plastic can be transformed into tools, parts and household items.

Katz is engaged in a pilot project with Ciuda Saludable in Peru, an organization that works with waste-picker communities to increase the volume of plastics collected. He's in partnership talks with similar organizations in Columbia and has had partnership requests from organizations in 40 different countries to date.

Back at home, he worked with the University of British Columbia to develop an extruder, which creates recycled plastic 3D printing filament. He's also working with a local plastic reprocessor to create Social Plastic, a brand of recycled plastic. Katz hopes to convince companies to purchase it as a socially responsible alternative to creating new plastics.

"There's enough plastic in the world right now that we would never have to make more of it," he explains. "And once it's reprocessed, the plastic doesn't degrade, which means it can be used for a wide variety of purposes and continue to be upcycled. It could be turned into fibre for clothing, or into prosthetics."

Lush Cosmetics is one of the companies that has shown an interest in using Social Plastic for use in their cosmetics tubs, and at the time of publication, Katz was awaiting the final paperwork on Lush's participation. Convincing companies to come on board with the concept of Social Plastic may be challenging, though. "Potential customers are concerned that once they start using social plastics, they'll always have to use it," he says.

> *"We're hoping that by turning plastic waste into a currency that can be exchanged, we can help lift people out of poverty, and transition them into a self-sustaining life of entrepreneurship"*
>
> **David Katz**
> CEO, the Plastic Bank

Katz says he's always been drawn to the shore, and with that attraction has come an exposure to its continuous degradation. "It's a symbol of the global catastrophe occurring because of people's misunderstanding of environmental issues," says Katz. "We're hoping that by turning plastic waste into a currency that can be exchanged, we can help lift people out of poverty, and transition them into a self-sustaining life of entrepreneurship."■

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3. Richard Venn, Chair of the Board, UJA Federation, addresses the crowd prior to the start of UJA's Walk with Israel.
4. Members of the Board, UJA Federation, take to the stage at Coronation Park.
5. Juno Award nominee Tyler Shaw entertains at the Walk kick-off party.
6. Two of UJA's ShinShinim proudly display the colors of Israel at Rest Stop 5.
7. The Chair of UJA's Walk with Israel 2014, Marcy Abramsky (second from right) enjoys a moment with (from left to right) Alison Himel, Chair, UJA 2015 Women's Philanthropy, David Matlow and Andrea Cohen, Chairs of the UJA 2015 Annual Campaign.

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 12, 2014

Early intervention is key for kids with special needs

SHERI SHEFA
sshefa@thecjn.ca

When Faige Oppenheimer's sixth child was unexpectedly born with Down syndrome, she wasn't sure what to do next.

Despite numerous pre-natal sonograms, her doctors didn't detect that Shira, now three years old, had Down syndrome because she doesn't have a heart problem – one of the most common markers.

In addition to coping with the life-changing news, Oppenheimer said she received very little support and guidance from the hospital staff about what to do next.

"No one said anything to me. I didn't get a booklet or a pamphlet from the [Canadian Down Syndrome Society], a where-to, a how-to… nothing. Not a social worker came into my room, not a doctor. They ignored me," she recalled.

When she brought Shira home from the hospital, she was inundated with phone calls from well-intentioned friends about what she should do.

"I had one person tell me, 'I have a child with Down syndrome – you have to start therapy right away!' And then another said, 'You must do this therapy,' and another recommended another therapy and I remember saying, 'Thank you so much, but for right now, for one month, until I recuperate from having a baby… if I decide not to do therapy for the first one month of my baby's life, as a mother, that is my decision.'"

Shira Oppenheimer

But when she heard about Zareinu Educational Centre's Infant Intervention Program, she decided to meet with Ellen Babbin, the program's infant interventionist and co-ordinator.

Oppenheimer met with Babbin when Shira was just a few weeks old, and learned about the program, which caters to children with a variety of developmental disabilities, including Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, and global delay.

The program runs twice a week with a team of seven professionals: an infant interventionist, a speech pathologist, an occupational therapist, a physiotherapist, a music therapist, a social worker and a program assistant.

Although Babbin insisted that the earlier therapy begins the better, Oppenheimer opted to enrol Shira at Zareinu when she was about five months old.

"I wanted my kids to enjoy the baby and be happy with the baby and have a good time and I wanted my husband to have time to adjust," Oppenheimer said.

She said her daughter thrived in the program, and it became apparent to her very quickly that early intervention is key.

"There is a lot of research on this now that says the brain is capable of being shaped and molded by experience.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

A disabled person can make a positive contribution

EDDIE RICE
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Many children died during the polio epidemic of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Thankfully, I was one of the lucky ones.

I was 21 months old when I contracted polio in June 1950 and spent the next 18 months in a medical ventilator called an "iron lung." As a youngster growing up in Long Island, N.Y., I used double leg braces up to the hip and two full-length crutches to keep me mobile. Physical therapy was constant during the first few years. My lower body took the brunt of the viral attack, while my upper body made a full recovery.

My parents, who were Holocaust survivors, sent me to a "regular" school so that I would learn how to participate and thrive in the real world. They never made me feel like I was disabled so I never looked at myself that way either. I wanted to be like every other kid, and I relied on my outgoing personality and sense of humour to help me fit in. I developed a thick skin to people's negative attitudes and a quick wit to combat it when the situation arose.

I had lots of friends. Though kids can be mean sometimes, I can't recall anyone ever saying anything rude to my face.

> *I've concluded that those who don't know someone with a disability really don't have a clear understanding of my life, its challenges and its benefits.*

However, one instance stands out. I was about eight years old and the school bully tried to pick a fight with me, but when I dropped my crutches and made a fist he ran away. Everyone wanted to carry my books between classes (perhaps because it meant they could leave class five minutes early!), and I still remain close with my schoolmates today.

People sometimes feel sorry for themselves when they go through difficult times. I was no exception, but my positive attitude soon brought me back to reality. I graduated and worked as a prosthetist and later, when Post-Polio Syndrome struck, I became a businessman. I served as chairman for the National Council of Jewish Women's Task Force on Jewish Persons with Disabilities. I've been an active member of B'nai Brith Canada for more than 40 years. I even spent 16 years telling jokes at Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club (they called me "the only sit-down stand-up comic in the business") and was able to show people that even someone with a disability can be funny. And I'm married to a wonderful woman, Harriet - she's the reason my heart beats - and we have seven grandchildren.

During various stages of my life I've often wondered what people thought when they saw me. I've concluded that those who don't know someone with a disability really don't have a clear understanding of my life, its challenges and its benefits. Sure, it's natural for people to stare at me since I have something extra for them to look at. But what angers me are those who can't see beyond my crutches and envision what I can't do as opposed to what I can do. You can change most people's attitude but others will never accept you. It takes a certain level of intelligence that allows them to accept reality.

I strongly believe that given opportunity, accessibility, and education, a person with a disability can be a positive contributor to society. It's also important that they build their self-confidence so they can get out of their shell and experience new ideas, new feelings and new people, provide a better life for themselves, and maximize their potential.

In 1998 I was appointed chairman of the Ontarians with Disabilities Sub-Committee, League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada. Working with other disability organizations, we were instrumental in getting the province to enact the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in 2005.

Though Post-Polio Syndrome has forced me to take early retirement and use a scooter, I remain as active as I can. I currently volunteer as an accessibility consultant, working with synagogues and public institutions to advise them on new construction or how to retrofit their existing buildings because current building codes do not meet the real-world needs required by people with disabilities. People are extremely receptive – it's just that, through no fault of their own, they don't know what to do or what's needed.

The more barriers that are removed, and the more disabled people who are integrated into society, the more the public will realize that they have a major contribution to make. ■

Important to be your child's advocate

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

So of course, the big push is, let's get them in there as early as we can [in] the critical period," said Babbin, who has held her position with Zareinu for the past 17 years.

"The plasticity of the brain is maximal during the first two years of life. It doesn't mean that the brain can't change later, but I think what the research shows is that the peak effect on development and learning happens during the critical period."

Zareinu staff work with the children to improve their fine motor skills, gross motor skills, communication skills, cognitive and social skills.

"When you come into our classroom it's a busy place, it's bright, it's noisy, there are parents, there are therapists, there's music, so they get used to being in a group [setting]. The earlier the exposure, obviously, the better," Babbin said.

Oppenheimer said she is grateful for the Zareinu program and its staff.

"Every therapist, teacher and assistant is hand-picked. They are so warm, they are so giving. They focus on each child, giving them what they need," Oppenheimer said, adding that the program is also beneficial to the parents.

"Mothers also need time to process what we're going through, talk to other people about what they're going through, get ideas, connect. As much as friends can be there for you and try to be helpful, they just don't have any idea," she said.

She said the advice she would give to other mothers coping with a special needs child, is not to forget to take care of themselves.

"If you're not taking care of yourself, you can't give to your child. You'll feel burnt out, stressed and depressed. It doesn't mean you have to take hours and hours of self-indulgence. If it means that at the end of the day, when the baby is sleeping and you want to take the phone off the hook and sink into the tub with a book and be unavailable, you're not available... You have to do things that re-energize you."

She also emphasized the importance of being your child's advocate and trusting your instincts.

"If you're not going to stand up for your child, no one else will. This is not a time to be shy. If you feel like it's not working well with your therapist, speak up. You are entitled, just like anyone else, to get the best care."

But most important, she said, is to remember to enjoy your child.

"Don't forget to hug them, love them. Be the mommy also, don't just be the therapist all day." ■

Fashion show

Jane Farkas, centre, co-founder of MOMMYtalks, which runs seminars and workshops for young mothers, held a fashion show fundraiser last week to raise awareness for Camp Aim, a non-profit that offers recreation and therapy to children with special needs. The event included a light lunch, auction and a fashion show with clothing by Aretz Originals, Cloakroom and Maternity Marketplace. Pictured with Farkas is florist Julia Germanovsky, left, and Camp Aim supporter Joanna Davids.

Cover Story

Rude awakening followed use of JDate

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

woman. I even offered to leave my condoms at home on our first date, to prove my sincerity about impregnating her.

I finally started to get the hang of it. And while my dating life improved, I never came close to meeting that next love of my life. These so-called dates felt like job interviews. And while I got pretty good at expressing the top three reasons I'd make a good father or turning my weaknesses into strengths, there was never any real connection. It just wasn't fun.

Certainly not as much as fun as simply exploring the website. The truth is, emailing all those potential mates was far more exciting than actually meeting them. The possibilities were exhilarating, the reality less so. What these sites were really offering was the dream. And sometimes the only way to keep the dream alive is to keep your eyes closed.

One night while I was sleeping, I had a dream of a different sort. In my nightmare, I saw dozens of angry female faces floating over my still and silent body. Which brings me to instant messaging, the bane of any new user's existence. Picture this: you're minding your own business, trying to think of something clever to say in your next email, when suddenly out of nowhere, a little box floats across the computer screen. Inside the box is a picture of a woman, say FLOWER4U123, with an attached flashing caption:

"FLOWER4U123 would like to instant message you. Do you accept?"

You've got two choices: "yes" or "no." If you choose nothing the box eventually will go away, but it takes a very long time. I always felt my pulse racing when that box appeared. I never had the heart to click "no" because then the sender would receive an automatic message, saying that I refused her instant message. So I did nothing. The worst part about it was that the picture in the box was usually a cropped close-up of the smiling woman's face. So it looked like some disembodied, cackling head floating on my screen.

Sometimes, I'd open up another window to get away but the head actually followed me to the next page. On one particularly stormy night, I had three heads floating across my screen. It was like something out of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. I ran from the room.

About a month after I started using JDate, I had a rude awakening. I'd received emails from over 50 women in that first week alone, but after that initial flood of interest for the new boy in town, the excitement wore off. No new emails came my way. I'd log onto the site looking for new faces, trying to stir up some interest, but it was no use. I now recognized many members, and they recognized me. We'd been down this road before. For a while, I kept emailing my initial "relationships" to keep the dream alive. But it wasn't the same. I'd lost them: my angels, my flock, my girls.

In the beginning, I felt invincible, omnipotent, like I was the king of the world. The dates may have been uneventful, but the potential was always there. But now even that feeling was gone. JDate left me broken, a shadow of my former self. Perhaps it was truly time for me to move on.

Still, I was grateful for the experience. Internet dating may have been a tease, but in giving me that taste of celebrity, it gave me a glimpse of the past, memories of greatness, memories I did not even know I had forgotten: birthday parties as a child, catching that fly ball in the bottom of the ninth and being kissed by a first love. And while I recognized that those golden years were gone forever, I was still left with some hope. There was life after JDate after all. For starters, there was Lavalife, Matchmaker and, of course, Plentyoffish. ■

Bruce Freedman is a Toronto-based consultant and writer. The above is a work of fictional non-fiction. In other words, the content is true except where it's not. Hopefully, you can tell the difference. The story is included in his recently published humour collection, You Don't Look Young For Your Age, *available on Amazon.*

Guest Voice

Government has finally righted a historical wrong

RABBI DANIEL FRIEDMAN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

First it was the shift in direction in Middle East policy. Then it was the long-overdue apology to First Nations. And now, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government has finally righted another historic wrong.

For many years, we were the only Allied nation in the world without a Holocaust monument in the capital. This sorry state of affairs was particularly peculiar, given the number of Holocaust survivors in the country – after the war, Canada took in the most survivors worldwide outside of Israel.

In 2009, Tim Uppal, MP for Sherwood Park in suburban Edmonton introduced Bill C-442, an Act to Establish a National Holocaust Monument, which passed unanimously in Parliament. Responsibility for this momentous task was assumed by Foreign Minister John Baird, who assembled a council from across Canada to oversee the project. Fran Sonshine and Ralph Lean were chosen from Toronto, Alvin Segal and Elliot Lifson from Montreal, and I represent western Canada. Our tireless executive director is Margi Oksner.

The National Holocaust Monument Development Council is charged with raising the funds and ensuring the project progresses smoothly at every stage of the process. Baird has committed $4 million toward the monument and we are aiming to raise $5 million from the citizens of Canada. So far, we have raised more than $4 million due to the exceptional generosity of Jews and non-Jews across our great nation.

The first stage of the process was to establish the purpose of the monument. A panel of experts and stakeholders was convened, and the consensus was that the monument must achieve three aims: serve as a memorial for the victims of the Nazis, acknowledge the incredible contribution of the survivors to the Canadian nation, and stand as an eternal symbol and reminder to future generations of Canada's commitment to combat all manner of intolerance and prejudice around the world.

Once the vision was determined, the

Rabbi Daniel Friedman

design competition was initiated. We received 72 submissions from across the country, from which six finalists were chosen. A jury of experts consisting of architects, artists, historians and survivors was assembled, and the finalists were asked to prepare a model and a concept. While all of the submissions were outstanding, *Landscape of Loss, Memory and Survival*, presented by Gail Dexter-Lord's team was chosen by the jury and the ministers as the idea that best embodied the vision.

Over the last number of years, Baird has made a point of visiting Holocaust memorials wherever his travels take him. From the outset, he has been adamant that he wants Canada's monument to be the most memorable and meaningful in the world. We believe that Daniel Libeskind's design will be unparalleled in its power, message and impact upon visitors to the site.

When you enter the monument, your first feeling will be one of bewilderment and confusion. The towering concrete structure is designed to overwhelm. You will try to go to the left and to the right, each time in vain as you enter a chamber that has no further exit. Finally, you will find the staircase leading out of the monument. As you ascend the stairs, in the distance, you will see the Peace Tower of the Parliament of Canada. And you will breathe a sigh of relief.

The feelings of confusion and uncertainty were certainly experienced by survivors of the concentration and death camps of Nazi Germany. But it was a time when our nation of Canada too was doubt-stricken. We did not know how to respond. Today, that is no longer the case. We have a government that is dedicated to protecting the rights of all persecuted peoples around the world. And we have a nation of Canadians of all faiths who have opened up their hearts and wallets to support this important piece of our history.

We are almost there. We have a government who is unlike any government to have walked the face of the earth in its commitment to doing what's right. We have a prime piece of land, we have an internationally acclaimed design team and we have most of the funds in place. We invite you to become part of our national story at www.holocaustmonument.ca. ■

Rabbi Daniel Friedman is the chair of the National Holocaust Monument Development Council. He is rabbi of Beth Israel Synagogue, Edmonton and is pursuing a Ph.D. in international relations at the University of Alberta.

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Wiesenthal conference draws 120

JODIE SHUPAC
jshupac@thecjn.ca

"The only way to kill an idea is to expose it," Raheel Raza, Muslim Canadian journalist, media consultant, anti-racism activist and author of *Their Jihad... Not my Jihad!* declared starkly to an audience of about 120 at the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies' (FSWC) inaugural Leadership Policy Conference on Anti-Semitism.

Held on Sunday, June 8 at the University of Toronto's Hart House, the conference featured five panel discussions, each examining a different element of contemporary anti-Semitism.

Raheel spoke on the third panel, "Muslims against Anti-Semitism," alongside Tahir Gora, Pakistani writer, activist and founder of Canadian Thinkers' Forum, a think-tank specializing in Islamic radicalization and anti-Semitic incidents in the Muslim Diaspora, and Tarek Fatah, author of *The Jew is Not My Enemy: Unveiling the Myths of Muslim Anti-Semitism*, *Toronto Sun* columnist and founder of the Muslim Canadian Congress, a think tank that gives a voice to Muslims not affiliated with existing organizations.

The panel was moderated by Evan Green, incoming chair of the Lawyers 4Wiesenthal, a group of attorneys dedicated to promoting the FSWC's agenda. ■

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Peres meets with Pope, Abbas at Vatican

MARISSA NEWMAN
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Israeli President Shimon Peres issued a prayer for a lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace at the Vatican on Sunday, alongside Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Pope Francis.

"These two nations – the Israelis and the Palestinians – suffer from the absence of peace. The tears of mothers for their sons is still heartbreaking," Peres said. "We must put an end to the pain, to the violence, the conflict. We all need peace. Peace between equals."

"Peace does not come easy. We must work with all our might until it is achieved, and achieved quickly, even if it calls for sacrifice and compromise. The Palestinians are our neighbours. We pray that soon we will live in mutual respect and good neighbourliness," he said.

"And even if peace seems distant, we must pursue it and bring it closer. And if we pursue peace with determination, with faith, we will reach it. And it will endure through all of us, as is written by Isaiah: 'They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.'"

Israeli President Shimon Peres, left, and Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas joined the Pope in planting a ceremonial olive tree at a Vatican ceremony on June 8. HAIM ZACH/GPO PHOTO

Peres emphasized that peace was attainable. "It is in our hands – together, now, Israelis and Palestinians – to realize the great vision and [make it a] reality. We can bring peace to our children and grandchildren. This is our obligation, the sacred obligation of parents."

Peres also praised Pope Francis for his recent visit to Jerusalem, during which, he said, "You touched the hearts of people – regardless of their religion or nationality. You came as a builder of bridges of brotherhood and peace."

Abbas offered his prayer for peace shortly after Peres, saying emphatically that "reconciliation and peace, O Lord, are our goal."

"Here we are, O God, inclined to peace. Make firm our steps and crown our efforts and endeavours with success," he said.

Abbas praised the Pope's Middle East visit as "a sincere expression of your belief in peace and a truthful attempt to achieve peace between Palestinians and Israelis."

The PA leader also appealed to God to "save our blessed city Jerusalem," and prayed for "freedom in our sovereign and independent state," on behalf of "the people of Palestine – Muslims, Christians, and Samaritans – who are craving for a just peace, dignified living, and liberty."

"O Lord of Heaven and Earth, accept my prayer for the realization of truth, peace and justice in my country Palestine, the region, and the globe as a whole," he said.

Abbas and Peres were at the Vatican attending an unprecedented interfaith summit, having accepted the invitation of Pope Francis during his visit to Bethlehem and Jerusalem last month. ■

Timesoflsrael.com

Israel will not unilaterally leave W. Bank, PMO says

MARISSA NEWMAN
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Israel will not make unilateral withdrawals from the West Bank, particularly if Hamas continues to hold sway, officials from the Prime Minister's Office said Sunday. The officials were responding to Finance Minister Yair Lapid's new peace plan that called for evacuation of parts of the area.

Officials also dismissed the finance minister's demand that the Israeli government produce maps outlining future borders, saying, "any map that is presented will become the point of departure for the Palestinians' demands.

"Anyone with political experience knows that you don't make concessions without [getting] anything in return, especially with a government partnered with a terror organization that wants to destroy Israel," officials said. The sources also referred to the 2005 disengagement from Gaza as proof of the futility of these measures.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu
ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

"We saw in Gaza the results of unilateral withdrawal," they said.

"The prime minister will continue to lead the State of Israel responsibly, while preserving the national interests of the citizens of Israel, starting with its security."

In a far-reaching speech at the Herzliya conference, an annual national security gathering, Lapid issued an appeal to return to negotiations with the Palestinians – despite the new Fatah-Hamas unity government – and outlined a new framework for peace that would draw borders and progress in three separate stages of Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

The finance minister also threatened to topple the government if right-wing calls to unilaterally annex areas of the West Bank are implemented.

Opposition leader Isaac Herzog appealed to Lapid to act on his threats and establish a coalition with the Labor party. "Go, get out of the government, it's not too late," he said, following Lapid's speech. "Join us, and I promise you I will bring the other partners."

Housing Minister Uri Ariel of the Jewish Home party responded derisively to the finance minister's threats, saying, "Israeli governments existed in the past without the Yesh Atid party, and will continue to exist without it." ■

Timesoflsrael.com

Poland to expand survivors' pension

RAPHAEL AHREN
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Poland is making it easier for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi or Soviet oppression to apply for monthly pensions, possibly enabling tens of thousands of Jews with Polish roots to start receiving payments as early as next summer, *The Times of Israel* has learned.

The government in Warsaw recently changed its laws to allow the Polish Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression to transfer a "monthly pecuniary allowance" of about 100 euros ($135 US) to eligible claimants who reside outside of Poland and don't have access to a bank account in the country. ■

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For more information, go to http://www.udskior.gov.pl/Home,page,71.html.

OPINION

Does Israel have a responsibility to intervene in Syria?

Gerald Steinberg

Should Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Israel's leadership send the IDF to intervene in Syria in order to reduce the violence or seek to end the slaughter of civilians resulting from the interminable civil war? In the face of paralysis in Washington, inaction from NATO and the European democracies, and the UN's failure, does Israel have a moral obligation to act unilaterally under the principle known as "responsibility to protect"?

From the perspective of political realism, which reserves the use of force for situations involving central national interests, the answer is clearly "no." Neither the survival of the Assad regime, allied with Iran and Hezbollah, nor a victory for radical Sunni Islamists leading the rebellion would place peaceful neighbours on Israel's border. Rationally, the best strategy for Israel is to continue to stay out while the two sides trade terror for terror and wear each other out.

However, from a moral perspective, the responsibility to protect civilians from chemical attacks and other forms of war crimes (real ones, as distinct from the propagandistic allegations targeting Israel) is particularly important for the Jewish state. We're very aware of the inactions of the world's democracies to intervene in Germany during the 1930s or to bomb the railroad tracks on the route to Auschwitz.

Israel is already providing extensive humanitarian assistance to Syrian victims of the civil war in their country, particularly through medical care for wounded civilians evacuated from the Golan Heights to the hospital in Safed. (At the same time, the moral corruption of the UN is taken to an even further level of absurdity as representatives of the Assad regime and obsessive Israel haters such as Richard Falk give speeches in the UN condemning Israel for "violations of international law.") So an Israeli strike to destroy Assad's remaining chemical arsenal and delivery systems would not be an entirely new departure.

The possibility that Israel might intervene on human rights grounds and the responsibility to protect has been raised by Amos Yadlin, a particularly thoughtful ex-general and currently head of the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv. In discussing justifications for Israeli military action in Syria, such as the transfer of advanced weapons to Hezbollah, he called for adding "to these red lines the murder of civilians at a level where we can no longer stand idly by. If Assad woke up one day to discover that all his helicopters dropping exploding barrels were gone, then the next day he had no navy, then the following day his security headquarters were attacked, he would realize that there's a price to pay for his actions." Yadlin prefers a U.S.-led intervention, including a no-fly zone and the creation of humanitarian aid corridor, but if necessary, Israel could act alone.

Indeed, in the past, the IDF has mounted extensive humanitarian relief operations in Haiti and rescue missions to populations struck by major earthquakes. But the situation in Syria is different – in this case, Israel would be acting militarily, although for humanitarian objectives, in a state that has waged war and supported the terror campaigns of the PLO, Hamas and Hezbollah. Such Israeli military action in Syria would also trigger a response from Assad's protectors in Iran.

A political realist would remind advocates for moral involvement in Syria, such as Yadlin, of the cliche that the "road to hell is paved with good intentions." In the Middle East and Europe, Israel would be reflexively portrayed and denounced as an occupation force, seeking to expand its borders again. The "responsibility to protect" notwithstanding, the European Union and its partners among non-governmental groups claiming human rights agendas would issue condemnations and threaten expanded boycotts.

The painful reality is that despite the lofty moral rhetoric, in the real world, no country, including any of the world's democracies, is willing to pay significant costs in the context of humanitarian intervention. As a result, the slaughter of civilians in Syria is likely to continue. ■

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OPINION

Referendum should be held on a two-state solution

ARIE RAIF
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

After nine months, the latest Israeli–Palestinian peace talks have ended with no positive results to speak of. Forget the blame game over who left the table at the moment of truth – as Israeli President Shimon Peres put it: "We left, too." All three parties involved Israel, the Palestinians and the United States – should be held responsible for the failure.

Perhaps the reason the peace process has once again stalled is that two very important and concerned parties are being ignored: the people of Israel, and the people of Palestine.

No one asked their opinion on what should be done or on how to move forward. More to the point, no one asked them to express their legitimate right to choose hope for a better future over an endless conflict.

For the Israelis, the way to move forward is to hold a referendum and precisely measure the will of the people. The question could be: " Do you want a two-state solution or a binational state?"

Jews, in Israel and around the world, are curious what Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's next step will be. Some hope the Israeli political class will adopt a more flexible policy in a real effort to resolve the conflict, but it's a dream. The current structure of Netanyahu's coalition government simply cannot resolve the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

That's why a referendum is needed. Only when the government receives a mandate to negotiate the core issues can a solution to these 100 years of bloodshed be pursued.

The status quo cannot continue. It leads to a binational state, or the end of the Zionist dream. Former prime minister Ariel Sharon – the "father of the settlements" – put it well in May 2003 when he said, "controlling millions of Palestinians cannot go on forever.

"You want to remain in Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah and Bethlehem?" Sharon asked a meeting of stunned Likud leaders, Netanyahu among them. "The idea that it is possible to continue keeping millions of Palestinians under occupation – yes, it is occupation, you might not like the word, but what is happening is occupation. It's bad for Israel and bad for the Palestinians, and bad for the Israeli economy."

I would add that it is also bad for security and adds fuel to the fire of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement and growing anti-Semitism.

Zionism was never meant to be a colonial movement. It did not set out to seize control of a local population, or its natural resources. Already Israel is labelled by too many as a semi-colonial country, and the Jewish state is not succeeding in freeing itself from that moniker. If Israelis cannot muster the fortitude necessary to hand over the West Bank, we shall see the liquidation of Zionism, whether by the adoption of colonialism or binationalism.

The irony of history is again revealing itself: The settlements were supposed to have strengthened Zionism, to revive a movement many felt had lost its way In practice, however, the settlements created the price tag attacks.

There are so many obstacles to peace, and some of them have been placed along the road by the Israeli government. A referendum could help remove those obstacles, and firmly set the government on the path to peace.

A referendum will hold the Israeli government accountable to the voters. Let the people decide. ■

Arie Raif is an Israeli political activist and former Israeli diplomat, including consul to Canada, from 1976 to 1981 . He's currently vice-chairman of the Canadian Peres Center For Peace.

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Jewish Life

MUSIC | BOOKS | FOOD | WHAT'S NEW

The Maladies of Adam Stokes: From left, Josh Awerbuck, Kohji Nagata, Emily Anderson, Ted Turner, Mikey Hill and Brett Harris.

Toronto band hard to pin down musically

SHERI SHEFA
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Members of the Toronto-based indie band The Maladies of Adam Stokes aren't interested in selling a signature sound or even letting themselves get too comfortable with a particular instrument.

But that hasn't gotten in the way of a growing fan base and a title as a spotlight artist at NXNE, Toronto's annual 10-day music, film, art and comedy festival running June 13-22.

The Jewish half of this six-member outfit, Kohji Nagata, Brett Harris and Josh Awerbuck, spoke to *The CJN* about their unpeggable sound, how they've evolved, and where they're going.

"It's hard right now... to pin down exactly what type of music it is that we play," Nagata said.

For anyone that's listened to their 2012 full-length album City of Trees, it's tempting to want to slot them into the folkmusic genre, but the fact that this five-year-old band is not afraid to venture out of its musical comfort zone means their fans don't always know what to expect.

"On our first record, a lot of the songs, they might have a similar sound to them, but they're all pretty different, so if someone didn't like one song, they might like the next one," Awerbuck said.

"With what we're doing now, it's interesting because it's a little difficult at times to get on the same page because we don't all listen to the same things, but that's also a good thing because we're challenging each other and bringing out new ideas and thoughts."

Perhaps what sets the Maladies apart is the fact that each of the band members has picked up new instruments, learning as they go.

"We knew that our friends were musically knowledgeable but they didn't necessarily have any practical ability with a given instrument," Nagata said.

"For example, I play trumpet and xylophone and a few other instruments that I had never played before in my life. Ted had never played the drums before, Brett was a guitar player but had never played bass before, so we kind of just put us all together and decided that we're going to make a band and figure out what we'll play afterwards," he said.

"It's not like we'd studied this in school, so we're kind of making it up as we go."

Harris said that when it comes to playing instruments they have yet to master, he feels it brings a unique element to their sound.

"I know for me, I'm constantly learning and exploring different styles of playing, and different techniques, so that can change the sound of a song or record or whatever," Harris said, suggesting that their next album, which they've started writing, might surprise their following.

"I think our next record is going to be a little more out there than our last record was. Maybe a little less folk-centric and a little more avant-garde," Nagata said.

Moonlighting as musicians, they all have day jobs – the lead singer, Mikey Hill, is a doctor, Nagata and Harris work for different companies making software for lawyers, and Awerbuck works in online advertising – but that hasn't held them back from selling out legendary Toronto venues including Horseshoe Tavern and Lee's Palace.

For those wondering what to expect from the Maladies going forward, Nagata said their goal is to keep the music as interesting as possible.

"I think we'll just keep trying new things, playing weird new instruments – I have a clarinet and flute at home that I barely know how to play, that I'll maybe one day add that in there. We'll just keep going crazy, keep things interesting and we'll never get bored as musicians and I don't think people will get bored of listening to it." ■

The Maladies of Adam Stokes plays the Tranzac Club on June 20 at 9 p.m. For more information visit www.nxne.com, and www.themaladiesofadamstokes.com.

Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

Amanda Martinez will peform June 21 at Old Mill Home Smith Bar.

AGO TO PRESENT RETROSPECTIVE ON COMIC ARTIST ART SPIEGELMAN

The Art Gallery of Ontario has announced it is presenting a major exhibition of works by acclaimed American comic artist **Art Spiegelman**, perhaps best known for *Maus*, a two-volume graphic novel that recounts his parents' life in Nazi-occupied Poland and later at Auschwitz.

Besides the Holocaust, Spiegelman's works have been based upon politics, cubism and hard-boiled detective fiction. The exhibition will feature some 300 pieces including early comics, trading cards, magazine covers and original manuscripts of Maus, rarely seen due to their fragility.

It will also feature Spiegelman's original cover art for *The New Yorker*, including a print of the black-on-black 9/11 issue. "Art Spiegelman's CO-MIX: A Retrospective" opens December 20 and runs to March 14, 2015.

• • •

TD Toronto Jazz Festival: The 2014 Festival (www.torontojazz.com) runs June 19 to 28 at venues around the city and features many wonderful performers including these artists of special interest to the Jewish community:

• **Amanda Martinez**, a Toronto-based singer-songwriter who blends her Mexican-South African-Jewish roots with flamenco soul. She performs with **June Garber & Friends**, featuring **Russ Little**. Old Mill Home Smith Bar, June 21, 7:30 p.m.

• **Ori Dagan**, a Toronto-raised Israeli-born vocalist who reimagines material by **Elton John, Madonna, Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra** and **Lady Gaga**, along with standards and selections in his native Hebrew. Various locations on June 20, 26, 27 & 28.

• Trumpeter **David Buchbinder** and Ensemble perform at Odessa Havana, Shops at Don Mills, on June 22.

• Toronto guitarist **Lorne Lofsky** performs three shows during the festival, June 20, 21, and 22.

• **Beka Gochiashvili**, an 18-year-old pianist and composer from Tbilisi, Georgia, joins the Stanley Clarke Band on June 28, 8 p.m. at Nathan Phillips Square. He has been described as an "old soul in a very young body" and is regarded as a piano virtuoso.

• • •

New in Print

• **Volume IV of Living Legacies:** *A Collection of Writing by Contemporary Canadian Jewish Women*, was recently published by PK Press. The editor is **Liz Pearl**. Visit www.facebook.com/PKPress for details.

• A newly revised edition has appeared of Brantford author **Howard Rotberg's** non-fiction book *Tolerism: The Ideology Revealed*. The book attempts to answer the question, "How did we get into the mess that so many people think that tolerance is a more important value than justice?" A reviewer for *The Times of Israel* recently found the book "well researched and surprisingly easy to read." www.mantuabooks.com

Out of Town

• A new exhibit at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Manhattan focuses on the rich Jewish history of Oswiecim, Poland, the town the Germans called Auschwitz, through photographs and artifacts from the 16th century through the postwar period. Selections from "A Town Known As Auschwitz: The Life and Death of a Jewish Community" are also on view online, at www.jmjhnyc.org.

• The Israel Museum of Jerusalem recently acquired *Die Medizin*, an oil study by **Gustav Klimt** (1862-1918) for a monumental painting that once adorned the ceiling of the University of Vienna's Great Hall. Commissioned by Austria's Ministry of Culture and Education in 1894, *Die Medizin* was one of three allegorical panels representing the themes of enlightenment. All three works were later destroyed by retreating German SS forces in May 1945. Blending elements of neo-Baroque and Secessionist aesthetics, the work captures the emergence of Klimt's iconic style and unconventional treatment of subject matter and themes. ■

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The Sunnyside Cemetery Association has submitted revised by-laws to the Registrar of the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act 2002. Any interested parties may contact Mr. Chuck Cohen at Tel. 416-805-3268 for information, or to make copies. By-laws or amendments may be reviewed or copied at 7 Trudy Road, Toronto, Ontario, M2J 2Y7 Canada.

These bylaws are subject to the approval of the Registrar, Funeral, Burial, and Cremation Services Act 2002.

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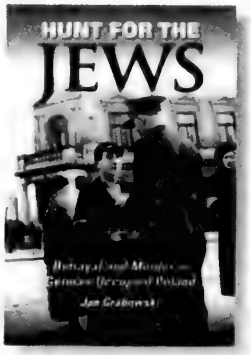
A historian's pursuit of new views of Holocaust

NORMAN RAVVIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN



Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland.
Jan Grabowski.

Indiana University Press

For many, Holocaust reception is experienced through popular culture, museum shows, and community events memorializing the Holocaust, which often include the testimony of survivors. This is a notable shift from early stages of Holocaust reception, in the 1960s and after, when historians such as Raul Hilberg, Michael Marrus, along with major European figures, led the discussion of how we should understand the events of the war.

Today, dedicated readers of detailed historiographical studies are, for the most part, found in academic circles, and to surmise the state of the art of Holocaust historiography one might enroll in a university course.

Sustained interest in the Holocaust reveals that over time the venues by which we study it, the audiences who consume this information, and the focus of their interest, all shift. Marshall McLuhan's pithy phrase the medium is the message points to the fact that what we read and look at with regard to the war affects what we know.

A new kind of historical study in English has been made available through scholars' access to eastern European archives that were untouchable during the Soviet period. Ottawa-based historian Jan Grabowski is one of a new breed of English-language researchers who can work with Polish, German or Russian documents, and through their tenacity and care continue to transform our understanding of the disaster that befell Polish Jews upon the German invasion of their country.

Grabowski's new volume bears the almost unbearable title, *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland*. It might be characterized as a "microhistory," because of its focus on a particular population in one largely rural area of Poland called Dabrowa Tarnowska County, northeast of Krakow. Grabowski has used this approach before, notably in his studies of the records left by the Gestapo outpost at Ciechanow, north of Warsaw. The Jewish population of Dabrowa Tarnowska was not large; a 1931 census counted 4,807 out of a total population of 66,678. The area included only two settlements one could call towns, while the rest of the population lived in villages or on farming estates. (A large village had 1,000 inhabitants; while a small one might have 500 or less.)

In *Hunt for the Jews*, remarkable use is made of testimonies made after the war by Jewish survivors to refugee organizations, as well as in depositions for the trials of Germans and Poles who conspired with the Nazis. These documents are certainly unknown and inaccessible to the layman, as well as to the average maker of literature, film or museum exhibits in the west. In this, Grabowski's historical art lays bare a set of events, a kind of Holocaust narrative, that most readers will not have encountered.

Testimonies by survivors were made immediately after the war at local offices of the Central Committee of Polish Jews. These were later transferred to the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, a remarkable institution that today houses the wartime archive of Emmanuel Ringelblum and operates as a key site of Jewish research in Poland. From these, and other sources, he highlights 24 accounts "of Jews who survived the war hidden in Dabrowa Tarnowska and in nearby villages."

Though Grabowski's materials offer a full depiction of events that followed the German occupation of the villages of Dabrowa Tarnowska, his focus is in fact another set of experiences: that is, the effort by many thousands of Jews to hide in the countryside following major deportations.

Hunt for the Jews examines the methods by which they managed this, and the involvement of Poles, under the tutelage of Germans, in hunting these Jews. This stage of the war in Poland had a German moniker – the *Judenjagd* – referring to the "organized searches for Jews" who attempted to hide "on the Aryan side." Although Grabowski paints a broader picture of the success of such efforts in the Polish countryside, his materials allow him to trace the "destinies of 337 Jews who, after the liquidation of the ghettos, tried to survive in Dabrowa Tarnowska county. Of this number, 51 succeeded, and survived in hiding until the liberation . . . ."

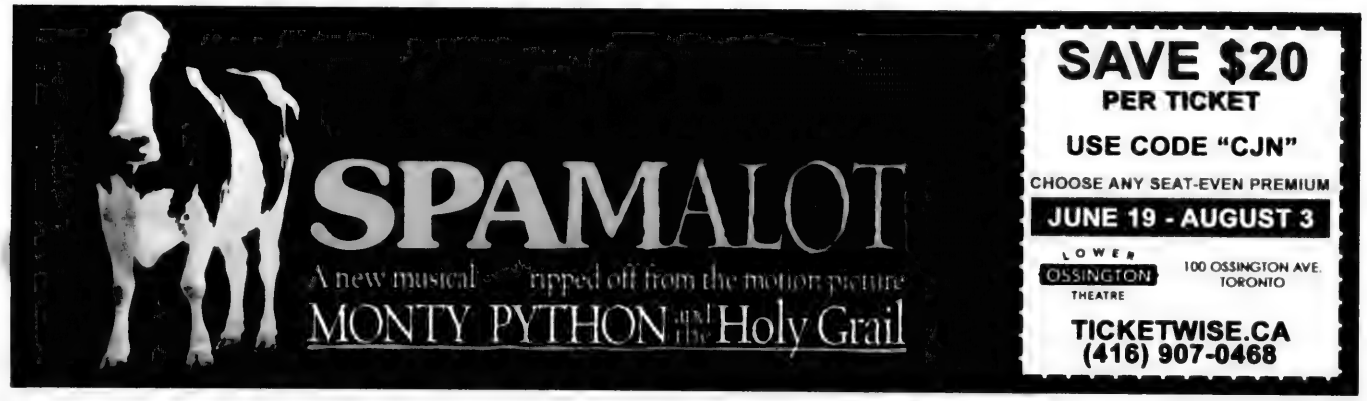
Grabowski provides a detailed picture of the network set in place by the Germans, radiating from local Gestapo outposts, to the contingents of local or newly arrived Volksdeutsche and agreeable Poles, who constituted obedient gendarmeries. These groups tasked village leaders and the infamous Polish "blue police" to capture and hand over discovered Jews.

Early in his study Grabowski cites Ringelblum, who wrote in his diary in the Warsaw Ghetto about related events: "The length of time that it was possible to go on hiding a Jew depended on two things - the German terror and the surrounding atmosphere. Where the environment had been infected with anti-Semitism before the war, hiding Jews presented great difficulties, and denunciations by anti-Semitic neighbours were more to be feared there than the German terror."

This account provides an entry into the period in the second half of the war when the structure of Polish-Jewish society was entirely destroyed by the Germans, and new forms of interaction became the norm. Grabowski examines in detail the economy of "paid help" from Poles in relation to what he calls "altruistic help."

Grabowski's resources provide astonishingly detailed portraits of the ongoing *Judenjagd*, of the infrastructure of Polish helpers for this German project, and of the fate of those caught in forest or village hiding places. As counter-texts to certain tendencies in popular culture – whether to style Holocaust exhibits, texts and films toward a moral lesson or a particular audience - these documents provide chilling, unmediated narratives. They make for very difficult reading but are true and existentially shocking in a way that an artful narrative can rarely be. They are, as Grabowski must have felt in including them in his book, necessary reading.

The events examined in *Hunt for the Jews* have returned to Polish popular discussions, in part because of the recent film *Aftermath*, which is a fictionalized treatment of the 1941 pogrom at Jedwabne. There, Germans supported Polish murderers in their attack on their Jewish neighbours. A film styled as a counter-narrative to this appeared on Polish TV, under the title *Historia Kowalskich*, focusing on Poles executed for helping Jewish families. These contemporary Polish debates are made comprehensible in the most immediate and painful way by Grabowski's *Hunt for the Jews*. ■



Doc examines links between Rastafarianism and Judaism

JORDAN ADLER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Filmmaker Monica Haim (centre, in yellow) explores the religious and musical connections between Jewish and Rastafarian cultures in the documentary *Awake Zion*.

Their way of life is rooted in the psalms of David and the words of the Old Testament. One of their symbols of hope is the Star of David. Their music comes from a source of pain stemming from years of slavery, yet evokes a message of peace and community, often culminating in a return to Zion.

However, these spiritual people are Rastafarian, not Jewish. In the documentary *Awake Zion*, screening on June 15 at the Upfront Studio Theatre in Toronto, American filmmaker Monica Haim explores the similarities between Judaism and the Rastafarian movement. These two spiritual followings seem different but actually have much in common.

Haim grew up in a devout Jewish household in Miami and had a Yeshiva-style education. As a teen, she says she was drawn to music commonly associated with African and African-American culture, including blues, funk and hip-hop. The ancient, traditional feel of many reggae songs, though, with lyrics about going to the "land where the milk and honey flow," stuck out for Haim.

"Inevitably, I ran into symbols and stories and pieces of culture that were kind of familiar to me," Haim says. "I was curious about the rhetoric of reggae and Rastafarian culture. Why was it really hitting a nerve that was not just cool but oddly familiar?"

> *Rastafarians see themselves as the 'lost tribe'*

Haim first made *Awake Zion* in 2005, (since updated in 2013) as a Master's student at New York University, where she focused her studies on music history. Fascinated by how Rasta culture shared much in common with Judaism, she researched as much reggae music as she could, combing through lyrics and analyzing cover art to find Biblical allusions.

In the film, Haim visits the Crown Heights neighbourhood in Brooklyn, where there were rifts between the Caribbean and Jewish communities. She explains that music contains a healing power to bring these groups together.

"Reggae music makes you feel positive, optimistic, hopeful," Haim says. "It puts you in the position of belief in the world."

Crown Heights is not the only place where a hybrid of Jewish and Rasta music comes together, most notably with Grammy-nominated reggae fusion artist Matisyahu. Israel also has a thriving reggae scene that Haim explores in *Awake Zion*, and there is currently a spiritual Jewish revival in Jamaica.

In one of the film's most fascinating scenes, Haim visits a synagogue in Kingston, Jamaica with two of the town's most revered Rasta leaders. After their visit, one of them tells the filmmaker he had no idea that these aspects he presumed were limited to Rasta culture could be found anywhere else.

"They were baffled because they were not expecting to see 'their' symbols [at the synagogue]" she says. "We're closer than we actually think."

Meanwhile, both followers of Judaism and Rastafarianism commit to their faith by allowing their hair to grow, through payot and dreadlocks. Some Rastafarians even call themselves "the true Israelites" and "the lost tribe," as their beliefs are deeply rooted in the tenets of the Old Testament.

Jews and Rastas also refer to a return to Zion, whether that is a physical place (Israel) or a spiritual place of perfection and nirvana.

"This film is a spark," says Michael Brooke, the founder of Longboarding for Peace, which is co-presenting *Awake Zion* on June 15. "It is a way to get a conversation to two very different groups who need to start talking and working with each other.

"There are so many Jews who love reggae who have no clue how culturally significant Judaism is within Rastafarianism," he adds.

Brooke says he wants to use the film as a way to start a dialogue. The presentation will be for an intimate audience of around 30 people, Meanwhile, Toronto Rastafest organizer Masani Montague says she wants to present the film for hundreds at Rastafest on Aug. 23.

The hope is to start a movement of spiritual awareness and awakening through word-of-mouth screenings.

"It's about taking two people who seem to be on the opposite ends of the spiritual spectrum and finding commonality between them," Haim says. "Even though we all need to have our own identity... it's equally important to find that which connects us to other cultures."

Awake Zion can also be purchased or rented from iTunes ■

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

In UJA Salutes our Community and its Volunteers Supplement (May 29th edition of the Canadian Jewish News), the photograph belonging to Shaarei Shomayim Congregation's submission was corrupted, and did not print properly. UJA regrets the error and any inconvenience it may have caused.

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation
A modern orthodox centre of Jewish life which provides the means for the fulfillment of religious, educational and social needs and which seeks to inspire the community to greater commitments to Torah, the Jewish people and the State of Israel. www.shomayim.org

MICHAEL GOLDRICH AND DAVID MANSELL
"Shaarei Shomayim is our home. It is where we pray, gather and celebrate with our extended family and the greater Jewish community. It was our communal obligation to renew our building so that Shaarei Shomayim can maintain its warm, welcoming and inclusive environment for generations to come."

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The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Israeli cuisine with a French twist

Gayla Sarner says her love affair with cooking dates back to her childhood.

BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Israeli food maven Galya Sarner has added a new twist to fusion cuisine.

We tend to think of fusion food as western-style fare melded with Asian or Mexican cuisine. But Sarner describes her fusion dishes as "Israeli-style food with a French twist."

Her cooking reflects the cuisine of the countries where she has lived – France and Israel. And since she moved to Canada nine years ago, many of her recipes contain maple syrup, an iconic Canadian ingredient.

Sarner, director of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Israeli-Canadian project, and the originator of A Taste of Israel, a culinary program based at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, recently gave a cooking demonstration to some 40 people at Beth Sholom Synagogue, hosted and organized by the shul's sisterhood.

Sarner said her "love affair with cooking" dates back to her childhood. She grew up in Jerusalem and she loved to shop with her mother in Mahane Yehuda, the bustling outdoor market. She also helped her mother prepare traditional Iraqi dishes for Shabbat.

When she and her husband, Toronto native Robert Sarner (a former columnist for *The CJN*), moved from Israel to Paris, she took up French cooking. "I learned so much from the French and their famous passion for food."

Sarner said many of the Iraqi dishes she had grown up with were made with a lot of oil. But after her five-year stint in Paris, she learned to cook with less oil and more fresh produce.

For instance, her mother would often fry eggplant, she recalled. "I would wake up to the smell of eggplant.

"Eggplant is like a sponge. When you fry it, it absorbs a lot oil, and when you eat it, you feel like you've put on three kilos. I try to make eggplant in a different way."

One of the recipes she demonstrated was baked eggplant slices seasoned with ingredients including fresh basil and sage, paprika, balsamic vinegar and maple syrup.

Sarner also prepared a labane (yogurt cheese) dish with roasted maple pears, fig balls stuffed with a mixture of sun-dried tomatoes and feta cheese, Iraqi-French-style pickled lemons, an Israeli-style quinoa salad, and roasted maple pecans.

She encourages people to be creative in the kitchen. "Don't be afraid to make mistakes," she said. "When it comes to the kitchen, there are no mistakes." ■

Galya's Baked Eggplant

- ❑ 1 cup fresh organic arugula
- ❑ 2 medium eggplants

Spice Mixture:

- ❑ 4 tbsp. fresh basil, finely chopped
- ❑ 3 tbsp. dried oregano
- ❑ 3 tbsp. chopped onions
- ❑ 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- ❑ 1 tsp. sweet paprika
- ❑ 5 tbsp. olive oil

Dressing

- ❑ 1/2 cup olive oil
- ❑ 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- ❑ 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- ❑ 2 tbsp. maple syrup
- ❑ 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- ❑ 2 tbsp. fresh basil, finely chopped
- ❑ 1 tsp. Dijon mustard

Preheat oven to 350. Prepare spice mixture by combining basil, oregano, onions, paprika and olive oil in a bowl. Mix well and set mixture aside. Slice eggplant in discs about 1/2 in. thick, and place slices on a lightly greased flat baking tray.

Bake eggplant for about 10 minutes. When the colour turns gold, turn the eggplant slices over. Bake another 7 minutes. Take tray out of the oven and carefully spread 1 tbsp. of the spice mixture in the centre of each eggplant slice. Bake for an additional 5 to 7 minutes. Remove the tray of eggplant slices and let cool to room temperature.

For dressing, combine oil, wine and balsamic vinegars, syrup, garlic, basil, mustard or marinated sage. Mix well and refrigerate.

About an hour before serving, place arugula on a serving platter and arrange eggplant slices on the bed of arugula. Pour sauce evenly over the eggplant and arugula. Makes 6 servings.

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What's New

JUNE 12 - JUNE 19

by Lila Sarick

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Look for your Yiddish roots at the Free Times Cafe			Father's Day			Learn what beer goes best with a burger at Beth Emeth

Thursday, June 12

JEWISH VIEWS ON THE END OF LIFE
Rabbi Michael Dolgin, Lorne Sossin, dean of Osgoode Law School, and **Dr. David Kendal,** Mount Sinai Hospital, discuss Jewish perspectives on death and dying, 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

YIDDISH VINKL
Sol Hermolin discusses his recent trip to Poland, "Looking for my roots," noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18, includes lunch. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca

A HISTORY OF JAZZ
Mike Daley presents "A Concise History of Classic Jazz." Tonight, "From New Orleans to Tin Pan Alley: Jazz Arrives." June 16, "The Dance Band Gets Hot: Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and the Swing Band." June 19, "Crazy Man: Bebop and the Beginning of Modern Jazz." Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 8 p.m. $10/$12.

MUSSAR
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Mussar: Path of Personal Growth," 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca

ISRAEL ADVOCACY
Steve McDonald, associate director of communications for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, discusses "Israel Advocacy Through the Eyes of a Convert," 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

Saturday, June 14

EMUNAH SHABBAT
Emunah Women presents a city-wide seudah shlishit program. **Sara Munk** discusses "The power of community," at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto, 6 p.m.; **Gella Weiss** discusses "Emunah: It's all in the perspective," at B'nai Torah, 6 p.m.; **Yael Gelernter** discusses "The trial and tribulations of the Jews in the desert," at Shaarei Shomayim, 5:30 p.m.; **Ilana Rubenstein** discusses "Transforming our lives," at Shaarei Tefillah, 5:30 p.m.; **Shayna Weiss** discusses "Religious women making changes in Israel," at Yeshivat Or Chaim, 5:15 p.m. RSVP to 416-636-0036 or email emunah@emunahtoronto.com

TORAH STUDY
Lou Vandelman discusses the parshah at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

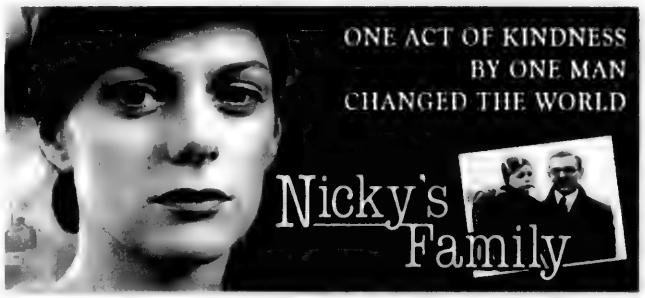
Sunday, June 15

BRUNCH & ENTERTAINMENT
Angelica Di Castro entertains at a Father's Day brunch for the whole family, 11:30 a.m., Beth David Synagogue. $10. Call 416-633-5500.

Monday, June 16

HEALTHY LIVING SERIES
Colin Blayney discusses "Physical Fitness: Being Active is Easier than you Think," noon, Temple Sinai. $15, includes a light lunch. To register, call 416-487-3281 or email programs@templesinai.net

MEDICAL HALACHAH
Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner discusses "How Judaism deals with Dementia Care," 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. 647-234-7299 or email info@torontotorah.com



Nicky's Family

Beth Tzedec Synagogue screens the film *Nicky's Family*. Journalist Joe Schlesinger, one of the 669 children saved by Sir Nicholas Winton, speaks at the showing, Tuesday June 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, June 17

NICKY'S FAMILY
The film *Nicky's Family* will be screened along with a discussion with **Joe Schlesinger,** one of the 669 children saved from the Holocaust by Sir Nicholas Winton, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Synagogue.

LUNCH AND LEARN
John Thompson discusses "New Realities in the Middle East," 12:15 p.m. Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Wednesday, June 18

BEER AND FOOD PAIRINGS
Stephen Rich, beer sommelier, discusses beer and food pairings, 7 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. $40/$58. Purchase tickets by June 16.

JEWISH GENEALOGY
Jewish Genealogical Society presents its annual "Breakthrough Event" where inspiring results in family research are shared, 8 p.m., Temple Sinai. www.jgstoronto.ca

POMEGRANATE GUILD
Join the members of the Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles as they show and share their work of the past year. First-time guests are free. Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m. pomegranateguild.wordpress.com

Thursday, June 19

UNDERSTANDING THE EVIL EYE
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Understanding *Ayin Hara* (the evil eye): Do you really need a red string?" 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation.

GARDEN OPENING
Kavanah Garden holds its season opening at the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 3:30-6:30 p.m. $6 per person/$18 per family.

SHIR DELIGHT
The Toronto Jewish Chorus presents its annual gala concert. Musical guests include **Cantor Charles Osborne,** Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir and Arbah b'Shir.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Deadline Reminder:
The deadline for the issue of June 26 is June 16. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m. $18/$25. www.TorontoJewishChorus.org

COMING EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
Reena is looking for volunteers to work as "Rec Buddies" at Camp Reena this summer. No experience needed. Call **Millie Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112.
◗ Act to End Violence Against Women is looking for volunteers with expertise in marketing, communications, public relations, social media or web development. Call 905-695-5372 or email info@acttoendvaw.org

CAMP AND SCHOOL REGISTRATION
Registration is now open for Chabad of Markham's Kindercamp, Hebrew School and Torah Tots programs. Call 905-886-0420.
◗ Kavanah Kids, Shoresh's Jewish organic garden, offers a half-day camp for kids ages 6-10 from June 30 to July 4. Email claire@shoresh.ca

PRIDE SHABBAT
Clergy from Temple Sinai along with Shir Libeynu and Kulanu will be holding an interfaith *Havdalah* ceremony and musical evening, June 21, 9 p.m. McGill Square, 56 Queen St. E. Call **Hayley** 416-487-4161.

SUPPORT FOR ABUSED WOMEN
The Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Free. Call 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS
Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.
◗ **When You're About to Separate, What To Tell the Kids:** A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. June 12, 9:30 a.m.
◗ **Stop the Rollercoaster:** A workshop for parents and professionals about how to deal with the changes in adolescent behaviour and attitude. June 18, 7 p.m.
◗ **High-Conflict Divorce:** A workshop for parents who want to develop strategies to deal with a high-conflict situation. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. June 18, 6:30 p.m.
◗ **Dating in Midlife:** A workshop for men and women over 40 who have been single for more than 2 years. June 24, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES
Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

◗ **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
◗ **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
◗ **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
◗ **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
◗ **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors club meeting three times a week. Call 416-256-1892.
◗ **Bridge Players** wanted for games at Forest Hill Public Library. Call **Lea**, evenings, 416-487-7630.
◗ **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC.** Art appreciation with **Osnat Lippa.** A discussion on painter Francis Bacon and sculptor Henry Moore, June 17, 1 p.m. $10/$12. Have fun re-enacting episodes from classic radio shows, speaking parts, narration, sound effects and period commercials with actor **Jack Newman.** June 19, 1:30 p.m. (doors open at 1 p.m.) $4. To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org Specialty fitness classes in osteofit, posture perfect and tai chi are offered at the Miles Nadal JCC. Call 416-924-6211, ext. 526 or email colinb@mnjcc.org.
◗ **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. June 17, **Rabbi Michael Skobac** discusses "Dealing with Negative Emotions: A Jewish Perspective," 10 a.m.; June 19, wellness lecture on foot care, 1:30 p.m.
◗ **Chabad of Markham** offers lunch and learn classes for seniors with **Rabbi Michael Gitlin**, Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. for women; Fridays at 10 a.m. for men. Call 905-886-0420 or email Rabbig@chabadmarkham.org
◗ **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Lunch and Song, June 19, noon. Couples dance with live music, June 22. Casino Woodbine, June 25. Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com

◗ Looking for something easy and delicious to prepare? Chef **Margie Arosh** showcases her Moroccan Spanish heritage, June 19, 6:30 p.m. $45.
◗ **Kevin Courrier** discusses "Nowhere Land: The Darkside of the Beatles' Utopian Dream," Wednesdays July 9-Aug. 6, 1 p.m.
◗ Learn to play mah-jong, Wednesdays July 2- Aug. 6 at 1 p.m.
◗ Join "The Beholding Eye: Photography from 1839 to today." Discover major trends and artists in the history of photography. Tuesdays, July 8-Aug. 12 at 1 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

◗ Dance photography by **Cylla Von Tiedemann** is on display in the gallery until July 8.
◗ Critic **Adam Nayman** analyzes the work of **David Lynch** Mondays until June 23, 7-9 p.m. June 16: *Mulholland Drive.*
◗ Like to sing? Drop-in anytime to the daytime choir Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. with instructor **Gillian Stecyk.**
◗ Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Vocal/Choral Edition July 14-18; Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. Call ext. 250.
◗ Fitness programs: MELT Method-full body Tuesdays to June 17, 7 p.m.; Wednesdays to June 18, 11 a.m. Gentle techniques for joint pain and injury management.
For all fitness programs email joolip@mnjcc.org or call ext. 574.
◗ Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821

◗ Supervised bridge meets Thursdays July 10-Aug. 28, 10 a.m.
To register for programs, call **Jennifer Appleby** 416-638-1881, ext. 3275. ■

THE REAL STORY

From the pages of Pope Francis's travel journal:

David Levine

SUNDAY: We depart tomorrow for the Holy Land. My soul longs to see the land of the Bible, to speak with both sides of an ancient conflict, and to work for peace. I thank the Lord for this historic opportunity, and I dedicate myself steadfastly to the task.

I confess that my body yearns for the luxuries of first class , but I am a willing servant, and would never complain about the leg-room in coach – or about having to share a row with Cardinal Ricardo, whose breath is like the breath of a diseased cow chewing on a diaper. We, like John Belushi before us, are on a mission from God.

MONDAY: We arrived, after visiting Amman, the West Bank and Jerusalem in a single day. All through the afternoon, the voice of Carnac rang in my ear: "Name three places that don't love Popes." (Does anyone remember Carnac? Ask Brother Alexander later.)

I feel an instant kinship with this ancient land: the stone buildings, the smell of blooming flowers in the evening. A few hiccups slowed the day's progress – the Lord saw fit to guide our luggage to the carousel last, the rental car was more expensive than Priceline implied, and calling Palestine a state upset some of the locals. I guess nobody's infallible, right? (jk)

P.S. Don't call anyone a 'maniac'. It's not the same thing here.

TUESDAY: My pilgrimage continues to be a testament to the beauties of God's creation. I am resolute in my quest to open a dialogue for peace, no matter the setbacks. This afternoon some passionate soul called me a fascist and threw a Slurpee in my face. (Brother Anthony pointed out that *Glee* only got to Israel this year.)

... Visited the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Wailing Wall. Our guide hinted that the whole world was waiting for the return of the missing Ark of the Covenant to the Temple, and the whole tour group stared at me. I said nothing; tolerance is great, but there's still only one true faith, amiright? Anyway. I'd never ask them to give up their furniture, so I don't see where they get the right.

...My thoughts turn to the topography of God's holiest land, and to the immodest irritation my inner thighs are suffering. Why has the Lord seen fit to afflict me so? Perhaps as a reminder of the suffering that occurs here - or perhaps because it's 130 degrees out and I'm wearing a cassock. Still, I can't help but wonder: would the Bible tell a happier story if the whole thing happened in Belgium, or something?

WEDNESDAY: Today marks the last day of our pilgrimage. I visited the refugee camp at Dheisheh, a memorial for victims of terror, a cemetery, and Yad Vashem. If the word 'vacation' has an antonym, I seem to have found it. (P.S. Yad Vashem has a Pope Pius XII exhibit, so....that was awkward.)

...I was fairly distressed by the time I left the bus, near the separation wall. Truth be told, all I wanted was a selfie with that Banksy painting, but everyone assumed I was praying, and the media pounced. I can't wait for Kimye's wedding photos to wipe this story from the news.

...Brother Andrew asked which gifts we should bring back and gave me a choice between vials of "holy dirt" and cans of "holy air". I'm all for transubstantiation, but I told Andrew that dirt is dirt, and people like chocolate from anywhere.

...On the plane home. Invited Abbas and Peres over for tea and prayer next month, which annoyed everyone again. Brother Philip had too much "take-off wine" and impertinently inquired after the contents of the note I left in the Wall. I kept my silence. Perhaps I should have prayed once more for peace or understanding – but, to be honest, the trip inspired only eight words in my prayer, words which will help me sleep peacefully until we land: "Thank you for giving me my own country." ■

Family Moments

Happy birthday to a wonderful husband and daddy. Love, Lisa and Jordana

Welcome Dalia Gwendolyn Morris, born May 8. Parents Ryan & Sarah Morris, brother Russell, grandparents Ron & Linda Morris, Dr. L. Stephen & Patricia Johnson.

Mazel tov Sydney Paige on graduating from Riverdale High School with Honours! Your hard work and dedication make us so proud! Love Mommy, Daddy, Jamie and Madison.

Kayla Weinberg & John Rose are engaged! Mazel tov from parents Barb & Ken Weinberg, Lynn & John Rose. Grandmothers, Toby Weinberg, Lillian Gossin & Jean Spence.

Happy 90th Birthday Helen Pearson!! Mazel tov and best wishes for good health til 120 from all your family and many friends.

Email your digital photos along with a description of 25 words or less to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click on **"Family Moments"**

Mazel Tov!

מזל טוב!

Parshah

Shlach | Numbers 13:1 - 15:41

Rabbi Aaron Katchen says we have the power to own up to our mistakes and fix them
Rabbi Michal Shekel writes God is our spiritual coach, despite our shortcomings
Rabbi Howard Morrison remembers his father's unique 'tour' of Judaism

Aaron Katchen

"And the Lord said, 'I have forgiven [them] in accordance to your words.'" (Numbers 14:20)

"But if an individual sins inadvertently, he shall offer up a she-goat in its first year as a sin offering. And the kohen shall atone for the erring soul which sinned inadvertently before the Lord, so as to atone on his behalf, and it shall be forgiven him." (Numbers 15:27-28)

Horayot (decisions) is a tractate of the Talmud that probes how we understand authority and what happens when our systems break down. Each of the three chapters deal with what happens when the court system errs, when the king errs, and when the High Priest errs.

The foundational text for these chapters is found in our parshah, in the verses of chapter 15. The guiding words appear to be "inadvertent error/sin" and "forgiveness." They're repeated regularly to illuminate how to correct errors when they occur.

It's common in our society to respond to a leader's failure or an institution's mistake by removing the individual or closing the institution. The Torah, conversely, takes the approach of understanding the imperfect nature of the human condition. There are intentional sins and unintentional sins. Both can be perpetrated by an individual or an institution.

When a sin is intentional, there are consequences from both human justice and divine justice. Our section is more concerned with inadvertent sins. This is where the beauty of the process appears. Humans and human institutions have agency. We have the power to act and to change. We have the ability when confronted with our errors to ignore them, to try to justify why they weren't a mistake or to own up to them and rectify the situation. When I have the courage to confront my mistakes and change them, God answers me with "I have forgiven in accordance to your words." ■

Rabbi Aaron Katchen is associate executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Michal Shekel

Reading the report of the scouts in Shlach and how we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves (Numbers 13:32), I needed a shot of self-esteem. An Internet search turned up more than 52 million pieces of advice. Clearly, I'm not alone in my quest. Fortunately, the best answer was old school, a two-parter found within this week's parshah.

"When you enter the land… as the first yield of your baking, you shall set aside a loaf [challah] as a gift… You shall make a gift to the Lord from the first yield of your baking, throughout the ages." (Numbers 15:18, 20, 21) For 40 years, God fed us manna. Upon entering the land of Israel, we were to reciprocate by setting aside a portion of our bread for God. This challah is our hand-made, homemade gift deemed precious by God. Think of the crafts kids bring home from school – the pride associated with making and giving, the delight of receiving and the connections reinforcing human self-worth.

A unique perspective on challah, citing our parshah, is found in midrash Genesis Rabbah. During creation, God removed challah: earth and water formed the dough that was used to make the human being. Separated from the rest of creation, humanity was thereby elevated – a powerful message about our value.

This is reinforced at the end of the parshah with the commandment regarding tzitzit. Related to an ancient Akkadian word for "ornament," tzitzit were a decorative element found on clothing worn by nobles. Add to this the blue thread of the tzitzit, a "royal" colour, and you have an ongoing reminder of how God views us.

We may think we are grasshoppers, but despite our shortcomings and disobedience, God sees our potential. Who needs Oprah when the Holy One of Blessing is your spiritual coach? ■

Rabbi Michal Shekel is executive director of the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

Howard Morrison

A week from this coming Shabbat, I'll commemorate the 15th yahrzeit, of my father, Ruben Morrison, who died June 7, 1999. My father spent most of his childhood in an impoverished foster home in the Bronx, N.Y. He grew up with minimal Jewish education, but possessed a genuine love for Jewish tradition and for Israel.

That love inspired this man to one day raise four children with day school educations, regular attendance and involvement in our local shul, and a family trip to Israel in our teenage years.

The spiritual journey of my father, a virtual tourist educationally in his own tradition, comes to mind as I reflect on Parshat Shlach. The beginning and end are united by the Hebrew word "latur," often translated as "to scout" or "to spy." At the outset, representatives of the 12 tribes are sent to investigate the Land of Israel. I prefer to understand the word "latur" as it sounds in English, meaning to "tour" the land.

In the beginning, the scouts see themselves mostly as tourists in the Promised Land. As a result, 10 of the 12 report back negatively, while only two, Joshua and Caleb, report back positively.

At the end of Shlach, we read what seems to be an unrelated text, the passage that's now the third paragraph of the *Shema*. In the commandment to wear tzitzit, the Torah states that you shall look upon the fringe "*v'lo taturu*," and not be led astray. I understand this to mean that one who wears tzitzit and thereby immerses oneself in mitzvot won't be led astray, meaning that one won't "be a tourist" in one's tradition. My father's journey and the values he gave to his children continue through me to my own children. I wish us all safety, health and fun as we explore the world as tourists this summer. But may it never be said we were tourists in our own Judaism. ■

Rabbi Howard Morrison is senior clergy at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue in Toronto.

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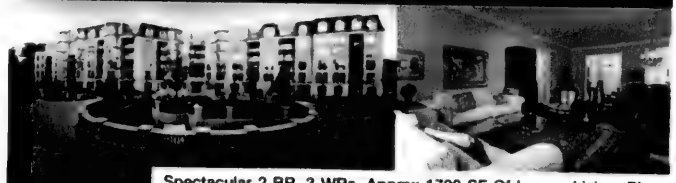

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Health

Tel Aviv University to receive eye-related research program

Retired Toronto accountant donates $110,000

CYNTHIA GASNER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Dr. Allan Slomovic will be setting up a major eye-related research program at Tel Aviv University due to a donation of $110,000 from retired chartered accountant, Meyer Zeifman.

Slomovic, a world renowned researcher, is the research director of the corneal/external disease service at Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network. He is also president of the Canadian Ophthalmological Society and immediate past chairman of the Canadian Cornea Society.

He is an associate professor of ophthalmology at the University of Toronto. Among his many awards, Aish Toronto recently honoured him at a Heritage of Healing gala dinner.

Slomovic developed the hospital's new cornea replacement program that is part of his plan to make the University Health Network the country's go-to ocular regenerative program.

"International co-operation is a priority for Tel Aviv University," says Stephen Adler, executive director of Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University.

"A particular emphasis is placed on bringing basic research discoveries to applied and clinical stages. The Zeifman donation allows the Tel Aviv University to continue building on its already strong relationship with University of Toronto."

The Meyer Zeifman Cornea and Stem Cell Research Project will commence in Israel in the 2014-2015 academic year.

"Ocular stem cell disease is a serious ocular condition that often results in blindness and severe pain, usually affecting younger individuals in the prime of their lives," says Slomovic.

"It can have devastating effects on the patient and also on the lives of their loved ones. Unfortunately, traditional ophthalmic treatments, such as corneal transplantation, are not successful in this group of patients.

"In many circumstances ocular stem cell transplantation offers them the only hope of getting their lives back."

He noted that at both Tel Aviv University and the University of Toronto are at the forefront of new and innovative corneal research treatment.

Seen at the signing of an agreement for research are, from left, Dr. Allan Slomovic, Beverley Burdeyney, Meyer Zeifman and Rhona Slomovic.

> *This important and impactful donation made by Meyer Zeifman, supporting stem cell research at both universities, will allow for collaboration and the potential for bringing research from the laboratory to the bedside, offering hope for patients suffering with ocular stem cell disease.*
>
> **Dr. Allan Slomovic**

"This important and impactful donation made by Meyer Zeifman, supporting stem cell research at both universities, will allow for collaboration and the potential for bringing research from the laboratory to the bedside, offering hope for patients suffering with ocular stem cell disease."

TAU has more than 40 research groups from various aspects of regenerative medicine and 30 groups focusing on diverse areas of cell and developmental biology that have a direct bearing on regenerative medicine.

Zeifman told *The CJN* that he suffered for many years with pain and swelling in his eyes. While on a trip to Israel, after several painful episodes with his eyes, an Israeli ophthalmologist in Jerusalem diagnosed his problem.

"For many years I wanted to thank Israel for saving my sight and I searched for a project," says Zeifman.

"It was my friend, Beverley Burdeyney, a community volunteer and fundraiser who introduced me to Dr. Slomovic and the shidduch was made for the project in Israel."

Burdeyney said that Zeifman's donation "will kickstart awareness of both young and old who suffer from eye related diseases and issues."

She added that a campaign has been created to raise additional money for a $250,000 eye research project at the university. ■

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 12, 2014

Gina Waldman: Making the case for Jewish refugees

PAUL LUNGEN
plungen@thecjn.ca

Gina Waldman was born in Tripoli, Libya with the family name, Bublil. Her family fled the country in 1967 as anti-Semitic mobs attacked Jews during the Six Day War. A human rights advocate, she found JIMENA – Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa – following the 9/11 attacks in the United States. In May 2013, she testified before a House of Commons standing committee on foreign affairs and international development that recommended the government recognize the fate of Jewish refugees from Arab countries, a position adopted by Parliament in March. She was in Toronto recently for a series of lectures, including one delivered at Congregation Darchei Noam.

Tell me about JIMENA. Who does it represent and what is its purpose?

JIMENA represents Jews from all Arab countries where there was a Jewish presence. JIMENA preserves the culture and traditions of these Jewish minorities, and our biggest mission is to educate the public about our story, the story of exile, which has not been adequately addressed.

We do that through several methods. The most successful is our 35-member speakers bureau. These are all eyewitnesses from different Arab countries who are sent to university campuses and synagogues to tell their stories.

We find that by telling the stories, people put two and two together and realize the Middle East has two groups of refugees, the Palestinians and the Jews.

Some people might say it wasn't the Palestinians who expelled the Jews. But the Palestinians enlisted the help of the Arab League. They turned around and declared a different kind of war toward their Jewish populations by arresting them, or harassing them, or torturing them, or by hanging them in public squares.

Gina Waldman

They made our lives impossible and finally expulsion was what happened in many countries.

How well known among Arabs is the story of Mizrahi [eastern] Jews?

Arabs themselves don't know their own history. Jews had lived and were indigenous to their region for over 2,000 years. The new generation is told by their parents that yes, Jews lived here, but they were Zionists and they chose to go to Israel and they left.

JIMENA has 10 websites, and we translated them all into Arabic. We used to get 50,000 hits a month. Since they were translated into Arabic, we get 150,000 hits a month. And a lot of that is coming from Middle Eastern countries. That tells us that these people really want to know what happened to their Jews.

What's your own story?

I was born and raised in Tripoli in 1948, when there were some 36,000 Jews between Tripoli and Benghazi.

We were not considered citizens, we had no human rights, we were not allowed to have passports, we were not allowed to work for the government, we were basically what they called *dhimmi* [second-class citizens].

When I was 14, I went to study in Switzerland. I returned in 1967 to Tripoli for the summer when the war broke out between Israel and the Arab countries.

I was working for a British firm, and I had to go into hiding in the garage of my employer, who was a British Christian. After a month, I was able to reunite with my family. In the meantime, riots were taking place all over Tripoli and Benghazi. The people, the mob were running up and down the streets, identifying Jewish buildings with a white X and putting gasoline all around it and they would burn it.

If they were able to get into a Jewish home, they'd drag the Jews out and God knows, kill them. Two families were murdered in this period. My father's warehouse was burned to the ground. Many properties owned by Jews were burned. Eventually the king said for your own protection, you better leave.

How did you get out?

We had to leave with only $20 equivalent and one suitcase. We boarded this bus taking us to the airport and in the middle of the road, the bus pulls over. I saw the conductor also leave. He said, there's something mechanically wrong with the bus. And then he disappeared.

I decided something was definitely wrong. I ran to a gas station where the conductor was making a phone call in this little hut in the desert. And he said everything was OK. I struggled with him for the phone. I called my British employer and said, come quickly we're in danger.

I hang up, and I see the driver outside. The driver has a packet of matches in his hand, and there's a huge pool of gasoline under the bus. I look up and here's my brother who's 13, my mother is crying, my grandfather is praying, seven of us altogether. And I realized really the life of all my family is hanging on that box of matches.

That's when I really lost my cool, and I started following this man's hand with the matches. After a few minutes, this British engineer, Brian, and another engineer, John, came with two jeeps. They said, "Oh my God, this is ready to explode. Let's get everybody out." We left half of our luggage on the bus, we grabbed the people from the bus and off we went to the airport.

I started JIMENA after 9/11 because I wanted people to know that the culture of hatred that made me into a refugee, that made 850,000 Jews refugees, the intolerance in Arab countries, that was what 9/11 was all about. The people who perpetrated it, came from the same culture of hatred against America as against us.

How significant are the moves by the Canadian Parliament and the U.S. Congress to recognize the fate of Jewish refugees?

Very significant. Canada has always had a role in human rights. In this case, Canada could be an example to lead other countries to do the same thing.

Do you expect European parliaments will get on board with this?

We very much hope so and we feel that having Canada lead this would be really key.

Have any Arab governments apologized?

Some Arab countries have outright denied any wrongdoing. Some say, "You can come back." The fact is, there is more anti-Semitism today in Arab countries... than when there were 850,000 Jews living among the Arabs. ■

Is history bunk?

Backstory

MICHAEL BROWN

Once I was in Toronto's Negev Bookstore, of blessed memory, inquiring about a new book, *Re-inventing the Jewish Past* by my *landsman*, Prof. David Myers of UCLA. Barely had I uttered the title, when the man behind me harrumphed: "We have a past. No need to re-invent it." I understood where my irate interlocutor was coming from. I could have recommended *Zachor*, the masterly work of my former graduate school classmate, the late Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, which delineates the difference between memory and history. Or I could have suggested he play a game of "broken telephone." I did neither.

As Jews, we have both memory and history. And while memory purports to be historical, sometimes it is, and sometimes it isn't. Many things in our past happened so long ago that the kinds of documentation historians require for verification cannot be found. And much of the time, historical accuracy really doesn't matter. Memory, accurate or not, usually selective, can be powerful and meaningful.

But that is not to buy into the "History is bunk!" dictum of Henry Ford. Ford, a nasty anti-Semite, as is well documented, was a pioneering industrialist and an American. As both, he valued the future and had little patience for the "lessons" of history. But if history is not bunk, how can it be invented or re-invented?

If we want to know how we got where we are, we do need to know history. History teaches no specific general lessons, because every historical situation is unique. Those who fail to understand that make bad decisions. Generals, it is said, always prepare for the last war, not the next. But actions have consequences, and we need to understand what happened in order to assess the possibilities the future holds. And here is where the multi-facetedness of history counts.

The re-invention Myers talks about in his book is not fabrication but the new emphases of scholars of the nascent Hebrew University, most especially, their interest in the Zionist, national aspects of Jewish history, and their de-emphasis of "books and tears," as my teacher, the late Prof. Salo Baron, perhaps the greatest of modern historians of the Jews, described the work of earlier historians. They sought, in other words, a past usable for the Zionist enterprise.

Such re-invention, or reconsideration of the past, is not new to Jews. How do we tell the story of Purim? Is it a Zionist tale of near annihilation in the Diaspora or a story of the value of assimilation (Esther as saviour)? And Pesach? Is its liberation story meant to fortify our determination to assert ourselves, never again to be slaves, or to remind us to be compassionate to the disadvantaged?

We have the same kinds of questions regarding the modern era. Is Polish Jewish history that of poverty and anti-Semitism, or of the great yeshivot, Chassidism and Mussar, and flourishing secular institutions (Yiddish and Hebrew literature, vibrant Zionism, thriving political parties)?

And Germany? Is its Jewish story the Holocaust, or the birth of modern Judaism (Reform, Conservative, and modern Orthodox – Buber, Rosenzweig, Baeck and Samson Raphael Hirsch), the temporary sanctuary of Hebrew writers (Bialik, Agnon, Tchernihovsky), and the first headquarters of the World Zionist Organization and the birthplace of its second and third presidents?

And Canada, is it the country of "None Is Too Many" or of multiculturalism, diversity and support for Israel?

There is, of course, no either/or. The historical past is complex and contradictory. Historians will emphasize now one aspect of the past and now another. They will continue to re-invent, to search for a usable past. The main goal of re-invention today is truth and reconciliation. They go together. As Jews, we have often re-thought our complex and contradictory history. We shall undoubtedly have to do so in the future, even re-inventing the past re-invented not so long ago by those early Hebrew University sages. ■

Michael Brown, is professor emeritus and senior scholar of humanities, history, and Hebrew, York University.

SeeJN | Buddies at play

Junior kindergarten students from the Thomas & Marjorie Schwartz Preschool Centre recently joined Grade 5 students from the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School for their final buddy program of the year. Included in the activities were viewing the older children's artwork, having snack with one another, sitting in the older buddies' desks and witnessing all the amazing things a Smart Board can do.

OBITUARIES AND RELATED NOTICES

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Leonard Yager	May 23/14	3560 Bathurst Street
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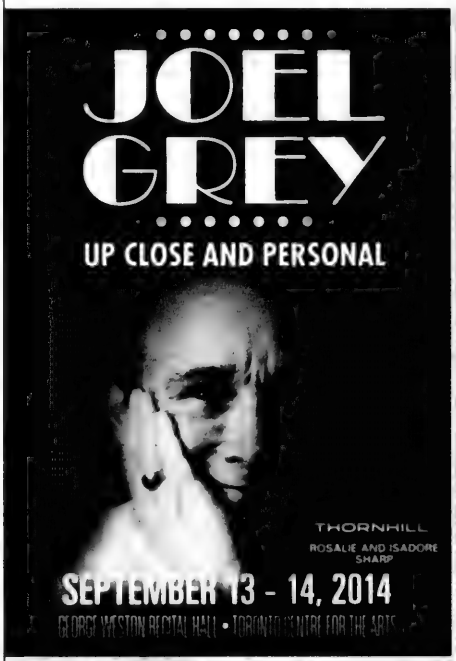
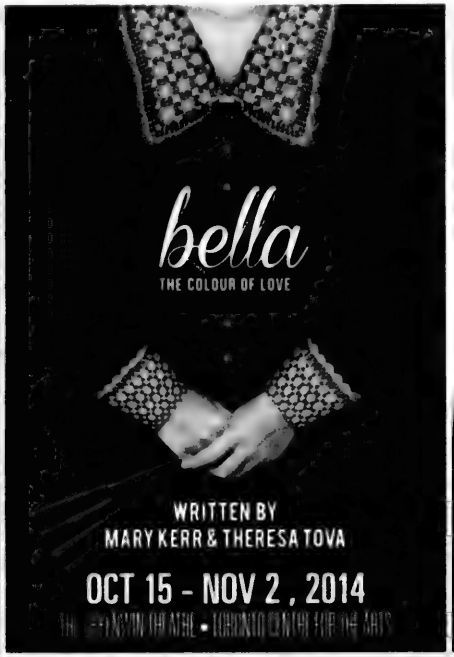
Marsha Shabsove	May 24/14	41 Fallingbrook Road
Tibor Stein	May 26/14	3560 Bathurst Street
Dick Grimm	May 26/14	65 Skymark Drive
Geri Migicovsky	May 27/14	1500 Steeles Ave. West
Brian Adam Fisher	May 27/14	505-1355 West 14th Ave.
Arnold Kacur	May 30/14	299 Mill Road
Myer Kalin	May 30/14	1 Canterbury Place
Frida Aizin	May 30/14	307-750 Wilson Heights

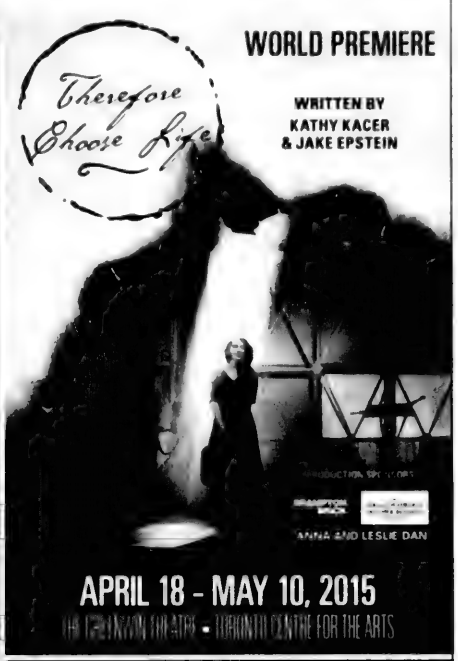
HEBREW DASIC

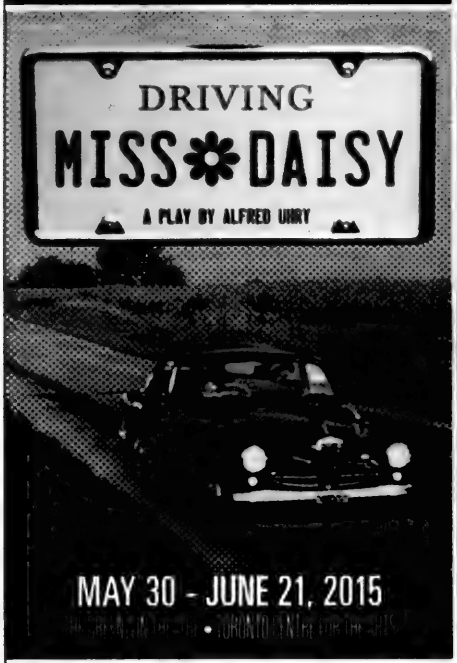
George Foxman	May 23/14	2200 Avenue Road

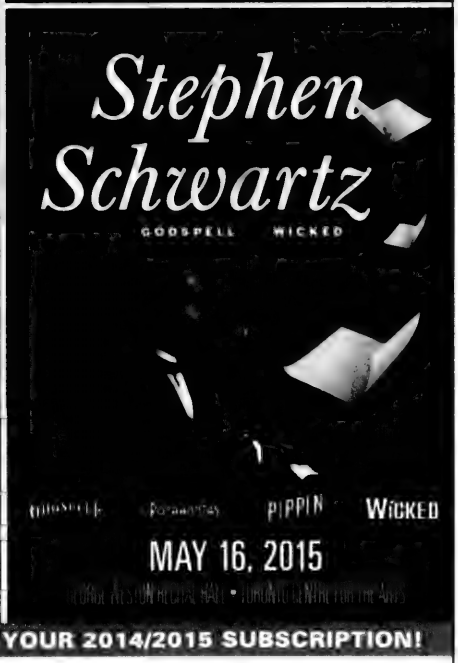
GREAT THEATRE PLAYS HERE











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Israel holds its breath

IDF searches for three teens kidnapped in the West Bank. **PAGE 37**

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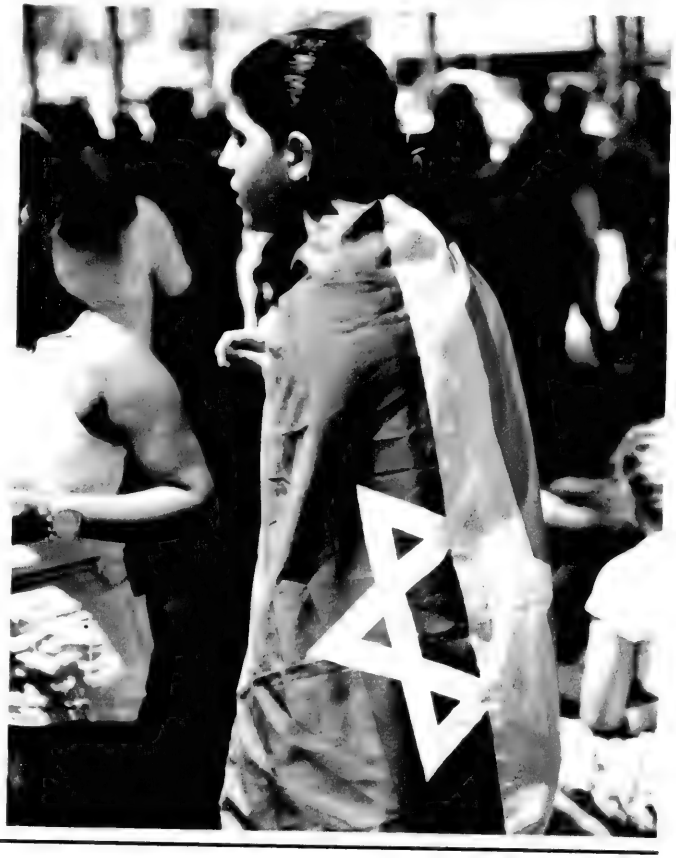
Our annual salute to the Jewish state. **Section B**

CANDLELIGHTING, HAVDALAH TIMES

Halifax	8:44 p.m.	10:00 p.m.
Montreal	8:28 p.m.	9:45 p.m.
Toronto	8:44 p.m.	9:58 p.m.
Winnipeg	9:22 p.m.	10:51 p.m.
Calgary	9:36 p.m.	11:09 p.m.
Vancouver	9:03 p.m.	10:29 p.m.

Pride and Judaism



Jodie Shupac reports on the emerging trend toward greater inclusion of LGBTQ individuals in the Jewish community. Plus, Rabbi Steven Greenberg writes about the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ Orthodox Jews.
SEE PAGES 8, 32 & 33

Cisco fund boosts PA middle class

Tech giant invests $15M for economic development in the Palestinian territories. **PAGE 12**

How sharp is your brain?

Baycrest launches new online test for 50- to 79-year-olds. **PAGE 14**

Left-wing student resigns over views on Israel

Calgary Hillel Israel chair criticized for online opinions. **PAGE 21**

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A fabulous display in Tel Aviv, and a political reversal

TA City Hall lights up for Pride

A massive, illuminated gay pride flag with 480 LED light bulbs – the world's largest rainbow flag – adorned Tel Aviv City Hall in Rabin Square in celebration of the city's 21st annual Gay Pride Week last week. Some 130,000 Israelis and travellers came to Tel Aviv for the event, which culminated in the annual Pride Parade on June 13. Tel Aviv is consistently listed among the world's "Best Gay Cities" by GayCities and ranked the No. 2 "Best Gay Honeymoon Destination" in the world by *Business Insider* in 2013.

Tel Aviv shows its Pride. FLASH 90 PHOTO

Red card for Nike World Cup ad?

Echoing widespread sentiment on social media, the Anti-Defamation League last week rejected suggestions by an Israeli MK and the World Zionist Federation that a World Cup video ad for Nike had an underlying anti-Semitic message. After the animated video was released last Monday and went viral on YouTube, the World Zionist Federation and Yisrael Beytenu MK Shimon Ohayon charged that its evil robot clones who face off against human soccer stars are sporting a ball emblem on their jerseys that they say strongly resembles the Star of David. Nike called the resemblance "entirely coincidental and unintentional" and the ADL apparently agreed, saying "Anyone who thinks this is anti-Semitism is certainly off base."

Candidate loses, then wins – probably

It was a wild week for Ontario Progressive Conservative candidate Gila Martow. First, it appeared she lost her Thornhill riding by a razor-thin 85 votes on election night to Liberal challenger Sandra Yeung Racco. Then her campaign was told by Elections Ontario the next day that a data entry error was discovered while the votes were being tabulated. The voting agency subsequently declared Martow the winner, also by a margin of 85 votes. Yeung Racco has asked for a judicial recount. Martow, a former optometrist, first won the riding in a 2013 byelection after incumbent PC MPP Peter Shurman resigned in a spending scandal. ■

Inside today's edition

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Rabbi2Rabbi ... 4	Cover Story ... 8	National ... 25	What's New ... 44
Commentary ... 6	Opinion ... 10	International ... 35	Parshah ... 47

Gematria

111

Age of the world's oldest man, Holocaust survivor Alexander Imich, who died June 8. (There are 66 women who are older.)

1.5 million

The number of pennies donated for a yet-to-be-built memorial to child victims of the Holocaust in Hernando, Miss., near Memphis, which got a $25,000 gift from Baptist Memorial Health Care last week.

Quotable

Judaism has always promoted lust between a husband and wife

— Rabbi Shmuley Boteach on how to spice up your marriage. See Q&A on page 50.

Exclusive to CJNEWS.com

High schoolers speak out against using children as soldiers.

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Letters to the Editor

COR brought kosher unity

I am bothered by some of the assumptions *The CJN* made in its series ("Behind the Label,") on the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR).

First, you assume competition is always a good thing. As an avowed capitalist, even I realize that we sometimes do need monopolies. For example, would you suggest we have competing police forces in Toronto?

Let's not forget that Toronto used to have competing kashrut bodies, and while the competition did not necessarily bring lower prices, it definitely brought disunity. COR has brought to Toronto a level of community kashrut unity that most of my friends who live elsewhere envy.

Second, I am not sure it is fair to blame COR for all the ills of the kosher world. For example, the challenge with kosher chickens in Ontario has nothing to do with COR. Rather, the issue is the lack of an open market in Canada for slaughtering chickens.

This also applies to the price of kosher food here as compared with the United States. The same car costs more in Canada than across the border, for example. In most cases, comparing costs between the U.S. and Canada has more to do with market regulations, taxes and manufacturer's pricing policies than anything else.

Do I believe COR is perfect? Only God gets that grade from me. But I do think COR faces a number of market challenges I hoped your articles would have expanded on.

Over the last few years, I believe COR's improved level of professionalism has become a standard for other kashrut bodies, and that its lay leadership deserves some praise. They have blemishes, and you do raise some points where COR could improve, but I would have hoped that somewhere in your series a reader could get the impression that kosher life in Toronto, while not perfect, is not that bad.

David Koschitzky
Toronto

QuAIA part of larger problem

According to columnist Adam Goldenberg ("Just ignore Queers Against Israeli Apartheid," *The CJN*, June 12), Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) is "not worth anyone's time" because, according to him, "as threats to the Jewish People go, this one's fairly benign."

What Goldenberg fails to understand is that QuAIA is part of a larger problem for our community.

The Jewish left has become the fifth column in the Israel destruction project, supporting political groups who take part in or ignore the propaganda, because they support gayism or abortion.

To overlook the impact of the broader network of Jew-hate groups on the left, including QuAIA, Goldenberg is saying that the war on his people does not merit any attention. His concerns and sympathies are more with protecting gayism than Judaism. He takes offence with every small indication that some individuals do not wish to follow his way of life, but he is happy to let the haters of Israel go unchallenged and unopposed.

Gary Gerofsky
Dundas, Ont.

Thank you

I know of no better place to send a thank you letter to our community than through the pages of *The CJN*.

I wish to thank my many friends, relatives and former colleagues for the outpouring of affection my family received since the passing of my husband, Dr. Neil Kendal, on May 20.

More than 1,300 people came to the funeral to pay their respects and to support us.

Suddenly losing a husband at the tender age of 54 is heartbreaking and frightening. Without all of the special people in my life, my family would not have been able to move forward. Further, I would never have the strength to support my children without the outpouring of love and generous help I have continued to receive. There is no better tribute I could imagine for my husband than the constant flood of genuine kindness provided to us.

These acts of loving generosity will never be forgotten, and my children and I will try to learn and follow suit when we can help others.

My husband and I had so many plans that will now only live on in my dreams. We had 40 years of life together that will now only live on in my memories.

I pray his passing will be a wake-up call for all the men I love to slow down and enjoy life. Life is sometimes far too short.

Quoting Neil's favourite line, "Don't look back, you can never look back." ■

Susan Kendal and family
Thornhill, Ont.

Letters to the editor are welcomed; they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to the address to cjninfo@gmail.com. *We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*

RABBI-2-RABBI

Judaism can't handle your boredom

But mitzvot and a sense of wonder can provide the antidote by letting us touch the most sublime parts of our being

RABBI YAEL SPLANSKY
HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE, TORONTO

RABBI MARK FISHMAN
CONGREGATION BETH TIKVAH, MONTREAL

Rabbi Splansky: I recently addressed our confirmation class (Grade 10 students). Here's an excerpt.

"I hope that by now you are on to the fact that Judaism is more than Bubbe's chicken soup. More than bagels and Jewish jokes. More than Israel. More than tzedakah More than Holocaust guilt. More than *Mah Nishtanah* at the seder table…

"Be curious. Question, challenge, and doubt what you think you've learned so far. Know that Judaism can take it… What Judaism can't handle is your boredom. Boredom is an insult to the Jewish leaders and scholars, artists and writers, teachers and activists who walked before you. Boredom is an affront to God, if I can be so bold as to say. If you are lazy or passive in your Jewish pursuits, you will find it lacking. But if you are rigorous in your studies, focused in your prayer practice, if you are committed to acts of chesed and passionate about acts of justice, you will never be bored."

Rabbi Fishman, do you think I went too far? Or perhaps not far enough?

Rabbi Fishman: Take a look at the number of hits websites such as bored.com receive daily to realize just how bored so many people (usually young people) are. Why are we so bored? I believe the answer can be found, at least partially, in the quality of our society today. Collectively, we live in a world where our desires and our wishes are just too easily satisfied. People do not long for things, they simple click to get them instantly. If we find our gratification not immediately met, we become bored at having to now wait for satisfactions to be quenched. Hence the immortal words of Mick Jagger: "I can't get no satisfaction."

Rabbi Splansky: King Solomon was bored. According to tradition, he tried women and wine, wealth, wisdom and power, too. All were fleeting. After living the life of privilege, Kohelet complained with a heavy sigh, "There is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

Boredom can trick us into believing there is no meaning, but the majority of the Hebrew Bible stands in opposition to Kohelet and asserts: Yes, there is meaning to be found! How so? Love. Give. Create. Devote. Commit. Affirm. Confirm.

Mitzvot can be a good antidote to boredom. Or do you find they, too, can become routine and boring?

Rabbi Fishman: At the heart of mitzvot is the process of building a relationship with God. If we misunderstand this point and simply think that we are doing good deeds, then eventually the repetitious act will become boring at best, negative and guilt-inducing at worst.

You are right. Mitzvot are the antidote to boredom, because within this understanding, we touch on the most sublime parts of our being – our lives as a process of constant becoming.

Rabbi Splansky: Wonder is perhaps the most accessible antidote to boredom.

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel distinguishes philosophical wonder from spiritual wonder. In his book *I Asked for Wonder*, he explains: "To the prophets, wonder is a form of thinking. It is not the beginning of knowledge, but an act that goes beyond knowledge; it does not come to an end when knowledge is acquired; it is an attitude that never ceases."

In other words, a magic trick is amazing – until we learn how it works. But spiritual wonder can never be diminished. Even when we learn how a particular miracle of nature works, God can never be reduced to a trickster. When we learn the science of evolution, of the orbits, of an atom, they are no less wondrous, sometimes only more so.

Rabbi Fishman: When looking at the sky, a person can witness the spinning of the Earth and the fading of day into night. It can be seen as a sterile process of a repetitious event that happens each evening. It can be described in scientific words and given an almost sterile definition. Alternatively, one can appreciate that he or she is witnessing a sunset and the changing of the sky's colours of blue to red to purple to then seeing the stars. Wonder is ours, if only we are prepared to open our eyes and be amazed. ■

Every winter, we like to go down south. Who needs the cold at our age? Last year, we signed up for the Benjamin's Funeral Service Listings email. It gives us peace of mind to know that if someone in our community dies, we won't miss the chance to send our condolences. Benjamin's updates us every day – a free service that helps us stay in touch.

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From the archives

ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES, BLANKSTEIN FAMILY HERITAGE CENTRE PHOTO

Joseph Barsh with his son Preston Barsh in front of Standard Barber Shop in Toronto, which was owned by Joseph's parents Ben and Gittel (née Stillman). In the background is Goldenberg's Restaurant.

SeeJN | Meeting the president

ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

The new Canadian ambassador to Israel, Vivian Bercovici, presents her credentials to Israeli President Shimon Peres in Jerusalem.

From Yoni's Desk

Bring back our boys

Eight years ago this month, Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit was captured by Hamas. During the five-plus years that followed, Schalit's redemption was the preoccupation of both the State of Israel, and Diapora Judaism. When he returned Oct. 18, 2011, some argued the price of his freedom – 1,027 Palestinian prisoners in exchange – was too high. But everyone was glad he was home.

The memory of Schalit's seizure on a June morning in 2006 is especially poignant in the wake of the kidnapping last Thursday of three Israeli teenagers – Gilad Shaar and Naftali Frenkel, both 16, and Eyal Yifrach, 19, the same age Schalit was when he was captured. There is no more instructive example of how Israel and worldwide Jewry will respond to this sort of terrorist act than the massive military, diplomatic and grassroots campaign to repatriate Schalit. Hopefully, the result will be the same. Ideally, it will come more quickly.

At press time Monday, Shaar, Frenkel and Yifrach, students at a yeshiva high school in Gush Etzion, were still missing. They were last seen late Thursday night near Hebron, at a hitchhiking spot. It remains unclear whether the boys were forcibly taken or tricked into accepting a ride with terrorists in disguise.

There appears to have been some confusion and lack of communication in the hours that followed the kidnapping. Opinions vary as to whether that gave the abductors enough time to smuggle the teens into Gaza. More likely, they are being held in the West Bank.

A massive manhunt has been underway since Friday night. On Saturday, an unnamed senior military official indicated to Israel's Channel 10 that security and intelligence forces had made some headway in the investigation, but warned, "This isn't going to be short."

Tens of thousands have gathered at the Kotel to pray for the release of the three students. Meanwhile, public and private prayer groups are being initiated across the Jewish world, and the hashtag #BringBackOurBoys is gaining steam on social media.

As the search continues, I offer this short prayer: Please, God, bring these three boys home, safe and sound, as quickly as possible. And in the meantime, watch over them and their loved ones.

• • •

June 20 marks the beginning of Pride Week (Israel held its own gay pride parade on June 13). This year, Toronto is hosting WorldPride, a distinction befitting Canada's progressive approach to the LGBTQ community. And yet, some LGBTQ Jews continue to struggle to establish their place in the Canadian Jewish community.

The good news, as reporter Jodie Shupac explains in this week's cover story, is "there appears to be a general shift towards emphasizing practical inclusion of LGBTQ congregants above rigid adherence to biblical text," a development that extends across Judaism, even to modern Orthodoxy. But the fear of isolation remains. As Rabbi Steven Greenberg writes, also in this week's *CJN*, "Right now, LGBTQ teenagers in your community are wondering whether there will be a place for them."

The question remains: Can complete integration ever be achieved? Taken together, Shupac and Greenberg illustrate the great strides Judaism has made toward embracing the LGBTQ community, and the roadblocks that still lie ahead. ■ — YONI

DISAPPEARING MIDEAST CHRISTIANS

Muslim persecution, not Israeli occupation, is to blame

Mike Fegelman

For many foreign news correspondents, the plight and flight of Christians under siege by Muslim extremists in the Middle East doesn't merit mention, and this proverbial elephant in the room continues to be ignored.

The systematic persecution of Christians by their Muslim neighbours and rulers in the Palestinian territories continues to evade the attention and scrutiny of the media year after year.

One would have hoped that with Pope Francis' recent trip to the region, this pressing issue would get the rightful attention it deserves in Canada's news media, but hopes are often dashed by doses of reality. Prominent media outlets such as the *Globe and Mail* failed to address the obvious red herring of the exodus of Christians from the West Bank and Gaza.

Reporting for the *Globe*, Mideast bureau chief Patrick Martin recently wrote a paean titled "Christians in the Middle East: Last one please blow out the candle." In his missive, Martin wrote: "While the Christians of Egypt, Iraq and Syria have reason to fear for their lives, the Christians of Palestine face a different threat. It's not from radical Islam, though that is present to some degree, nor is it as life-threatening. Their discomfort comes from the poor living conditions that result from the Israeli occupation and the territory's poor economy.

"The Israeli occupation of the West Bank has made life hell for many Palestinians, both Muslim and Christian. Israeli settlements have taken up much of the territory and Israeli roads, tunnels and the ugly security barrier that rings the district has cut across olive groves and farmers' fields."

Mike Fegelman

Of course, any credible assessment would require a balanced analysis, which is altogether lacking in this report. Martin altogether ignored Israel's security concerns, disregarded Muslim persecution of Christians, and effectively laid the entire blame at Israel's door. Nor did Martin attribute his statements to an expert source or disclose any facts to back up his assertions that Israel is the one contributing to the malaise of the area's Christians, not radical Islam. This is a classic case of disguising opinion as news.

Times Online columnist Michael Gove once said that "The parlous position of Palestinian Christians, indeed the difficult position of most Christians across the Arab world, is a consequence not of Israeli aggression, but of growing Islamist influence." Indeed, according to a report by the Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs, the Christian population in the West Bank and Gaza is likely to dissipate completely within the next 15 years as a result of increasing Muslim persecution and maltreatment.

Indeed, most West Bank Christians live in cities such as Nablus, Jericho and Ramallah, which are under Palestinian Authority control. Once 15 per cent of the population, Christians now make up less than two per cent. Israel's former ambassador to the United States, Michael Oren, has argued that "when Bethlehem was under Israeli control, the city's Christian population grew by 57 per cent. But under the Palestinian Authority since 1995, those numbers have plummeted. Palestinian gunmen seized Christian homes – compelling Israel to build a protective barrier between them and Jewish neighbourhoods – and then occupied the Church of the Nativity, looting it and using it as a latrine. Today, Christians comprise a mere one-fifth of their holy city's population."

As an *Ottawa Citizen* editorial observed: "Bethlehem, for many, many centuries an entirely Christian town, has now been largely depopulated of Christians. While this is generally explained, in media accounts, as the result of 'harsh Israeli security measures,' other factors may well have contributed to the exodus, such as violent impositions of the Shariah code, the takeover of their church by Palestinian gunmen in 2002, and the hideous desecration that followed, the use of Christian homes by 'militants' of both Fatah and Hamas as cover for the shelling of Jewish targets in south Jerusalem, and sundry murderous attacks on Christians around the town during the Al Aqsa intifadah and since. Against which background, the loss of the pilgrim trade has deprived the dwindling Christian community of their chief source of income. The town is now overwhelmingly Muslim, and may be Christian-free very soon."

Indeed, the U.S. State Department paints a grim picture of Hamas-run Gaza and the Palestinian Authority's administration of the West Bank, citing institutionalized discrimination by Hamas and the Palestinian Authority against the Christian minority under its control. The trend goes the opposite way in Israel, where the Christian community's population has quadrupled since the creation of the modern State of Israel in 1948

In other words, only in Israel is the Middle East Christian community growing. There are roughly 161,000 Christians living in Israel, equalling about two per cent of the population, up from 158,000 in 2012

As Oren observed: "Christians are prominent in all aspects of Israeli life, serving in the Knesset, the Foreign Ministry and on the Supreme Court. They are exempt from military service, but thousands have volunteered and been sworn in on special New Testaments printed in Hebrew. Israeli Arab Christians are on average more affluent than Israeli Jews and better-educated, even scoring higher on their SATs. This does not mean that Israeli Christians do not occasionally encounter intolerance. But in contrast to elsewhere in the Middle East where hatred of Christians is ignored or encouraged, Israel remains committed to its Declaration of Independence pledge to 'ensure the complete equality of all its citizens irrespective of religion.' It guarantees free access to all Christian holy places, which are under the exclusive aegis of Christian clergy. When Muslims tried to erect a mosque near the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth, the Israeli government interceded to preserve the sanctity of the shrine."

Sadly, it seems that some journalists, including the *Globe's* Martin, are more interested in tarring Israel with false libels than drawing attention to the real persecution of Christians in the Middle East. ■

Mike Fegelman is executive director of HonestReporting Canada, a non-profit organization that advocates for fair and accurate Canadian media coverage of Israel and the Middle East (www.HonestReporting.ca)

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 19, 2014

Same-sex marriage and beyond

How inclusive are Canadian shuls?

JODIE SHUPAC
jshupac@thecjn.ca

Had they gotten engaged one year later, Orrin Wolpert and his husband, Mitchell Marcus, would have been married by the rabbi at the downtown Toronto synagogue to which they now belong, the First Narayever Congregation.

The traditional egalitarian synagogue changed its policy on allowing same-sex weddings in June 2009, 10 months after the couple planned their ceremony.

At the time, Wolpert and Marcus were involved with the Narayever, but weren't members, unwilling to belong to a shul that disallowed gay weddings.

They asked a Reform rabbi they both knew to officiate at their August 2009 wedding, and subsequently joined Narayever in accordance with the synagogue's new stance.

"I feel really strongly about the shul," said Wolpert, who comes from a traditional background.

"It's an amazing community of passionate Jews who are very traditional in their practice yet very inclusive in their approach... the membership is very intellectual, very socially progressive... we feel totally included there."

Wolpert worked on the Narayever's board for two years, ran its social action committee, helped draft the language on its website and attends services with his husband and their two-year-old twins about once a month.

The congregation honoured them with an aufruf prior to their wedding, a brit milah for their son and a simchat bat for their daughter.

Wolpert and Marcus' sense of total acceptance by their synagogue is not anomalous, but neither is it the norm.

Over the past decade or so, as Canadian legislation and large swathes of public opinion have come to recognize the rights of homosexual couples to marry and access attendant legal benefits, Canadian synagogues across denominations have been confronted with the expectation to assert where they stand on LGBTQ inclusion.

Created in 1984, Holy Blossom Temple's "rainbow chupah" was inspired by imagery from the story of Noah's Ark. Thirty years later, Holy Blossom's rabbi, Yael Splansky, says the chupah signals to the LGBTQ Jews of Toronto that "Holy Blossom looks forward to providing a warm welcome to them." JODIE SHUPAC PHOTO

Given the traditional Jewish view that homosexual sex is biblically prohibited, the issue continues to be sensitive for many synagogues, and, in some cases, one that requires an overhaul of entrenched values.

And it's not just the question of whether to allow same-sex marriage. Synagogues and rabbis across the board are increasingly establishing – both formally and informally – positions on their overall approaches to including LGBTQ congregants, in matters such as ritual participation, educational programming and use of language.

While levels of acceptance tend to vary widely among synagogues and rabbis – even within the bounds of a given denomination – there appears to be a general shift toward emphasizing practical inclusion of LGBTQ congregants above rigid adherence to biblical text.

Reform, Reconstructionist and progressive, non-denominational synagogues across North America have generally embraced LGBTQ members as equal participants, both by officiating at same-sex weddings and offering full involvement in ritual and executive proceedings.

In 1999, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the principal association of Reform rabbis in Canada and the United States, green-lighted same-sex marriages, but left the decision whether to officiate at them up to individual rabbis.

For some Reform leaders, then, change has been more gradual.

This past April, Rabbi Yael Splansky became senior rabbi at Toronto's Reform Holy Blossom Temple and the first rabbi in the synagogue's history to perform same-sex weddings.

"For years here [as an associate or assistant rabbi], I wouldn't, out of respect for my senior colleagues, officiate at same-sex weddings."

Rabbi Splansky said Holy Blossom has long supported the LGBTQ community in other ways. The shul is an ongoing sponsor of Jewish LGBTQ group Kulanu's Pride Parade float and it supported gay Jewish men afflicted by AIDS in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The drawing of lines around "acceptable" and "unacceptable" forms of inclusion continues to be quite common among synagogues.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

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Unity government is a contradiction that won't last

Paul Michaels

In the immediate aftermath of the formation June 2 of the Fatah-Hamas "unity" government – consisting of non-political "technocrats" – there have been both predictable and unpredictable reactions.

Predictably, the international community raced to embrace the new government, despite Hamas' refusal to endorse the 2006 conditions set by the Quartet (the European Union, UN, United States and Russia): recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence, and accept PLO-Israel agreements. The rationale for the embrace, including by the United States (which most expected would take a wait-and-see approach) is that since none of the new government's 17 cabinet ministers is a Hamas member and Hamas "merely" supports the government externally, the Quartet conditions on Hamas' inclusion have not been violated.

Furthermore, PA President Mahmoud Abbas claims the unity government itself accepts the Quartet conditions, although there's no formal policy statement to that effect. Yet, Hamas, while supporting the government (appointing four ministers), rejects the conditions Abbas says the government has agreed to.

To Israeli and other observers, this is simply an effort to square a circle.

Unpredictably, it was the *New York Times*, usually critical of Israel, which, in its June 6 editorial "Israeli-Palestinian Collision Course," said that "some skepticism" expressed by the Israeli administration is warranted: "Many experts say that if there is ever to be an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, admittedly a distant dream at this point, the Palestinians must be united. But the United States has to be careful to somehow distinguish between its support for the new government and an endorsement of Hamas and its violent, hateful behaviour. To have some hope of doing that, the United States and Europe must continue to insist that Mr. Abbas stick to his promises and not allow Hamas to get the upper hand."

It's precisely the prospect of Hamas' getting the upper hand that worries Israeli analysts. In a June 4 *Times of Israel* article, Ehud Ya'ari warned that instead of being interested in healing the rift with Fatah dating from Hamas' violent overthrow of Fatah in Gaza in 2007 – as of this writing the groups continue to bicker, even arresting each other's members – what Hamas really wants is to transplant "the Hezbollah model from Lebanon to Palestine."

While Abbas is nominally in charge of Gaza (Hamas' government there having been dissolved), Hamas has said it will refuse to disband its 20,000-strong armed forces and security personnel or let them come under PA rule. Nor will it stop producing missiles, estimated now at 10,000.

Even if Hamas doesn't win presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled to take place in six months (though well-known Palestinian journalist Khaled Abu Toameh already predicts victory for Hamas), it could end up in a position to destabilize the West Bank. Like Hezbollah, Hamas would have political clout as well as an independent military or "resistance" force – just as, in Lebanon, Hezbollah forces are separate from, and far stronger than, the Lebanese army.

No wonder dovish Israeli President Shimon Peres, on his way June 8 with Abbas to meet Pope Francis at the Vatican for a "peace prayer," warned the Fatah-Hamas partnership is a "contradiction that won't last." "One is in favour of terror and one is against terror. That won't work… You can't have water and fire in the same glass."

Several Israel commentators have argued that Israel, once again, lost the PR battle to Abbas by immediately condemning the unity government instead of accepting it and subsequently shifting the focus to Hamas, insisting it reform and comply with Quartet conditions. David Horovitz, founding editor of *The Times of Israel*, however, asked the following: "Rather than rushing to embrace a Palestinian government in which an unreformed Hamas is a central component, what was to stop the U.S. conditioning its acceptance on a reform of Hamas?" Good question. ■

Paul Michaels is the director of research and media relations for CIJA.

We can all take part in the mitzvah of challah

Rabbi Sean Gorman

In my trips up and down the Bathurst Street corridor in Toronto, I see numerous signs for programs in the Jewish community. One that caught my eye was a program to get 1,000 women to bake challah on May 14. Two thoughts went through my mind. The first was, "Great idea!" The second was, "Am I allowed to take part?" I bake challah, and I am a man.

When the Gorman family first came to Toronto nine years ago, I was amazed at the number of people who baked challah. As I think further about those people, the majority are men. They include rabbis, professors, doctors and lawyers. They take their challah personally.

These bakers use a variety of ingredients. Many use sugar. I use honey. One colleague uses multigrain flour. I use a combination of white and white whole wheat flours (you read that correctly) only available in the United States. Bakers put poppy seeds, sesame seeds or streusel on top. I also use sunflower seeds. During the summer, I use ice cream sprinkles.

When my younger son was three, he called a round pull-apart challah a cupcake hallah. Since then, we always have a cupcake challah on the table. When our eldest was a toddler, he pilfered two still-warm challot from the counter. I found him feasting on the kitchen floor. It's a family joke that I can braid a challah, but I cannot braid my daughter's hair.

Once, after a busy week, my spouse, Rabbi Jennifer Gorman, bought challah. We have wonderful bakeries in Toronto, but my kids were emphatically displeased. Nothing beats homemade.

The spiritual dimension to baking challah also has practical side. The challah gets a wonderful bottom when baked on a stone. I bake with honey. Honey yields softer bread. I learned from Jennifer to measure the oil, then use the same measuring cup for the honey. If you like raisins (I prefer dates), soaking them in rum will help them remain sweeter.

As with most mitzvot, men and women can perform this one on equal terms. It is a delight to bake with Jennifer. We celebrate Shabbat as a family. We eat together. We daven together. We play games and go for walks together. It's a joy to prepare for Shabbat together. Gentlemen, I urge you to take part in this mitzvah. This privilege is not limited to our spouses. We should not wait until signs appear along Bathurst to assume our rightful place at the breadboard.

There is rabbinic debate about when Shabbat begins. Is it sundown? Is it 18 minutes prior? Is it in the liturgy? The answer to all those questions is a resounding "no." Shabbat begins about 10 minutes after you put the challah in the oven, when the smell of baking bread drifts through the house.

Jennifer and I would like to invite all of you to our home for challah. That is, alas, difficult. Instead, I would like to share my favourite recipe with you. ■

Rabbi Sean Gorman is rabbi at The Pride of Israel Synagogue in Toronto

- ❑ 1-1/2 cups water
- ❑ 3 eggs
- ❑ 2-1/2 tsp. salt
- ❑ 1/2 cup oil
- ❑ 1/2 cup honey
- ❑ 5-2/3 cups flour
- ❑ 1 tbsp. gluten (adds protein and texture)
- ❑ 3-1/2 tsp. yeast

Put ingredients into a bread machine on the dough cycle.

Sprinkle corn meal on a baking sheet. Shape the challah the way you like it and place on the baking sheet. If preferred, add raisins. Crack an egg into a cup. Add a sprinkle of salt. Scramble. Paint the hallah.

Let rise until doubled in size (75 minutes or so). Preheat oven to 350. Paint the bread with the egg wash again. Sprinkle seeds. Bake for 28-30 minutes, turning halfway. When it sounds hollow on the bottom, it is finished. The space between the braids should look like light brown toast.

For a nice change, dip in olive oil and za'atar instead of salt.

Taking the good of the whole into account

Rabbi Jay Kelman

The Supreme Court of Canada, in a unanimous decision no less, recently upheld the right of a law firm to force a partner to retire at age 65. Yet had this partner been an employee, he would not have been forced to retire solely because of age. The court argued that employees are in a vulnerable position and in need of protection, while partners, as owners, need no protection from themselves. It seems that such an argument has no basis in Jewish law, and if anything, the reverse would be true.

Jewish law goes to great lengths to protect and ensure proper treatment of an employee. Giving somebody busy work that serves little benefit to the firm runs afoul of the Torah's prohibition of *avodat parech*, demeaning work. Not coincidentally, this is the exact term used by the Torah in describing the work the Egyptians forced our ancestors to perform. While not all agree, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein ruled that an employer may not fire an adequate worker in order to replace him with an exceptional one. At the same time, a worker can generally quit with little if any notice. This right ensures that a worker not feel enslaved to their job.

Of course, one who signs a contract is expected to carry out its terms. As such, a recent court ruling disallowing a senior vice-president at BlackBerry from joining Apple would seem to be in consonance with Jewish law. In that case, the employee in question had signed a contract agreeing to give six months notice before quitting. While no one can be forced to work against their will (with the possible exception of essential workers, such as doctors and teachers), one would have to pay damages resulting from breach of contract. And even when there are no damages, moral censure is in order.

Yet when all is said and done, employers are entitled to run their companies in the way they see fit. While replacing workers may present a problem, letting them go in order to increase profits or due to increased use of technology is less so. At its core, giving an employee a job is an act of charity – the highest level of charity one can perform – enabling those hired to be self-sufficient. The fact this charitable act may benefit the donor even more so has little bearing on the fact the employer is providing a means to make a living. But charity has its limits. While there may be no reason to do so, and while one should definitely take employee needs into account, an employer is within his or her rights to have a policy that staff must retire at a certain age.

However, forcing a partner to retire is a different matter. The court actually left open the possibility that a junior partner with little or no control might be protected as an employee, but not a partner who exercised control. It's precisely because a partner exercises control and thereby demonstrates ownership that forcing him to retire would seem problematic. Yet at the same time, the partners must act in the best interest of the partnership and not in their own personal interests, a point noted by the court. And it might very well be that a partnership is better off by retiring people at a certain age – or perhaps by using some other criteria – to allow new talent to flourish. A majority vote of the partners – with each partner's vote count tied to their ownership share – to this effect would bind all.

While the above may seem relevant only to partners and employees – a large group no doubt – it has relevance for all. A democracy is a very large partnership where all members have an equal share. As such when voting – and while Ontario's provincial election has passed, Toronto's municipal one has not – each partner must vote in the best interests of the partnership as a whole. ■

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Rabbi Jay Kelman CPA, CA teaches at TanenbaumCHAT and is founding director of Torah in Motion.

The nature of trust

Norma Baumel Joseph

Mohamed Hersi warned a supposed friend: "You have to think… trust nobody." Fool that he is, he should have taken his own advice. The friend he spoke to was an undercover Toronto police officer. Hersi was arrested and found guilty of trying to join Al Shabab, a Somalia-based terrorist organization. His advice strikes at the heart of how we live our lives.

Do we walk around suspicious of everyone, afraid to put our trust or faith in any human being? Or do we choose to live our lives as though the world is a safe place and innocently rely on humanity?

In the world we live in, the decision is never so stark. We might wisely choose not to trust politicians, but how much must we trust doctors? We have a responsibility to exercise a level of judgment in our dealings with people. Some will disappoint, others will appear to exemplify trustful standards.

My concern is not with particular individuals and incidents, but rather with an approach to life. The famous Shakespearean quote can be applied: To be or not to be in a trusting relationship with the world around us. Do we look at life as a positive experience, enabling an open approach or do we withdraw from life, expecting constant frustrations?

What does trusting entail? I do not think this approach is simply about a naïve or unquestioning stance. It is also not necessarily based on experience. Rather it entails a choice to take a positive stance, to believe the sun will come up tomorrow, so to speak.

I trust the world will go on and I will continue to be in it as an active presence. I know at some point I will not be here and that I will lose loved ones, but I cannot – or choose not to – conduct my life on that basis. For sanity's sake, I will suspend my suspicious nature. I want to accept individuals as basically good, even though I read about all the evil in the world. I could focus on distrust, but it gets me nowhere.

So even though I have reasons to doubt and to see the evil of this world, I choose to have a basic level of confidence. I want to trust people and see their actions in a positive light.

This disposition may run against logic and caution, but it puts me in a good space vis-a-vis life. Surely this attitude requires some level of restraint and action. One cannot blithely proceed without some trepidation. Circumspection is a prerequisite. One must be careful in whom to place trust. Look to deeds. Learn from experience.

But our own actions must also be placed on the agenda. In order to trust, we must act in a trustworthy manner. That involves levels of personal integrity and faithfulness, but also performances displaying conviction.

In this regard, the story of Miriam is instructive. More than Moses, his sister displays levels of reliability and loyalty. She stands by, watching the baby Moses, sure that she can help, that something good will be possible. Unlike Hagar who cries in Genesis, certain that the end has come for her child, Miriam behaves with assurance.

But her most significant act comes after the crossing of the sea. She leads the women in song and dance, praising God. Where did the women get their drums? Midrash tells us that the righteous women trusted in God's deliverance and were prepared for thankfulness. When escaping slavery they thought to take their instruments with them. Not only did they believe, they also acted on their belief. Our tradition gives us many examples of those who, like Nachshon, jump into the water, accepting and trusting God's guidance.

Can we live like that, carrying our timbrels ready to say thank you? Maybe we have to. ■

Norma Baumel Joseph is a professor in the departmentof religion and associate director of the Azrieli Institute of Israel studies at Concordia University.

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Cisco hopes for peace dividend in PA investment

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Back when he was in the Senate, Jerry Grafstein made the case that the best way to lay the groundwork for peace in the Middle East was to foster economic development in the region. When people have a stake in peace, they are less likely to opt for war, he suggested.

It turns out he wasn't the only one thinking along those lines. In Israel itself, the local branch of high-tech giant Cisco has embarked on a project designed to help Palestinian society foster development of a middle class. As part of the company's corporate social responsibility mandate, it's investing $15 million "for economic development in the Palestinian territories," said Gai Hetzroni, senior manager of corporate affairs for Cisco in Israel.

Hetzroni was in Toronto last week along with a 25-person delegation of Palestinian businesspeople to meet with Canadian companies that have an interest in their services or products. The Palestinian firms represented the agribusiness, tourism, information communication and technology (ICT) sectors. The trade mission was sponsored by the Canadian-funded Export Development Project, the Palestinian Trade Centre and the Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development.

The Palestinian firms attended the Canadian Arab Chamber of Commerce trade show at the International Centre in Mississauga, held business-to-business meetings and laid the groundwork for future co-operation.

For his part, Hetzroni said Cisco first targeted the Palestinian tech sector in 2009, outsourcing several projects to firms in that region. "We're trying to build the ecosystem that partially exists in the Palestinian territories," he said.

Gai Hetzroni

Cisco also invested in improving "the soft skills" that are part of the international high tech milieu, from the language employed in doing business, to the transparent way companies relate to their clients, to managing people and managing programs. The company's Israeli employees conduct monthly seminars for Palestinians in Ramallah or in a location on the Dead Sea, Hetzroni said.

To date, there has been plenty of interaction between Cisco's Israeli employees and staff from Palestinian companies, which have benefited from Cisco's outsourcing.

"On a personal level, people don't have any issues. When you talk about politics, it can become problematic," he said.

Hetzroni, a software developer who also managed Cisco's R & D, said he's found a number of similarities between Israeli and Palestinian personnel. "They laugh at the same jokes, their body language is similar and it's easier to understand each other than it is people from India or China," he said.

Palestinians "say they need to learn from Israel about building high tech. Many Palestinians have friends in the industry in Israel, and they feel it is wise to do business in Israel," Hetzroni said.

The Israeli government has facilitated the exchange by granting permits, allowing a fairly free movement of people between Cisco's office in Netanya and Ramallah in the Palestinian territories.

Hetzroni sees lots of upside in the endeavour. "If the middle class in a good, strong economic shape, then that reduces the level of hate," he said. "I do it because I believe that providing jobs, a healthy economic environment will reduce tension and help us live in quiet.

"The politicians are not fast enough in the process, so the private sector is following a bottom-up approach. If the business connections are strong enough, the politicians will have to follow," he said.

One of the Palestinians in the trade mission agrees. East Jerusalem-born Kais Salhut said "economic partnerships are going to be a major contributor to peace.

"It serves a humanistic goal, and being a Palestinian, also a nationalistic goal," said Salhut, CEO of iConnect Tech, a company with offices in Chicago and Ramallah.

The bottom line, is that it's also good for business, he added.

• • •

Palestinian Arabs are not the only people benefiting from Cisco's corporate social responsibility policy.

"Cisco has a program to integrate Israeli Arabs into high-tech industry," Hetzroni said. "And Cisco supports a program to integrate the ultra-Orthodox into the high tech world.

"The biggest problem with the Israeli economy is that 30 per cent of the population – 20 per cent Arab and 10 per cent Orthodox – are not part of it," he said.

The unemployment rates in both communities are high, while the education level "is not up to that of the Jewish community."

Ma'antech, a program founded by Cisco and outgoing President Shimon Peres, is aimed at the Israeli Arab community.

It draws on the support of a coalition of blue chip high tech firms "to make efforts to hire Israeli Arabs," Hetzroni said.

Kamatech is a similar program geared to the ultra-Orthodox, likewise supported by a group of Israel-based high tech companies. Kamatech provides diversity workshops to the firms to explain the cultural differences they might expect when interacting with ultra-Orthodox Jews. It also runs programs to upgrade the educational standards of Orthodox employees in core subjects, such as math and English.

"We're trying to bridge the gap," Hetzroni said.

Cisco's Networking Academy prepares young members of the Orthodox community to become PC technicians or network administrators, he added.

The company expects to enrol around 400 young people in the program in the next two years. ■

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 19, 2014

Baycrest launches new online brain cognition test

JODIE SHUPAC
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Barb Dixon has a thing for tests.

Having spent 14 years testing software as director of a company's software quality assurance, the 71-year-old retiree and resident of an adult lifestyle community in Freelton, Ont., says "test-taking is very close to my heart – it's something I love to do."

When the Canadian Association for Retired Persons (CARP) put out a call about a year ago for volunteers to participate in a trial for a new online brain test being developed by Cogniciti Inc. – a company owned by Baycrest Health Sciences and MaRS Discovery District whose mission is to bring "brain health solutions to people" Dixon didn't hesitate to sign up.

She was one of 300 adults ages 50 to 79 who Cogniciti recruited to try out versions of the test over the course of a year.

The online self-assessment tool, which launched May 26, is free and can be accessed by anyone at www.cogniciti.com. It's designed for people 50 to 79 who want to see whether their memory and attention capacities fall within a normal range for their age, education level and general state of health.

Though the test can't replace a doctor's clinical assessment, Angela Troyer, a Baycrest neuropsychologist and director of the centre's memory and aging program, along with Baycrest senior scientist Brian Levine created it to be a cognitive check-up, a first step for people concerned about changes to their memory or cognition.

Memory and attention can be affected by normal aging processes and by brain disease, explained Cogniciti president Michael Meagher. The test helps people determine if their cognitive functions are "normal" or if they indicate a problem – this could mean a neurological disease or something much more benign.

Troyer explained: "If somebody has a problem on this test, we don't know if it's a neurological disease. It could be, but it could also be because of things like depression, anxiety or medication side effects. Or maybe they didn't understand the instructions or got distracted."

Test-takers receive an overall score of their cognitive health, and can save their results if they want to track their performance over time. If someone scores poorly, he or she is encouraged to re-take the test after a week and if the score remains low, to follow up with a doctor.

Angela Troyer

Despite her confidence, Dixon said she found the test, which contains various cognitive activities and includes assessments for immediate and delayed memory, to be quite difficult.

"There was one part I found easy, because it played into the logic of a computer programmer, which I once was, but there was a part where we had to match different faces and names and that was quite challenging."

Dixon scored within the normal range, which was comforting, but not a surprise.

"Prior to the test I hadn't had any worries. There's no Alzheimer's or dementia in my family. My sisters are in their 80s and are still sharp."

Her husband, 72, refuses to take the test.

"He's that kind of person. He says, 'If I have something, I don't want to know.' And I think there's a big segment of the population who feels that way… I found that when I sent the test to friends."

But according to Troyer, "there's clearly an appetite for this kind of tool… A lot of people don't know if what they experience cognitively is normal aging or not."

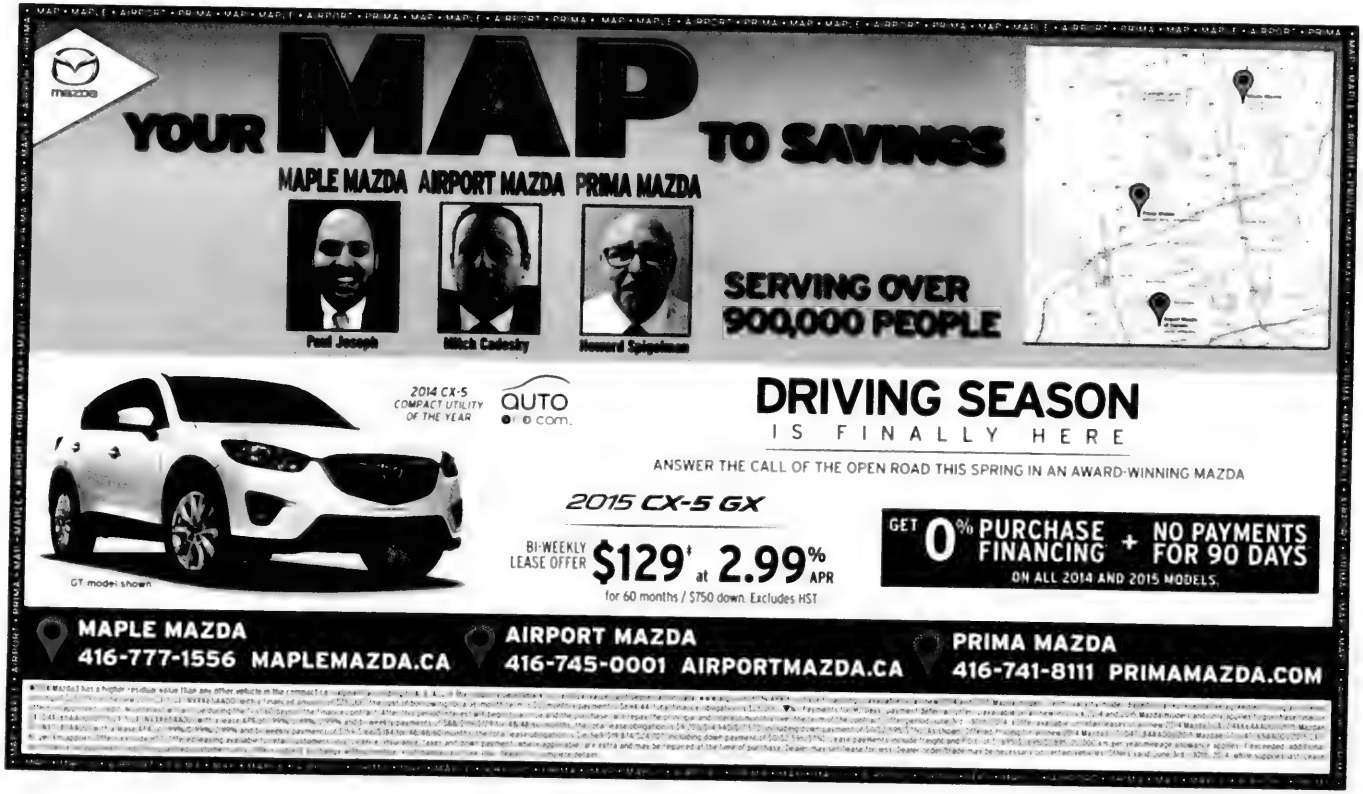
Two weeks after its launch, about 30,000 users have taken it.

She said it took three years to develop the test, which her team adapted from research and existing clinical tests, taking care to account for individual variability.

"We spent a lot of time making sure the test wasn't too easy or too hard, to cover that whole span of what's normal."

She stressed that a low score does not necessarily signify dementia. Some causes of memory decline are treatable, such as thyroid disease, mental health issues or vitamin deficiency.

"It's not a diagnostic tool. We say, 'If you have an unusual score, get it checked [with a doctor].'" ■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Mount Sinai partners in $10M Crohn's study

RON CSILLAG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Dr. Ken Croitoru

A Toronto doctor buffeted by $10 million in new research funding still has a daunting task. Before a cure for Crohn's disease can be found, its cause must be determined.

One of several inflammatory bowel diseases, Crohn's affects some 130,000 Canadians. According to Mount Sinai Hospital, Canada has one of the world's highest rates of Crohn's. More alarmingly, the number of new cases of the disease in Canadian children has almost doubled since 1995.

Recent research shows that Ashkenazi Jews are four times more likely to get it than any other group.

Mount Sinai is partnering with nine hospitals and health centres in Israel to conduct the largest study of its kind to identify the cause of Crohn's disease, a chronic illness of the digestive system. It's part of the Genetics, Environmental, Microbial (GEM) Project, founded at the hospital in 2008.

In April, the project announced $10 million in new funding – $6 million from the U.S. Helmsley Charitable Trust and $4 million from Crohn's and Colitis Canada and Mount Sinai Hospital. It was billed as the largest single donation in Canadian history dedicated to Crohn's research.

There are lots of treatments for Crohn's, "but none of them offer a cure. They just control the disease to varying degrees," the study's lead researcher, Dr. Ken Croitoru, a gastroenterologist at Mount Sinai, told *The CJN* in an interview. "This study is designed to try and identify what the trigger is for the disease, or maybe even the cause, because once you understand that, you actually have the opportunity to redesign treatments that might lead to a cure."

One current theory about a cause is genetic predisposition "that somehow influences the way the body's immune system interacts with something in the environment," Croitoru said. However, "it's not clear whether it's the air we breathe, the water we drink, or specific bacteria."

Diet, he said, is a consideration but only as part of one's environment. "Diet may have ingredients that might trigger the inflammation or make it worse. We have just been unable to identify specific components of diet that might be responsible."

Crohn's usually affects the intestines, which become inflamed and thick, but it can occur anywhere in the digestive tract. The bodies of sufferers overreact to normal bacteria in the intestines. Typical ages of onset are 15 to 35, but it can occur at any age. Its main symptoms are fatigue, loss of appetite, abdominal cramps, fever, weight loss, and others.

Treatments include use of steroids but only in the short term due to their side effects. Over the past decade, a new class of drugs called biologics hold promise because they are engineered to block a certain protein thought to play an important role in inflammation.

"The clinical data show this can be very effective in some patients," Croitoru said.

In 2012, researchers, led by Inga Peter, a geneticist at Mount Sinai, discovered five new genetic mutations that make Ashkenazi Jews four times more likely than other populations to develop Crohn's disease.

Croitoru said it's been observed that Crohn's is more prevalent in developed countries in northern latitudes.

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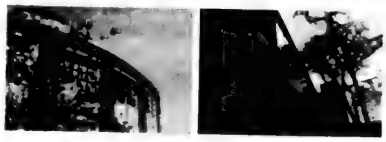

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Study to measure environmental, genetic factors

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Despite the partnership with Israeli centres, his team has no hard numbers on the incidence of Crohn's in Israel, though he feels it's probably similar to western rates despite its southern location, but perhaps offset by its high Ashkenazi population.

Anecdotally, it appears that Sephardi Jews in Israel have a lower incidence of Crohn's than their Ashkenazi cousins, "but when they come to Canada, they get the Canadian incidence," he explained, underscoring a possible environmental cause.

The study will measure both environmental and genetic factors. To do that, researchers will look at healthy relatives – siblings or children – of people living with Crohn's. To date, the GEM project has recruited more than 2,800 participants, with another 2,200 to be found in the United Kingdom, France and the United States.

"What we want to do is to study someone who's going to develop Crohn's before we actually know they're going to develop it," Croitoru said. He said the likelihood of a healthy first-degree relative of a Crohn's subject developing the disease is about 0.3 per cent per year.

So with 5,000 subjects over a five- or six-year period, researchers hope to find about 70 new cases of Crohn's, he explained. "That's the number we're really after. We think that with 70 such patients, we may be able to detect a signal that tells us why they're different than those of the same cohort who don't develop Crohn's disease."

Although outside the scope of the GEM study, researchers at the Meir Medical Center and Sackler Faculty of Medicine in Israel have found that cannabis can help relieve symptoms of Crohn's disease. ■

Dr. Laffa to open franchises

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Dr. Laffa, the popular kosher restaurant that opened on Magnetic Drive in North York about four years ago, is looking to expand by selling franchises throughout the Greater Toronto Area.

Richard Rabkin, managing director of the Kashruth Council of Canada, which supervises Dr. Laffa under its COR hechsher, said this may be the first time in Canada that a kosher establishment has sold franchises.

"We don't keep records of that, but we are not aware of anyone else who has done it," Rabkin said.

Dr. Laffa owner Sasi Haba said he's currently in talks to have two new franchises – including one deep in Toronto's downtown core – open later this year.

Haba has another company-owned takeout outlet at Bathurst Street and Lawrence Avenue.

He said it's still too early to share any details about the new franchises.

"There are a lot of changes... We hope that in the next two or three weeks, everything will be sure. We have some offers around the city, plus one downtown, and we'd be happy to open the first express kosher place there," Haba said. ■

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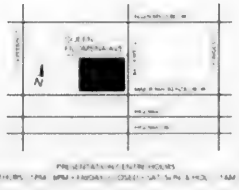

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COMMENTARY

Ontario election result holds a message for Jews

Martin Goldfarb

At first glance, it might seem the recently contested election in Ontario revealed few, if any, implications for the province's Jewish community. Such thinking fails to account for the important story this election has illuminated.

To the great surprise of many pollsters, the election was a major Liberal success, especially in urban ridings. Clearly, a significant number of Jews voted Liberal – even in ridings where the Progressive Conservatives ran Jewish candidates. The take-away is that many Jews voted Liberal because they believed a government led by Premier Kathleen Wynne was the more stable and fair-minded choice.

The PCs and soon-to-be-former leader Tim Hudak ran a campaign of confrontation and conflict that promised unrest – especially in the public service sector, where Hudak surprisingly promised to slash 100,000 jobs. In my experience, Jewish voters tend to get twitchy and anxious in times of political uncertainty, and that's why the Jewish community also chose to vote against Hudak.

Like all communities, Jews vote based on our own self-interests. Certainly we care about Israel, but our personal interests run deep, too. The Jewish community understands that liberal democracy is necessary, but not entirely sufficient. As a general rule, Jewish communities thrive when paired with non-dogmatic and open governments.

This election proves that the Jewish community cares about issues like maintaining a successful public school system, the environment, the charter, the Supreme Court, social welfare, justice and safety. Jews care about these issues because they influence their daily lives. They are committed to a fair and just society, because they know it is only in such a society that they will continue to thrive. It's in their best interest to support political parties that adhere to these values.

The Jewish community cares about helping more people live better – and to that end, in my mind, the recent election in Ontario sends a clear message to Prime Minister Stephen Harper: Jews want their government to be pro-Israel, but not to the exclusion of a fair-minded, non-confrontational method of governing. Harper seems to adhere to a more aggressive manner of governing – that much has been evident in his approach to the census, the Supreme Court, citizenship, a women's right to choose and other social welfare issues. For some, these and similar actions are not in keeping with Jewish values.

> *Many Jews voted Liberal because they believed a government led by Premier Kathleen Wynne was the more stable and fair-minded choice.*

Most Jews express unequivocal support for the State of Israel, but this election suggests many of them could reject a party that comes across as overly truculent. Why? Because we understand instinctively that such governments can be bad for Jews. A fair society is what we want.

Harper and his Conservatives must learn from this election – and so should the Jewish community. Ontarian, and all Canadian, Jews need to feel that the Jewish organizations that represent them in Canada are responding to issues *within* Canada – issues that affect them each and every day. Politically speaking, this means groups like the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) need to be sensitive to issues here in Canada that Jews care about. This is not to say that these sorts of groups can't focus on Israel, only that they cannot do so exclusively (or at least close to it). The strength of Jewish groups, including CIJA, will come from meeting the needs of their community.

All people, Jews included, tend to vote in their own self-interest. In the case of the Jewish community, this means we lean toward fair-minded and kinder governments. Issues directly affecting Ontarian Jewish voters dominated this election – the parties' respective positions on Israel were of much less concern, and anti-Semitism fears were even further behind. As a result, it appears Ontario's Jews chose to vote for a government dominated by Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals. ■

Martin Goldfarb is chair of Goldfarb Intelligence Marketing, a Toronto-based public opinion research and marketing firm. He served as the official pollster to the Liberal Party of Canada from 1973 to 1992.

Calgary student resigns Hillel post over Israel views

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Jake Birrell

University of Calgary student Kate Jacobson, who was voted in as Calgary Hillel's incoming Israel chair in April, resigned from her post last week following a backlash from Hillel members who opposed comments she made online that were critical of Israel.

One comment, posted on a Facebook thread last January, said, "The Israeli government has massacred children, and if we're not willing to change – to give democratic and human rights to all peoples living in the area of Israel-Palestine, then I think we should question whether that's a state we want the word 'Jewish' attached to."

Another was posted later that month on the Calgary United With Israel (CUWI) website after the group criticized the University of Calgary's independent student newspaper, the *Gauntlet*, for running a piece that advocated violence against Israelis.

In her defence of the newspaper, for which she is a contributor, Jacobson wrote, "I'm a Labour Zionist and a state that has murdered Palestinian children (and they have, children have died) is not a state I necessarily want the name of my people attached to."

When Jake Birrell, a 20-year-old sociology student at Mount Royal University and a Hillel member, learned about Jacobson's comments, he circulated an email to the media and the Jewish community calling for her resignation.

Birrell wrote that he was "disgusted that a person with views such as her own is representing me and other Zionist Jews in our community."

Birrell, who is also a CUWI member, threatened to drop out as a member of Calgary Hillel if Jacobson didn't resign from her post as Hillel's Israel chair.

"It bothers me, because she's representing a Jewish-based organization," Birrell told *The CJN*.

"I wouldn't be as upset if she wasn't in a leadership position and didn't have people looking to her for guidance when it comes to the topic of Israel. I found it completely disgusting that she's on the Israel board, but she slams Israel. It doesn't make any sense to me."

Jacobson, an 18-year-old international relations student, said that despite her decision to step down, she stands by her political views.

"My view on Israel isn't any more right or wrong, or more Jewish or less Jewish than anyone else's view on Israel. This is just how I personally and politically feel about the State of Israel. I have a more left-wing opinion, which is fine. CUWI has, on a political spectrum, a more right-wing opinion, and that's fine, too. Their opinion isn't more or less valid than mine," she said.

> *I found it completely disgusting that she's on the Israel board but she slams Israel*

Jacobson added that she will remain on the Hillel executive board, "focusing on other work in the community."

"I believe that what I said doesn't convey the full depth of my political beliefs. I have a right to my political beliefs and I should be able to stay on the board and represent Jewish students and the Jewish community," she said.

Calgary Hillel director Kira Blumer said Jacobson's decision to resign from the post was the right thing to do, because "she appears to be subscribing to a particular political belief and if she is representing all Jewish students on campus, it's going to be hard for her to do her job effectively."

A statement from Calgary Hillel said the student group "embraces diversity and encourages debate among our students, which is integral to the development of a strong Zionist identity. We will continue to strive to represent students from a broad set of backgrounds and personal beliefs." ■

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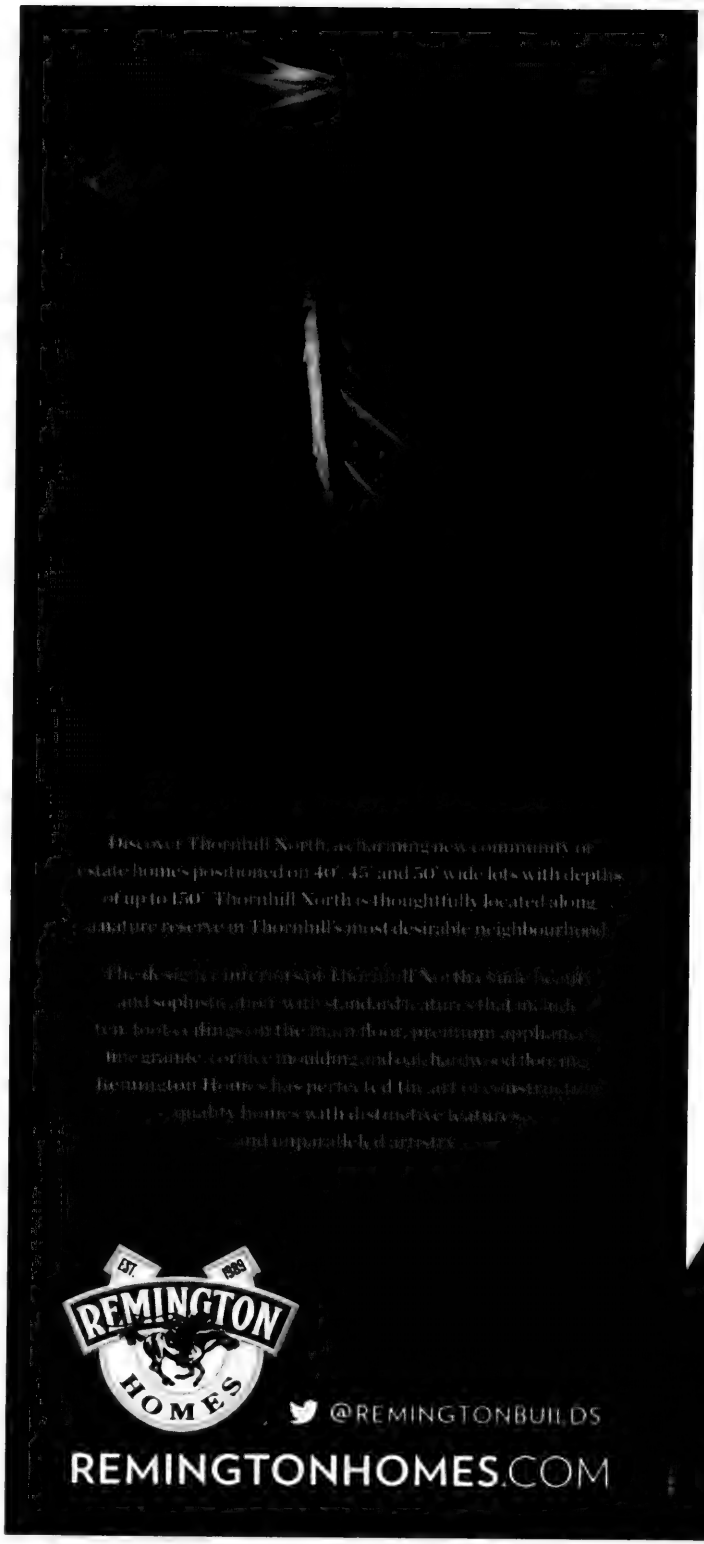
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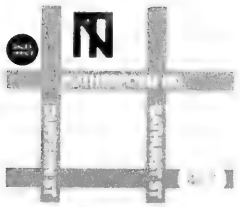

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Pro golfer Pressel talks pucks with best of them

PAUL LUNGEN
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Morgan Pressel hails from the Sunshine State, where golf, tennis, football, baseball and basketball – maybe even jai alai – are front runners on the sports pages, well ahead of that import from the north, hockey. But she can talk pucks with the best of them.

Ask her to name her favourite players on her favourite team, the Detroit Red Wings, and Steve Yzerman and Nicklas Lidstrom top her list. But it's hard to ignore Pavel Datsyuk from the current edition of the Red Wings, she said.

Pretty impressive, but can she recall the third-pairing left-shooting defenceman for the Wings from those cup-winning teams? Better not to ask; she might actually know the answer.

So how does a Florida-based professional golfer, in 37th place in the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings, come to be a fan of the Red Wings and hockey?

Her family hails from the Detroit area and as a young girl she'd spent a lot of summers there. She played quite a few rounds of golf with Kirk Maltby, a Red Wing from the glory era.

Her love of hockey is right there on her LPGA bio and Pressel is all smiles describing her younger days on the course with Maltby. There seems to be an affinity between hockey players and golf, she said.

Pressel was playing hockey trivia with *The CJN* following the second round of the Manulife Financial LPGA Classic at the Grey Silo Golf Course in Waterloo. She plays LPGA events pretty much every week, though her performance at Grey Silo had to be disappointing.

At the end of the weekend, Pressel had shot six under par – well back of winner Inbee Park, who scorched Grey Silo with a four round total of 23 under par, including a 10-under 61 in her final round.

Pressel finished the tournament tied for 45th, earning $5,921. Last year in the same event she shot 13 under par and finished tied in 26th place, earning twice as much.

To date this year, Pressel has had two top 10 finishes and she's won north of $205,000. Last year, she finished in the top 10 three times and earned more than $500,000, bringing her career earnings to more than $5 million.

Not bad at all, but you've got to go all the way back to 2007 for the highlight of her career, a victory in the Kraft Nabisco Championship, when at 18 she became the youngest player ever to win an LPGA major tournament.

Morgan Pressel

When you're that good, that young, it attracts attention and it no doubt helped her launch a charity golf event near and dear to her heart.

Having lost her mother, Kathryn Krickstein Pressel, to breast cancer when she was 15, Pressel now hosts the annual Morgan & Friends Fight Cancer charity tournament. Her golfing buddies, Paula Creamer, Lexi Thompson and Stacy Lewis, among others, participate, lending it credibility and glamour. This past January, the event raised $600,000 for breast cancer treatment.

While her trip to southern Ontario might be considered professionally disappointing, Pressel's got her share of fans north of the border. As she makes her way from fairway to green, a small but loyal group follows her around. It makes coming to Waterloo a little more special, she said.

"I like playing in Canada," she said. "It's a great time of year to be playing here."

Besides the group that follows her in Waterloo, she has found that young women and girls also look up to her.

"I try to be a good role model," she said. "I think I've grown up a lot being out here."

Turning pro at a young age, she never had the opportunity to play in the Maccabiah Games. "I wish I could have," she said.

In December 2011 she participated in a mission to Israel sponsored by the Jewish National Fund (JNF), accompanied by her sister and grandmother. "We toured, we had so much fun."

"The trip was great." ■

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Tribute Chair Dr. Gerald Halbert, Honoree Dr. Anthony Lang and Tribute Committee Vice-Chair and Event Donor Rick Goldberg at *A Tribute to Tony*

On May 14, 2014, Toronto General & Western Hospital Foundation and the Canadian Friends of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem came together to celebrate the distinguished career and accomplishments of Dr. Anthony Lang – a world leader in the treatment and research of movement disorders and Parkinson's disease at the Krembil Neuroscience Centre, Toronto Western Hospital.

The gala event, *A Tribute to Tony*, was a spectacular success, raising over $900,000, thanks to a wonderful response from our donor community. Funds will support a collaboration between The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Edmond J. Safra Program in Parkinson's Disease at the Krembil Neuroscience Centre.

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Hollande's stand against anti-Semitism impresses delegation

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Canadian participants in a meeting last week with French President Francois Hollande came away impressed with the French leader's sincerity and determination to address the terrorism and anti-Semitism that has France's Jews on edge.

Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, and MP and former justice minister Irwin Cotler said Hollande was empathetic to the concerns of the country's Jews and was forthright in discussing the threat posed by French-born jihadists returning from Syria.

"Hollande spoke about the barbaric attack on the Jewish museum in Belgium" and about the protection of Jewish schools, synagogues and other community buildings, Cotler said in a telephone interview from Jerusalem.

Cotler and Benlolo were part of a 20-member delegation assembled by the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center, which met with Hollande prior to officially inaugurating a historic exhibition at the UNESCO's Paris offices. The exhibit, mounted by historian Robert Wistrich, is titled, *People, Book, Land: The 3,500 Year Relationship of the Jewish People to the Holy Land.*

Canadian MP Irwin Cotler and senior officials of the Simon Wiesenthal Center were at the Elysee Palace in Paris last week to meet French President Francois Hollande. Seen here, from left, are Rabbi Marvin Hier, Rabbi Meyer May, Rabbi Abraham Cooper, Cotler and Avi Benlolo.

The exhibit was sponsored by the Simon Wiesenthal Center along with the governments of Canada, Israel, the United States and Montenegro, and launched last week after pressure from Arab countries forced its cancellation in January.

Benlolo said the reception by French officials and Hollande at the Élysée Palace was warm and welcoming. The delegates were anxious to express their concerns about the attack on the Jewish Museum in Brussels by a French gunman, who killed four people.

"Hollande believes there are more than 1,000 French nationals who went to fight in Syria and joined radical groups," Benlolo recounted. Three hundred remain. Many came back and he's concerned about their radicalization and if they will take action against the Jewish community.

Mehdi Nemmouche, the man accused in the Brussels attack, is believed to have spent 2013 fighting with Islamic radicals in Syria.

Hollande assured the delegates that he is working closely with intelligence and security services to track returning jihadists and to ensure the safety of the country's Jews.

"I believe Hollande was very sincere," Benlolo said.

"The Jewish community received substantial grants to secure their schools and synagogues," Benlolo added.

Cotler, who has visited France three times in the last six months, said "people spoke well of Hollande and his genuineness, his commitment to combat anti-Semitism, to bring perpetrators of anti-Semitism to justice and his appreciation of jihadist acts as threatening to French Jews and France alike. He took the position that it's a joint struggle, a part of the protection of French democracy and all of France."

During the meeting, Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean and founder of the Wiesenthal Center, told the president "we meet at a pivotal time in history, when the Jewish community and France's democratic

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto
A Great SCHOOL

MAZAL TOV TO OUR GRADUATES OF 2014/5774

Abecassis, Myriam	מרים	Coles, Matthew James	מתיו	Hummel, Rachel Taylor	חנה פעל רחל	Narbonne, Macie Anna	חנה
Adivi, Miriam Michelle	מרים	Daniel, Eden Malka	עדן מלכה	Hirsch, Rebecca Shira	רבקה שירה	Offenheim, Rachel Emily	רחל אסתר
Albo, Daniel Ian	דניאל איאן	Einhorn, Joshua Nathan	נתנאל יהושע	Hoffman, Solomon Ruben	שלמה יהודי	Okavon, Natanel Victor	נתנאל ויקטור
Alon, Ophek	אופק	Einhorn, Noah Meir	מנחם מנדל	Horwitz, Joshua Aaron	יהושע אהרון	Oren, Ariel	אריאל
Alter, Benjamin David	בנימין דוב	Elmalech, Shirelle	שיראל	Jacobs, Marci	מלכה בלימה	Osler, Perry Tristan	פיטר צפר
Amar, Jonathan Daniel Isaac	יונתן דניאל יצחק	Elmalech, Jonathan Solomon	יהונתן שלמה	Jeffet, Danielle Anna	דניאל חנה	Ozsel, Samuel Isaac	שמואל יצחק
Ansel, Jordana Chana	יהודה חנה	Falkenstein, Sara	שי	Klein, Yael Tova	יעל טובה	Parker, Rachel Gila	רחל גילה
Artman, Aaron Joseph	אהרון יוסף	Fishbaum, Julie	יהודית יעל	Klotz, Jeremy Robert	ראובן	Pasoff, David Aaron	דוד אהרון
Attas, Cedric Elishah	אלישע	Fortinsky, Zahava Leah	יהבה לאה	Koenigsberg, Alex Cole	ישראל נפתלי	Polwoda, Jessica Rachel	רבקה רחל
Baer, Jenna	נעמי	Gencher, Matthew Evan	מתן חיים	Landau, Heath	חיה	Rakhman, Julia	מיכל
Bell, Talia Zahava	טליה יהבה	Gerlock, Samuel Shane	שמעון שניה	Lazarev, Shahar	שחר	Raphael, Sari Eliana	שרה אליאנה
Ben Aharon, Mia	מיה	Gold, Jordan Jacob	יהודה יעקב	Lebowitz, Danielle Golda	דניאלה גולדה	Ressin, Anna Rebecca	אנה רבקה
Benitah, Vanessa Michal	מיכל	Goldschmidt, Tzvi	צבי	Lev, Laura	רחל	Rochwerg, Ron	רון צבי
Ben-Itzhak, Maor Shalom	מאור שלום	Grant-Assor, Lauren Eden	לורן עדן	Lederman, Shirli Bat	שירלי בת	Rosenzweig, Yonatan Menachem Dodi	יונתן מנחם דודי
Berger, Eitan Tzvi	איתן צבי	Guerevich, Yaron	ירון	Maged, Benjamin Abraham	אברהם	Saskin-Lewittes, Tamar Rachel	תמר רחל
Bongard, Matthew Ryan	מתתיהו רחמן	Gurshomov, Revital	רויטל	Malek, Avelet Joelle	אילת יהודית	Sekler, Carmel	כרמל
Bromberg, Serena	רינה	Halberstadt, Amitai Jeremy	אמיתי ירמיהו	Malka, Roni	רוני	Shapiro, Aryeom	נעמי שיינה תמרת
Brooks, Arielle Shayna	אריאל שיינה	Hames, Miva Rachel	מיה רחל רפורה	Mann, Rachel Keren	רחל קרן	Sharer, Rebecca Shayne	רבקה שני
Brown, Zachary Zalman	זכריה זלמן	Hart, Ciera Hadas	חדס	Matchen, Raphael	רפאל מרדכי	Shechtman, Adam	אדם
Cohen, Lauren Felicia	לאה יחיפה	Havek, Sevan Hannah	שוון חנה	Mercer, Efrem Israel Mordechai	אפרים ישראל מרדכי	Shegal, Moshe	משה
Cohen, Talia Shayna	טליה שיינה	Hensler, Noah	נח יעקב	Mochon, David	חיו	Shields, Madison Ilana	אילנה עפה
Cohn, Naomi Lara	נעמי לאורא	Hermant, Hadas Eve	חדס חוה	Moodrow, Noah Daniel	נח דניאל	Shnitzer, Hila Deena	הילה דינה
		Hermant, Vered Adina	ורד עדינה	Moyal, Joshua Solomon	יהושע שלמה	Shorfer, Samuel Liam	לוים יחזקאל
		Hirsch, Rebecca Shira	רבקה שירה	Nahoum, Cayley	סיון רחל	Silverman, Julia Amanda	שירה נעמי
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		Horwitz, Joshua Aaron	יהושע אהרון	Oren, Ariel	אריאל	Smilovici, Rachel	רחל
		Jacobs, Marci	מלכה בלימה	Osler, Perry Tristan	פיטר צפר	Somogyi, Joelle Roen	יעל חני
		Jeffet, Danielle Anna	דניאל חנה	Ozsel, Samuel Isaac	שמואל יצחק	Starkman, Danielle Beth	דניאלה בלימה
		Klein, Yael Tova	יעל טובה	Parker, Rachel Gila	רחל גילה	Steinfeld, Steven Mitchel	שמואל
		Klotz, Jeremy Robert	ראובן	Pasoff, David Aaron	דוד אהרון	Stockhamer, Brooke Rebecca	ברכה רבקה
		Koenigsberg, Alex Cole	ישראל נפתלי	Polwoda, Jessica Rachel	רבקה רחל	Stresnfield, Jordyn	ירדין רפורה
		Landau, Heath	חיה	Rakhman, Julia	מיכל	Strago, Aoch	יוחן
		Lazarev, Shahar	שחר	Raphael, Sari Eliana	שרה אליאנה	Susman, David Phillip	דוב פנחס
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		Lev, Laura	רחל	Rochwerg, Ron	רון צבי	Traubici, Benjamin Yair	בנימין יאיר
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		Maged, Benjamin Abraham	אברהם	Saskin-Lewittes, Tamar Rachel	תמר רחל	Veiner, Kayla Nicole	קיילה ניקול
		Malek, Avelet Joelle	אילת יהודית	Sekler, Carmel	כרמל	Weinberger, Jordana Sarah	יהודית שרה
		Malka, Roni	רוני	Shapiro, Aryeom	נעמי שיינה תמרת	Weinreich, Eli Joshua Jacob	אליהו יהושע יעקב
		Mann, Rachel Keren	רחל קרן	Sharer, Rebecca Shayne	רבקה שני	Widrich, Talia Judith	טליה יהודית
		Matchen, Raphael	רפאל מרדכי	Shechtman, Adam	אדם	Wise, Samuel Meyer	שמואל מאיר
		Mercer, Efrem Israel Mordechai	אפרים ישראל מרדכי	Shegal, Moshe	משה	Wynn, Daniel Nikolas	דוד ניקולס
		Mochon, David	חיו	Shields, Madison Ilana	אילנה עפה	Yakobi, Tzipi Yosef	ציפי יוסף
		Moodrow, Noah Daniel	נח דניאל	Shnitzer, Hila Deena	הילה דינה	Zepp, Lilly Samara	לאה שמרה
		Moyal, Joshua Solomon	יהושע שלמה	Shorfer, Samuel Liam	לוים יחזקאל	Zwiebel, Joshua Jack	יהושע יעקב
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POSTMEDIA

Jewish leaders reflect on death of Shoah denier Keegstra

SHERI SHEFA
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Holocaust denier Jim Keegstra, the first Canadian convicted under Canada's hate propaganda laws, was an "unrepentant anti-Semite" whose prosecution helped reveal a dark side of Canadian society, Jewish leaders said after his death became public last week.

The former Eckville, Alta., high school teacher, who made international headlines in 1983 when it came to light he was teaching his students that the Holocaust was a hoax promoted by Jews, died June 2 at age of 80. The *Red Deer Advocate* reported the news on June 12.

B'nai Brith Canada's national legal counsel, Marvin Kurz, who worked on the case under Mark Sandler, the Ontario legal counsel for the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada, said Keegstra was the first "nationally known" Holocaust denier.

Len Rudner, director of community relations and outreach at the the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), said that "for more than a decade, Keegstra used his position as teacher to poison the minds of his students, teaching them that Jews were treacherous, subversive, and even child-killers.

"He taught his students that Jews were inherently evil and that they created the Holocaust in order to gain sympathy – and expected them to reflect these views in their classroom assignments," Rudner told *The CJN* in a statement.

Bernie Farber, former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, CIJA's predecessor, said Keegstra was "an unrepentant anti-Semite… who held a mirror to the consciousness of Canadians. He did us a favour by exposing a pretty ugly underbelly of Canada while concomitantly helping to solidify the fence of protection for vulnerable minorities, Canada's anti-hate laws. It was the Keegstra case that ended up before the Supreme Court of Canada, and in the end the decision to validate our anti-hate laws as constitutional."

In 1984, Keegstra was fired from teaching and charged with "wilfully promoting hatred against an identifiable group" under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Represented by Doug Christie, an attorney who would go on to defend many of Canada's other high-profile Holocaust deniers and neo-Nazis, Keegstra was convicted and given a fine of $5,000, which was later reduced to $3,000.

Len Rudner

> *He taught his students that Jews were inherently evil.*

Following a number of appeals and trials that lasted seven years and eventually brought the case to the Supreme Court of Canada, Keegstra received a one-year suspended sentence, one year of probation, and community service.

Kurz said that in the years since his conviction, Canadian society has come a long way in combating anti-Semitism.

"The kinds of things that Keegstra said are no longer, in Canada, said in polite company. You would no longer admit to this kind of thing, and there are very few people who do," Kurz said.

"His generation of anti-Semites and neo-Nazis are dying out and it highlights the movement toward a different kind of anti-Semitism that is more aimed at Israel and tying Jews to Israel's alleged criminality."

Rudner added that, "it is fitting that [Keegstra's] name will be remembered not for the noxious beliefs he espoused, but for the verification, from our highest court, that truly hateful speech is unworthy of our protection," Rudner said. ■

UJA Jewish Toronto Contingent Marches in NYC's 50th Annual Celebrate Israel Parade

By Daniel Horowitz

For the first time ever, a contingent from Jewish Toronto, organized by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, joined more than 35,000 passionate supporters of the Jewish State in a march up Fifth Avenue in Manhattan on Sunday, June 1, in the 50th annual Celebrate Israel Parade.

Among those who took part in the Parade, which drew thousands of onlookers, were New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, Israeli diplomats and members of the Knesset, Israel's parliament.

Jewish Toronto's inaugural appearance at the Israel Day Parade – chaired by Judy Bronfman – was the brainchild of Andrea Cohen and David Matlow, the Chairs of United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto's Campaign 2015. Matlow and Cohen suggested that Toronto have a presence in order to reach out to the many Torontonians living in New York, especially college students and young professionals.

Also, having a UJA Toronto contingent in the parade was a great way for Jewish Toronto to show its ongoing support for the people of Israel, especially in the wake of the May 25 UJA Walk with Israel, which attracted 20,000 participants.

Bronfman was accompanied in the parade by her children Alexandra and Andrew.

"We were completely overwhelmed by the response to our group in New York," said Bronfman. "People asked for our Canadian flags so they could wave them. Luckily, we brought extras. It was clear to us that Canada's support for Israel is well known in New York. While we were receiving the cheers they were really directed at all Canadian supporters of Israel."

UJA's Jewish Toronto contingent at New York City's Celebrate Israel Parade was led by Co-Chair of UJA's Campaign 2015, David Matlow (centre in baseball hat).

On registration, each participant received a Walk with Israel T shirt, Canadian and Israeli flags and a souvenir key chain. The key chain was generously donated by Danny Levinson of Lambertville, New Jersey and was sold by the East Side Torah Center as a fundraiser in the 1940s. The letter that accompanied the key chain, signed by Judy Bronfman, David and Andrea and Alison Himel, Chair of UJA Women's Philanthropy, stated the following:

"The East Side Torah Center was founded in 1890. In the 1940s, its fundraising campaign involved the sale of this keychain. In 2014, both the methods of fundraising and the needs of the Jewish community are much more complex. However, the objective of helping our fellow Jews in need remains the same. In Toronto, United Jewish Appeal is the organization that has the scope and breadth to help every person who is in need. UJA also has the capacity to fashion creative solutions to difficult social problems, as well as to conceive and implement unique experiences such as the one you are about to enjoy."

And enjoy, they did.

"Being involved in the UJA Campaign is not only meaningful, it is also fun," said Cohen. "We knew that the parade would be a great experience for the participants. Also, it shows that we in Toronto are part of the wider group known as the Jewish people. Not only does UJA raise money that transforms the lives of many members of the Jewish people, it marches in solidarity with it. That is what is significant about Toronto being in the parade. We are one with all people who care about the State of Israel and with helping our fellow Jews."

"For me, the highlight of the Parade was turning the corner from 54th Street where we waited, on to Fifth Avenue," said Matlow, whose New York-based daughter Naomi was a valuable volunteer in making Toronto's appearance a reality. "I looked north up the street and I saw group after group as far as you could see, all waving Israeli flags to the sound of Israeli music. Sometimes supporting Israel feels like a lonely business. Last month in Toronto at the Walk with Israel and this week in New York I saw how many people care about our homeland. It is inspiring to know that so many others care. Such support makes Israel strong, and we all need a strong Israel."

Judy Bronfman (centre), the Chair of the Toronto contingent at the June 1 Celebrate Israel Parade in New York City, was joined by her children Alex and Andrew.

Panel probes whether Canadian Jews follow U.S. trends

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In a survey of American Jews conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2013, 94 per cent said they were proud to be Jewish and 75 per cent said they had "a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people."

At the same time, 22 per cent identified themselves as "Jews of no religion," a self identification that was more pronounced among younger people than older ones.

Pew published *A Portrait of Jewish Americans* in October 2013 based on telephone interviews with 3,475 American Jews earlier that year.

In a phone interview from Washington, Greg Smith, director of U.S. religion surveys in the religion and public policy project of the Pew Research Center, stressed that the data reflect the American situation, not necessarily the one in Canada.

"Jews overwhelmingly told us they were proud to be Jews and they have a strong connection to the Jewish community," Smith said.

The extent to which the U.S. experience is relevant to Canadian Jewry's future will be the subject of a panel discussion at the Elka Klein Memorial Lecture at Congregation Darchei Noam on June 23.

The panelists set to tackle the issues are Frank Bialystok, an instructor at the Centre for Canadian Studies at the University of Toronto; Bernie Farber, former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress; and Rabbi Aaron Levy, founder of Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism. Smith will present the Pew's findings.

Meanwhile, communal organizations in Canada have commissioned their own reports, profiling the Jewish community nationally and on a city-by-city basis.

Local federations will release their community reports in the next few months, while UIA Canada will publish its national findings in the near future, said Linda Kislowicz, CEO of UIA Federations Canada.

The reports will look at demographic trends, population growth and shrinkage, the aging population, Jewish poverty, immigration and other factors "that are useful for people planning services," she said.

Kislowicz said the Canadian data "will show some similarity [to that reported by Pew], but not at the same level or at the same pace."

Some of the U.S. data no doubt sent chills down the spines of community leaders and others concerned about the future of the Jewish people. Younger people were more likely than older ones to identify themselves as Jews of no religion. They are also less connected to Jewish community organizations, more likely to intermarry and less likely to raise their children as Jewish, compared to previous generations.

Among "millenials," those born after 1980, those identifying themselves as having no religion is as high as one-third, substantially more than Gen-Xers and far greater than found with Baby Boomers and the so-called Greatest Generation (born 1914-1927), said Smith.

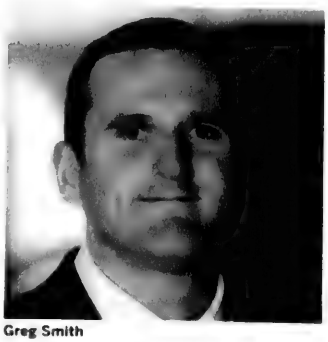
So what does it mean for Jews?

"On the one hand," said Smith, "we see that Jews of no religion are less engaged in the Jewish community" with lower rates of synagogue membership. They are less likely to donate to Jewish charities or support Jewish organizations. They're also more likely to intermarry and less likely to raise their children as Jewish.

On the other hand, Smith pointed out, the children of intermarried couples are more likely to identify as Jewish today than they would have been a generation ago.

"Among all U.S. adults with one Jewish parent [who are] older than 65, just 25 per cent are Jews." By contrast, 60 per cent of those under 30, with one Jewish parent today, are Jewish today, he said.

Defining what it means to be Jewish may well be a factor in the findings. "When we ask Jews what it means to them to be Jewish, religious aspects are not at the top of the list," Smith said.



Greg Smith

Pew's survey also notes that "Jews tend to be less religious than the U.S. public as a whole." Many say they can be Jewish even if they don't believe in God or if they work on the Sabbath. Leading an ethical and moral life was a common response to questions about their Jewish identity, he added.

Kislowicz said the Pew report was "conceptually relevant" to those studying the Canadian scene, but the two communities are not entirely alike.

"I think Canada is different. Our history is different, our affiliation is still more traditional," she said.

Whether Canada is trending along the same lines as Jews in the United States "is still a debate," she added. ■

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French Jews, democratic values 'under attack'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

values are under unprecedented attack by the forces of extremism both from the far right and from extreme Islamist purveyors of religious intolerance and murder."

He applauded Hollande and his predecessor, president Nicolas Sarkozy, for denouncing an earlier terrorist attack in Toulouse that claimed the life of a rabbi and four children. But he lamented the failure of Muslim religious leaders to condemn the attacks.

Meanwhile, Cotler was effusive in his description of the Wistrich exhibit, which he called "historic."

"It is a remarkable dramatization of history and heritage, of people, book, land, memory and state," he said.

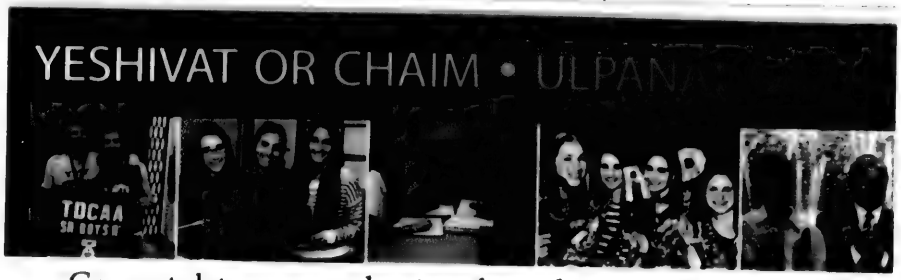
In 24 panels, it traces Jewish history back to the patriarch Abraham, through Moses, King David and all the way through to the struggle for Soviet Jewry, the birth of Zionism and the reconstitution of the State of Israel.

The exhibit, which will run for nine days, had been scheduled to open last January. Pressure from 22 Arab countries, who argued it would prejudice the peace process, prompted UNESCO to cancel it.

Responding to that decision Rabbi Hier stated, "It is ironic, that while the Arab League was trying to kill this exhibition and all the attention was focused on Paris, the UN headquarters in New York is hosting an exhibit entitled, *Palestine*, based entirely on the Arab narrative, which was not criticized as an interference with Secretary [John] Kerry's mission."

Following public criticism from Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird and U.S envoy Samantha Power, the exhibit was rescheduled to open last week, but with the name "Israel" removed from the title and replaced with "Holy Land." UNESCO also required the removal of an image of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which had been part of the initial exhibit prepared by Wistrich, a professor of European and Jewish history at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. ■

French President Francois Hollande, at right centre, meets with a delegation from the Simon Wiesenthal Center.



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SCIENCES

Binyamin Fingerote, Kobi Nauenberg, Jeremy Piwko, Yoav Shumacher and Eli Werner placed fourth at Weizmann Institute's International Safe Competition

CHESED

Lauren Bergman received the Vaughan [illegible] Avi Kohanzadeh [illegible]

Yakira Begun
Lauren Bergman
Esther Blinick
Aviva Doctor
Leora Eisenstat
Baila Glogauer
Rachel Gold
Debra Green
Kayla Halberstadt
Rachel Hershkop
Yardena Katz
Rebecca Lax
Jaclyn Lyons

Noa Mecica
Sarena Meyer
Sarah Posluns
Miriam Rosenberg
Yael Saban
Talia Schwartz
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Gideon Turk
Eli Werner

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25 out of 25 graduates will be attending seminary in Israel next year and were accepted to university programs at either McGill, McMaster, Ryerson, Stern College for Women, University of Toronto, Western or York

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JGH opposed to dying with dignity law

JANICE ARNOLD
jarnold@cjnews.ca

Montreal's Jewish General Hospital (JGH) "will explore all possibilities to opt out" of Bill 52, Quebec's end-of-life-care law which was adopted by the National Assembly on June 5, said executive director Dr. Lawrence Rosenberg.

He told a JGH-sponsored symposium on the so-called dying with dignity legislation held June 12 that the hospital will take an official position and "I can assure you it will not be apolitical."

Rosenberg blasted the government for apparently choosing the "expediency" of allowing medical intervention that results in death over addressing deficiencies in the health-care system, such as inadequate palliative care.

The legislation allows incurably ill adults capable of consent to request that a doctor administer a lethal injection.

"We do not give life, and we have no right to take life," Rosenberg affirmed. "The National Assembly has no bona fides to determine what is high-quality medical care and what is not."

He said he is not aware of a single doctor at the JGH who will comply with the law.

That position is at odds with the Quebec Medical Association which played a significant role in drawing up the bill and "welcomed" its passage. The law is not expected to be implemented for 18 months.

Rosenberg, a McGill University professor who was previously the JGH chief of surgical services, said the decision as to whether its doctors may assist gravely ill adults in ending their lives should be solely within the jurisdiction of health-care institutions' boards.

This "draconian" legislation sanctions "active euthanasia," he said. "It begs the question: Is this euthanasia law a pretext to provide an alternative solution to a problem [lack of proper end-of-life care] that either [the government] can't afford, doesn't know how or want to deal with?"

He noted that health care accounts for over half of Quebec's budget and the greatest costs are incurred at the end of life.

The vote was 94-22, with all the nays coming from Liberals. The sole Jewish MNA, Liberal David Birnbaum of D'Arcy McGee, voted for it with "a certain level of reticence and anxiety."

"I understand that there is no perfect answer morally speaking, nor an answer that eliminates completely the risk of unforeseen consequences," Birnbaum said in the legislature.

The day-long symposium for health-care professionals, lawyers and other interested parties began with the JGH's director of pastoral services, Rabbi Raphael Afilalo, saying that "thousands of people in Quebec will end up being killed every year," if the experience of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, where doctor-assisted suicide has been legal for more than a decade, is a guide.

The numbers of people dying this way has doubled over that period in Belgium to almost 4,200, he said. ■

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 19, 2014

Shuls grapple with same-sex unions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

While gay marriage itself remains a sticking point for a lot of rabbis, there are many who nonetheless view the welcoming of LGBTQ Jews as both an ethical and practical imperative.

"If someone with an interest, commitment or curiosity about Jewish life knocks on our doors, we've got to let them in," Rabbi Splansky said.

"Some [rabbis] do it with full pleasure while others do it grudgingly, but everyone's got to do it... just looking at the numbers, we can't afford to lose anybody."

Her comment is in reference to the 2013 Pew report on American Jewry, a survey that indicates rising rates of secularism and intermarriage.

Perhaps for this reason as well, the modern Orthodox world has also seen a shift toward shelving views on homosexuality as sin and ushering LGBTQ Jews into the fold.

In 2010, close to 200 Orthodox rabbis signed a statement of principles regarding homosexual Jews.

Drafted by Rabbi Nathaniel Helfgot, a member of one of the largest organizations of Orthodox rabbis, the Rabbinical Council of America, it affirms that although same-sex unions are "antithetical to Jewish law," individuals with "homosexual inclinations should be treated with the care and concern appropriate to all human beings," including acceptance in synagogues.

It further acknowledges that homosexual Jews in the Orthodox community often face serious emotional and psychological challenges and that, especially among teenagers, the risk of suicide is greater.

Rabbi Aaron Levy, a modern Orthodox rabbi at Makom, a non-denominational, grassroots Jewish community congregation in downtown Toronto, won't perform gay marriages, but he said Makom is "a very queer-inclusive community," with a number of active LGBTQ members.

Last summer, Makom held a Shabbaton to honour the upcoming same-sex wedding of two members, which included an aufruf and learnings on queer issues and Judaism.

"In terms of where I am vis-a-vis my own approach to traditional Jewish law and my understanding of where the Orthodox community is in grappling with LGBTQ issues... I don't think I can perform a gay wedding," said Rabbi Levy.

Still, he noted, "Nature provides a minority of people whose sexuality is different, and Halachah has to, at some point, come up with a credible response... Even if communities aren't thinking as much about queer issues on the level of possible reinterpretations of Halachah, they're thinking about the social dynamic of becoming more welcoming."

Boston-based Rabbi Steve Greenberg has garnered recognition for being the only known, openly gay Orthodox rabbi, and one willing to officiate at same-sex Jewish weddings.

Author of *Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition* and executive director of Eshel, an American organization that functions as a national support network for LGBTQ Orthodox Jews who wish to remain committed to tradition, he has performed a same-sex, halachically observant wedding for a Toronto couple and will officiate at another one in Toronto in August.

"I do it because, being gay myself, I feel a responsibility for young people, that there should be some way to commit in a fashion that's real and that your family can celebrate," Rabbi Greenberg explained.

"But I think it's a mistake to presently expect [other] Orthodox rabbis to do this... it's premature to expect the Orthodox world to sanctify or celebrate what most in it still believe is a prohibition... I think it's sufficient to have Orthodox rabbis support a same-sex couple's Jewish life once they're married."

He emphasized that Orthodox rabbis have a responsibility not to dismiss LGBTQ individuals by telling them to pursue a heterosexual marriage or to opt for a life of celibacy.

Such responses, can, particularly for young people, cause extremely harmful outcomes, such as depression, self-harm or substance abuse, he said.

"This cannot be a process by which we throw arguments at each other. We need to take a human read of what it is to discover oneself to be gay, lesbian or transsexual and figure out if the community can find ways – either within halachic norms or within a sense of responsibility to shift them – to make way for people who aren't choosing their sexual or gender identity, but living it."

Rabbi Greenberg suggests that Orthodox rabbis can instead say things such as, "God is merciful. There are 612 mitzvot you can still try to do to the best of your ability... join my shul."

Aviva Goldberg is the ritual leader at Shir Libeynu, an unaffiliated, inclusive congregation that formed in the late 1990s in Toronto as a place for LGBTQ Jews to worship comfortably.

Raised in a modern Orthodox home, she turned to Reconstructionist Judaism as an adult and came out as a lesbian at age 38 (she's now 65).

Goldberg recalled how, two decades ago, even at a Reconstructionist synagogue, she and her partner weren't allowed to come up for an aliyah together to mark their anniversary.

While great strides have been made, she said, the community still has a way to go overall.

"Toronto's Jewish community is generally very conservative... I've heard some rabbis say, 'Anyone can come to our shul.' Sure, but do you talk about issues affecting LGBTQ members? Do any of your liturgies relate to them? Do you perform same-sex weddings? The answer is, of course, no. It's more like, 'You can come to our shul, but leave your life behind.'"

For some LGBTQ Jews, this perception sparks a rejection of "mainstream" synagogues in favour of wholly inclusive, non-denominational congregations like Shir Libeynu.

For others, like Wolpert, a more traditional synagogue that accepts LGBTQ congregants, but doesn't strictly define itself as a "gay shul" holds greater appeal.

"My gay identity is only one part of me. The rest of me also has to be satisfied by my religious home." ■

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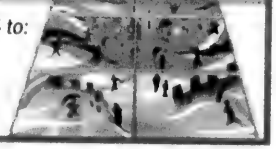


NEXT WEEK
How Conservative synagogues are approaching LGBTQ inclusion.

LGBTQ Jews need a place in community

RABBI STEVEN GREENBERG
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

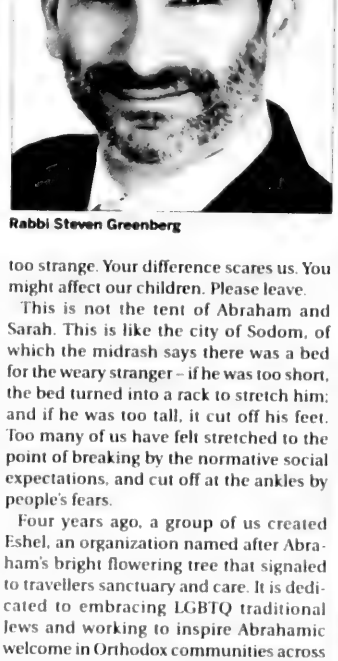
In 1952, my dad was a popular senior on his high school football team and my mother was a recent immigrant from war-torn France. It was my father's protective instinct that caused him to intervene one day to help a newly arrived French girl navigate their American high school, an instinct, among others, that eventually led to their marriage.

My mother was among 1,300 children who survived World War II in the French countryside, where, at great risk to themselves, three non-Jewish French families opened their doors to my mother after her father had been taken to Auschwitz and her mother could no longer protect her.

Over the years, it has become clear to me that the value of *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming the stranger) is an existential one for me personally. But I have also come to understand that it is an orchestrating value of Jewish identity.

Among all the many duties of kindness that Maimonides records, he deemed welcoming the stranger the most important. Such was the nature, he claims, of Abraham and Sarah, whose commitment to opening doors to the vulnerable stranger is embedded in our cultural DNA. Maimonides teaches that expressions of kindness – like dowering a poor bride, visiting the sick and burying the dead – are fulfilments of "love thy neighbor as thyself."

While in many liberal environments, acceptance is common, in Orthodox communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people are terrified to speak honestly about their feelings. Many have been told by their religious authorities: you are not wanted. You cannot have aliyot, or lead services, or bring your children to the youth program, or join formally, or in some cases even walk through the door. You are just too strange. Your difference scares us. You might affect our children. Please leave.



Rabbi Steven Greenberg

This is not the tent of Abraham and Sarah. This is like the city of Sodom, of which the midrash says there was a bed for the weary stranger – if he was too short, the bed turned into a rack to stretch him; and if he was too tall, it cut off his feet. Too many of us have felt stretched to the point of breaking by the normative social expectations, and cut off at the ankles by people's fears.

Four years ago, a group of us created Eshel, an organization named after Abraham's bright flowering tree that signaled to travellers sanctuary and care. It is dedicated to embracing LGBTQ traditional Jews and working to inspire Abrahamic welcome in Orthodox communities across North America.

In the past several years, a new empathy has begun to transform Orthodox communities. Slowly and steadily, Orthodox LGBTQ individuals in their teens and 20s are choosing to be upfront and honest with their families and communities about their sexual orientation and gender expression. In so doing, they are changing the face of Orthodox Judaism. Some of us are finding committed partnerships, making families and seeking Orthodox communities where we can be members. This is challenging religious leaders and their congregations to navigate halachic considerations and group fears that can make any difference feel too risky to embrace.

My great-grandmother on my father's side did just that in the 1940s. Hannah Greenberg and Grandpa Max left Romania in 1923, settled first in Winnipeg and then moved to McKees Rocks, Pa., where they joined the little Orthodox shul. A few years later, Hannah joined the board and, as the family story goes, when a poor man, Mr. Rive, reputed to be a Communist, could not pay his dues the board decided to bar him from attendance on the High Holidays. Hannah would have none of it. "If there's no room for Mr. Rive," she announced, "then there's no room for me."

The next week she founded what was lovingly called "The Rebel Shul." She bought two Torahs with her own money and ran the minyan for seven years, baking rugelach and serving matches herring to lure the men to shul on time.

These are the values that mark true faith and piety. No one is locked out, stripped of membership. No one is asked to leave due to irrational fear, political liability or social discomfort.

Right now, LGBTQ teenagers in your community are wondering whether there will be a place for them. There are presently a few – at most a dozen – Orthodox shuls in the world where LGBTQ people and their families have been fully embraced. In the next five years, Eshel is aiming to help generate 36 "Rebel Shuls" across North America where young LGBTQ Orthodox Jews can imagine a good life lived in community. It may not be easy, but the ethic of fearless welcome that made heaven swoon for Abraham and Sarah is also life saving for the vulnerable, and defining of our very nature. ■

Rabbi Steven Greenberg is author of Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition, and the founder and co-director of Eshel, an Orthodox LGBT community support and education organization. Steve lives with his partner Steven Goldstein and his daughter Amalia in Boston.

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WHY THE SYSTEM WORKS, WHEN IT DOESN'T AND WHO'S TO BLAME

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash

B. A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 33 years

Sisyphus is a figure of Greek mythology who was condemned to repeat forever the same meaningless task of pushing a boulder up a mountain, only to see it roll down again

A spouse who seeks justice from Ontario's Family Courts often feels like Sisyphus, except at least the Greek hero did not have to cash in an RRSP to pay any legal fees to roll up that bolder. The Judges are not at fault. They work very hard for a system that is overtaxed, often with people that come to them with or without legal representation. They also work without the assistance of a sufficient number of other Family Law judges to share the caseload, an issue the federal and provincial governments must address.

So Sisyphus just keeps pushing that boulder when a competent lawyer might have dissuaded him not to bother; or to have settled; or to have driven up the mountain instead with the expert knowledge he doesn't have. Many simply can't afford any lawyer and don't qualify for legal aid. They don't have a choice and cannot be criticized. But certain others would rather buy a nicer looking car or spend their money on a vacation or improve their home then to spend part of their income on experienced counsel. They would rather waste the Court's time. These "certain others" help bottle up the system. They prevent those responsible people who want to resolve their disputes from having their cases heard. A knowledgeable lawyer may have settled or shortened a hearing or abandoned issues that he/she knows will be a loser: but not the Sisyphus who is self-represented. He just keeps rolling that bolder and all those Sisyphuses lower down the mountain are left waiting, even though they may be well represented. This is the hidden problem that Judges cannot talk about. They strain to assist unrepresented litigants during motions and trials, people who usually don't know a thing about procedure or the law. Such spouses often account for much of the delay inherent the family court system, but since everyone has a right to be heard, with or without counsel, everyone suffers.

Another reason that this bolder keeps rolling is the way in which issues are resolved under the Court's rules. These "family law rules" were designed to ensure that people and their lawyers talk about their conflicts to Judges directly before they do battle so that the Court can help resolve a conflict without necessarily imposing a ruling, usually at a much greater cost. So before one can fight it out at a "motion" or "trial" a spouse must attend a series of "conferences" before a Judge, and present the issues through written briefs and discussion. If there is a true emergency, one can dispense with the Conference and ask the Court simply to make an emergency ruling or call an Emergency Case Conference.

In my experience the Conference system and these rules usually work. They have not only been successful, but have generally served as a model for other jurisdictions. Many excellent judges and lawyers over the years have resolved innumerable difficult cases and disputes without the necessity of bringing the matters before a different Judge for a formal decision, such as a motion or trial, saving both parties a lot more money. However, the system breaks down with some people who manipulate it by causing needless delays for a variety of reasons, particularly when delay serves their interests.

Delay can lead to "litigation fatigue" and sometimes it is intentional or tactically planned in the hope of wearing down a spouse to promote an easier settlement or in the hope that the other spouse will simply walk away. I have been involved in cases where a spouse will pay a lawyer just to have my client keep pushing that bolder long enough that he or she will give up pushing. Accordingly, some people intentionally fail to provide sufficient disclosure of their financial documents or information in a timely fashion, forcing opposing counsel to bring proceedings to oblige their cooperation, but at a heavy cost. The spouse who requires such information then suffers endless months of delay. Other times a parent with the care of a child since separation will intentionally delay proceedings long enough to ensure that his/her child is so alienated from the other parent that it will no longer matter anymore what a judge rules at trial about parenting decisions or where the child should reside. A trial judge cannot easily change what a child feels, thinks or does, particularly after a certain age.

Then there are those lawyers with scheduling conflicts that make them so busy that they can't agree to an early Conference date. However, when one of their clients requires urgent attention a very few number of these lawyers suddenly manage to somehow "free up" the time they didn't have before by appointing agents or even showing up themselves. I'm always amazed to see this sudden transformation. It's as if a traffic jam stops the bolder from rolling and then a Tomahawk helicopter magically appears to lift it into the sky and up the mountain. Amazing.

So yes, the system usually works. But there are hidden problems. I've just mentioned a few. The challenge is to fix them.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit ***www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.***

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GUEST VOICE

The potential of lawful, democratic processes

A. Alan Borovoy

My recently-published memoir, *At the Barricades*, relates how a Jewish kid from downtown Toronto became a professional agitator for human rights and civil liberties. The memoir illustrates the potential of lawful, democratic processes to achieve social reform. It is one man's answer to the defenders of violent and unlawful tactics.

Early on, for example, my colleagues and I organized a large, representative delegation that met with the then- premier of Ontario, to urge a legislative prohibition against racial discrimination in housing. Our delegation included all the major churches, unions, ethnic groups, and even three municipal councils. The Ontario government overcame its traditional resistance to such measures and moved almost immediately to enact our proposed changes. In the wake of rallies we organized – several hundred strong – the federal government amended a bill on national security and Parliament declined to resurrect the death penalty. All perfectly legal.

We also developed some novel tactics. At one point, we considered how to deal with a federal pornography bill that threatened to jail librarians for disseminating certain legitimate literature. At our urging, there was a one-day closing of all but four Toronto libraries. The event was a media sensation – and a lawful one. The bill was withdrawn soon afterwards.

Earlier, we went door-to-door asking parents from a North York public school to exempt their kids from the official Christian instruction that was being conducted there and elsewhere. We gathered exemption requests for more than 400 pupils at that school. Our action effectively paralyzed the program, prompting officials of the school board to seek a meeting with my organization. That precipitated a number of changes in board policy and ultimately the withdrawal of the program from all North York schools.

In conjunction with other measures we adopted (including a court challenge), the religious education program was finally eliminated from the Ontario public school system. Significantly, our tactics were all lawful.

Unavoidably, there was also unpleasantness. Such was my experience with the free speech claims of Holocaust denier, Ernst Zundel, and anti-Semitic teacher James Keegstra. Both were prosecuted under laws that could nail not only them but also democratic dissenters. So, we at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA), undertook a campaign against those laws. Regrettably, this provoked tensions with elements of the Jewish community.

***At the Barricades* by A. Alan Borovoy**

But we were ever on the look-out for principled ways to dramatize the conflicts between the hate mongers and CCLA. Shortly after the Zundel trial ended, I was on a radio program, discussing the CCLA objections to the prosecution. Suddenly, the moderator announced that Zundel himself was on the phone. Upon taking the microphone, I simply said that, while I might feel obliged to defend Zundel's legal rights, I had no comparable obligation to treat him with respect. Thereupon, we pulled the plug and the interview ended. Thus we were able to rebuke both the prosecution and Zundel.

My memoir opens with a description of early influences on me: the liberalism and humour in my family, the frequent brushes with anti-Semitism, the tribulations of a childhood friend who had polio, the insensitivity and even idiocy of certain educators, and the financial insecurity of many around me.

My memoir closes with some advice (possibly gratuitous) to those activists who succeed me. The beginning of wisdom, I say to them, is the recognition that, whatever we humans do, it's likely to turn out badly. So, even if we can't make the situation good, we can make it less bad. We should aim, therefore, not to create heaven on earth, but rather to reduce the hell.

Nevertheless, I conclude, it's necessary to have fun. Those who miss the humour in our work will likely develop a bad digestive system. And that could mean pimples. ■

A. Alan Borovoy is general counsel emeritus of Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

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Hitchhiking the norm for many in Israel

JESSICA STEINBERG
TIMES OF ISRAEL

The sun was blazing down when Avi Kohn was waiting for a ride.

Standing at the side of Route 60, often known as the Tunnels Road for the two tunnels at the Jerusalem end of the highway (which runs north-south to the Etzion Bloc settlements, Bethlehem and Hebron), Kohn was *tremping*, hitchhiking, home to Efrat.

"My wife has the car today," he said. "So here I am."

There he stood, dressed in a pinstriped, button-down shirt, tucked neatly into navy chinos, a middle-aged man incongruously sticking out his hand, looking for a free ride.

He was joined intermittently by others looking for a *tremp* as well.

Every few minutes another car would stop. Sometimes it was driven by a neighbour, or by someone else the hitchhikers, or *trempistim*, knew personally. But those looking for rides also got into cars driven by strangers, certain kinds of strangers. The men usually had large, knit yarmulkes on their heads; the women covered their hair as well, with hats or scarves. Even the cars had a certain look: large minivans or small sedans, often banged up, and sporting yellow Israeli license plates.

"You can recognize when it's the right kind of driver," Kohn said. "My 17-year-old daughter *tremps* all over the place. But she's careful."

With a vast manhunt under way since early last Friday as police and the army search for the three teenage boys abducted late last Thursday night, the subject of hitchhiking is on everyone's minds. The three boys were *tremping* home from their schools in the West Bank, as is customary. It's a cheaper and often more convenient way of getting around than the less frequent public buses.

"I was an hour behind them on Thursday night," said S., an 18-year-old high school senior who was sitting on a bench next to the Route 60 *trempiyada*.

S. lives in Jerusalem but attends an all-boys school in Kiryat Arba, a settlement next to Hebron. His parents would prefer that he only take the bus, and have even offered to pay for a private cab, but that's not an option, he said, even though his parents can afford it.

"It's just not normal to take a cab. No one does that," he said. "If you're right-wing or an extremist, you take a *tremp*. *Tremping* is the norm."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

Eyal Yifrach, left, Gilad Sha'ar, top and Naftali Frenkel were abducted while hitchhiking in the West Bank.
ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

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OPINION

World Cup fever is upon us again

Yair Lootstein

Although we're much better at sports such as judo and sailing – and even team sports such as basketball – soccer is undeniably the most popular game in Israel. I've never quite understood why.

We have a mediocre 14-team upper tier division called the Winner League, followed by several lower divisions. The handful of truly talented Israeli players are continually being plucked by more successful and far wealthier European teams, leaving the local soccer scene in general decline.

There is, however, a ray of hope, and surprisingly, it's made its way to Israel from Canada in the form of Torontonian Mitch Goldhar. In 2009, Goldhar bought Maccabi Tel Aviv's soccer team and ever since, he's been fixated on bringing a more professional style of soccer management (as well as much-needed funds) to that club, something that has not been universally appreciated by others in the soccer "industry" here in Israel. With his watchful eye and open wallet, Maccabi Tel Aviv won the national championships in both 2013 and 2014, and with no real challengers on the horizon, an Israeli soccer dynasty might be in place.

In the absence of a calamity that doomsday seers are predicting for Brazil, by the time this piece is published, we should be a week or so into the World Cup. In Israel, we call it the Mondial. Every four years, the world's top national soccer teams come together for a true festival of football – a month-long competition leading one of them to the coveted World Cup trophy. Literally billions watch the games around the globe – more than the Olympics.

We've been waiting for this year's tournament ever since Spanish midfielder Andrés Iniesta scored the only goal in the final of the previous Mondial, in Johannesburg in 2010, to beat my favourite – the Netherlands – just four minutes before the end of overtime, giving Spain its first-ever championship.

Preparations for the qualifying rounds of this World Cup began not long after the climax of the South African games, and in Israel, we hoped against hope that our national team would finally make it to the tournament, something that has happened only once, in 1970, in Mexico City, where our side was led by striker Mordechai (Motaleh) Spiegler and where we even managed two ties and a goal (against Sweden) before bowing out of the preliminary round.

Our hopes were once again frustrated. Israel finished third in its qualifying round group of six, behind Russia and Portugal, better teams that both made it through to Brazil. That might not seem too awful, given Israel's current FIFA ranking of 75th in the world, but many here in Israel were very disappointed.

Despite Israel's lackluster performance, Mondial fever is upon us. Sales of huge flat-screen TVs have spiked. Restaurants and bars have prepared special events throughout the month. Some homes are festooned with the flags of favourite national teams. People have changed their work and holiday schedules enabling them to watch games, most of which will be broadcast in the middle of the night here in Israel, seven time zones ahead of Brazil.

And speaking of those broadcasts nearly all the games will be aired on Channel One of the Israel Broadcast Authority (IBA), our equivalent of CBC or TVO. That same IBA is currently threatened with closure because of decades of financial mismanagement, and its employees have been executing all sorts of labour-related actions. Some even mistakenly schemed to cancel broadcasts of World Cup games, until their union leadership realized that doing so would backfire, bringing the ire of millions of Israelis upon them.

I'm rooting for the Netherlands again in Brazil, but maybe by 2018, when the next World Cup is held in Russia, Israel will finally find a place among the Mondial finalists. And perhaps Goldhar or someone like him could help Israel bring that dream to fruition. Amen! ■

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Netanyahu seeks PA help

IDF soldiers search for three missing teens in Hebron. ISRAEL SUN PHOTO

JTA
JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas seeking his assistance in the return of three teens, believed to have been kidnapped by Hamas.

Monday's conversation was the first between the two leaders in more than a year. Following the conversation, Abbas released a statement condemning the kidnapping, his first such statement, according to *Ha'aretz*.

"I expect you to assist in returning the abducted youths and in apprehending the kidnappers. The Hamas kidnappers came from territory under Palestinian Authority control and returned to territory under Palestinian Authority control," Netanyahu told Abbas, according to a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office. "This incident exposes the true face of the terrorism that we are fighting against. Terrorists abduct innocent Israeli children while we save the lives of ill Palestinian children in our hospitals. This is the difference between our humanitarian policy and the murderous terrorism that is attacking us."

Netanyahu added, according to the statement: "The consequences of the partnership with Hamas must be understood; it is bad for Israel, bad for the Palestinians and bad for the region."

The three Israeli teens, including one dual Israeli-American citizen, have been missing since the night of June 12. Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Sha'ar, and Naftali Frenkel were last seen trying to get rides home from a yeshiva high school in Gush Etzion, a group of settlements located south of Jerusalem.

In a statement given to the official Palestinian news agency, *Wafa*, Abbas "condemned the latest escalations in the West Bank, including the kidnapping of three Israeli settlers and the ongoing series of violations by Israeli soldiers and settlers, against innocent Palestinian civilians and against prisoners held in Israeli jails."

The statement called on all sides to refrain from violence, and restated Abbas' position "to continue with the extensive efforts to ensure the release of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails when a final peace deal with Israel is signed."

Also Monday, the Israel Defence Forces' spokesperson's unit called on the Israeli public to "behave responsibly and not take part in the promotion of unsubstantiated rumours" on social media including Facebook and Twitter.

The IDF also confirmed Monday that Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian the previous day near Ramallah after the troops came under attack from Palestinian rioters during a raid of a Hamas target.

The Palestinian was killed as he attempted to throw a brick at Israeli soldiers, according to the IDF.

The International Red Cross on Sunday night called for the "immediate and unconditional release" of the three Israeli teens.

"We are very concerned by the fate of the teenagers. International humanitarian law prohibits abduction as well as the taking of hostages," said Robert Mardini, head of ICRC operations in the Middle East. "They must be treated humanely, and their lives and dignity protected and respected."

In a statement, Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird condemned the kidnappings.

"We call for the immediate release of the three Israeli teenagers. Whoever has taken this action must be found and brought to justice," he said.

"We urge the Palestinian security authorities, who have been trained through Canadian and U.S. leadership, to make every effort to investigate this incident and work diligently to ensure the safe return of these children to their families."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

CANADIAN MAGEN DAVID ADOM HONOURS WOLF BRONET & THE "Y" WOLF PACK

Congratulating Wolf Bronet is Joseph Bitton (L), Canadian Magen David Adom's National President

Wolf Bronet and the YM-YWHA Wolf Pack were honoured recently at the dedication of the 12th ambulance, a "hospital on wheels", they have generously donated to Magen David Adom Israel. The dedication was especially moving because it represented the culmination of Wolf's dream – to donate 12 ambulances in honour of the 12 tribes of Israel.

WOLF PACK MONTREAL

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'Trempistim' unafraid

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

He said he knows how to identify a safe driver or fellow hitchhiker. They look like him, he said, pointing to his jeans, polo shirt and kippah.

He's right, in a sense. *Tremping* has long been a phenomenon of the Israeli collective, said Prof. Gad Yair, a sociologist at Hebrew University.

"Hitchhiking represented the concept that all of Israel is unified," said Yair, "that everyone *tremps*, that we're one big kibbutz, that we're in this together."

Taking rides with strangers was considered acceptable by many until the first intifadah in 1987 and a spate of abductions, including that of Nachshon Wachsman, who was abducted by a car of Hamas militants wearing yarmulkes and playing chassidic music.

After Wachsman was killed by his Hamas captors during a failed rescue attempt, the IDF forbade soldiers from hitchhiking. It regularly sends out undercover military police units in unmarked cars to pick up soldiers who hitch, sending them to military jail for violating the order.

But two other populations have continued to hitchhike, the national religious settlers and the ultra-Orthodox.

The ultra-Orthodox tend to *tremp* for financial reasons, Yair said. The national religious, however, hitchhike as a statement of ownership.

"They're saying, 'It's our state and no one will stop us or scare us,'" he said. "It's a guerrilla stance."

Maayan Sivillya, 22, was waiting in the shade of the *trempiyada*. Dressed in a sleeveless white blouse tucked into jeans, an artful tattoo inked on her shoulder, she did not look like the other religious young women waiting at the bus stop.

Now living in Hazeva, a community in the south, Sivillya was trying to get home to her parents' house, in Kiryat Arba. "I *tremp* all the time," she said.

For Sivillya, it's a matter of practicality. There are no buses from Be'er Sheva to Hazeva. Once she makes it here, to Route 60, the Egged buses are often full.

"For me, it's more the issue of men; I prefer to ride with women," she said. "But this is how we grew up out here, we *tremped*."

"A Tel Aviv guy is going to wait for a bus," S. said. "But people who live out here are stronger, they're used to it. They grew up in this environment, and *tremping* is how they get where they need to go." ■

TimesofIsrael.com

Thousands pray for teens at Kotel

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry also called for the immediate release of the teens and noted the "many indications" pointing to Hamas' involvement.

In a statement Sunday, more than 48 hours after the teens' abduction, Kerry said he "strongly condemns" the kidnapping and reiterated that Hamas is a "terrorist organization."

Kerry said U.S. officials "continue to offer our full support for Israel in its search for the missing teens, and we have encouraged full co-operation between the Israeli and Palestinian security services." Along with calling for their immediate release, he said the United States hopes for "their quick and safe return home."

He said the U.S. continues to "seek details on the parties responsible for this despicable terrorist act, although many indications point to Hamas' involvement."

"We reiterate our position that Hamas is a terrorist organization known for its attacks on innocent civilians and which has used kidnapping in the past," Kerry said.

On Sunday, thousands gathered at the Kotel to pray for the teens' safe return.

More than 25,000 people attended the Sunday evening service led by Chief Rabbi David Lau. Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef also was at the service, as were members of the Chief Rabbinate council and MKs.

"We prove to our enemies that the nation of Israel is alive and will never be broken," Rabbi Lau said at the service. "Everyone gathered here at the Kotel as one, with one heart, unified in a prayer for the safety of the kidnapped, that they will be swiftly returned to their families."

A Facebook page dedicated to the return of the teens, Bring Back Our Boys, has garnered more than 64,600 likes since its establishment on Friday.

Talmud scholar Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, founder of the yeshiva attended by two of the three teens, called on Jews to recite psalms, and pray for their safe return.

In Canada, Rabbi Reuben Poupko, co-chair of the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, said, "the entire Jewish community [is] praying for the rescue and safe return of the boys."

Added co-chair Rabbi Baruch Frydman Kohl: "Our concern now is with reuniting the boys with their families. We invite members of the Jewish community, other religious communities, and people of goodwill everywhere to join us in prayer to support those who are living through this traumatic ordeal." ■

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Jewish Life

Classically trained singer stars at Toronto Jazz Festival

MARVIN GLASSMAN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Toronto jazz singer Lara Solnicki could have become the next Beverly Sills, but instead is carving her own path as a jazz artist.

Once a Verdian soprano, Solnicki will showcase songs from her recent CD *Whose Shadow?* at the Toronto Jazz Festival June 21 in a one-hour concert at Lula Lounge.

An accomplished composer and poet with a four octave range, Solnicki gave up an opportunity to sing *Madame Butterfly* and a career in opera to develop her creativity in poetry and jazz over the last eight years.

"When I was at the Royal Conservatory of Music, I initially thought opera would be my career. But I ultimately decided I wanted to immerse myself in creative music, improvisation and writing poetry and found my home in contemporary jazz ," said Solnicki.

Thus far, Solnicki has received acclaim for both *Whose Shadow?* and her debut 2010 CD *A Meadow In December*, a selection of songs from the Great American Songbook of jazz standards that have been played on jazz radio stations across Canada.

In *Whose Shadow?*, Solnicki shows her flair for composing and drawing from her classical music training in many songs. In the song *La Flute Enchanté*, she combines a classical flute styling with her jazz arrangements while singing in French.

She draws inspiration from artists such as Peter Gabriel and Joni Mitchell interpreting what she describes as "art pop songs."

"I love the playfulness of jazz and the poetry of words in these songs."

Along with her artistic talent, Solnicki has a business flair that has made her widely known in jazz circles across Canada.

She has recorded with multiple award jazz instrumentalists and producers despite not being signed on a major record label and having no agent.

Solnicki may have drawn inspiration from her family. Born in Toronto, her parents, filmmaker Victor Solnicki and author Jill Solnicki gave her both the love of the cultural arts as well as the self-discipline to succeed in her career. ■

Jazz composer/singer Lara Solnicki performs June 20, 7:30 p.m. for the Toronto Jazz Festival at Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. in Toronto. Admission is free. For further information, call 416-588-0307 or go to www.lula.ca

CBC Radio winner will also play at renowned festival

Ori Dagan plays at the TD Toronto Jazz Festival on several days:

• A tribute to Cole Porter, featuring the Ori Dagan Quintet with trumpet player Brownman, at the May Cafe, June 20 at 9 p.m. • With bassist Dave Young at Pauper's Pub, June 26, at 7 p.m. • With guitarist Eric St-Laurent at Habits Gastropub, June 27, at 9 p.m. • A trio with pianist Scott Metcalf and special guests at La Revolucion, June 28, at 9 p.m.

For more information, visit http://torontojazz.com. – SEE STORY ON NEXT PAGE

THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS
JUNE 19, 2014

Top jazz singer 'loves being himself'

RUTH SCHWEITZER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Jazz singer Ori Dagan says he never thought of himself as a crooner until he won a CBC Radio 1 competition that named him "Canada's Next Top Crooner."

He was surprised when he won the 2010 competition in which contestants were asked to take an '80s pop tune and make it a crooner song. Dagan chose to sing Madonna's *Like A Virgin* for the competition because it's "hilarious," he said. "I wasn't trying to win. I was being myself."

Being himself means being musically adventurous, a trait that's evident on his latest, and sophomore, recording, *Less Than Three*. On it, he covers songs by Elvis Presley, Elton John and Lady Gaga. "I wanted to challenge myself," Dagan said.

Dagan is more than a crooner. He's known for his scatting ability, and his repertoire includes rock 'n' roll and Hebrew songs. "I consider myself a jazz singer, but I draw from a wide range of influences," said Dagan, who was born in Haifa and raised in Toronto.

Voted *NOW Magazine's* 2013 best male vocalist, Dagan has come a long way. As a child he was afraid to speak in class, never mind to sing in public. But he always gravitated to music, he said, as had his musical ancestor, his mother's grandfather, who was a cantor. When Dagan was four years old, he started taking classical piano lessons and he stuck with the piano, unhappily, for some 12 years.

"I showed promise, but I wasn't passionate about classical music," he said. At 18, he enrolled in the English program at the University of Toronto and writing poetry became his creative outlet. It was around that time he was blown away by Ella Fitzgerald's version of *How High the Moon*, which includes a seven-minute scat performance. "When I first heard it, I said, 'I have to sing along with it.' I literally listened to it 10,000 times," said Dagan, describing how he taught himself the basics of scatting.

Immersing himself in jazz, he found the freedom intoxicating, he said. Just the idea of improvising thrilled him. "What bothered me about classical music is that it was always the same," Dagan said. "Ella would do a song differently from night to night and recording to recording. I found that cool."

Dagan enrolled in the jazz program at York University, but a professor told him he needed to do some extra work on his voice. The prof suggested that Dagan – a bass-baritone, a rare type of classical voice – transfer to a baroque music program to improve his singing. So Dagan took a detour back to classical music. Then he returned to the music he loved, enrolling in the jazz program at Humber College.

It was between York U. and Humber, in 2009, that he released his debut recording of jazz standards, *S'cat Got My Tongue*. Three years later, with the release of the edgier *Less Than Three*, the critics declared Dagan had hit a home run.

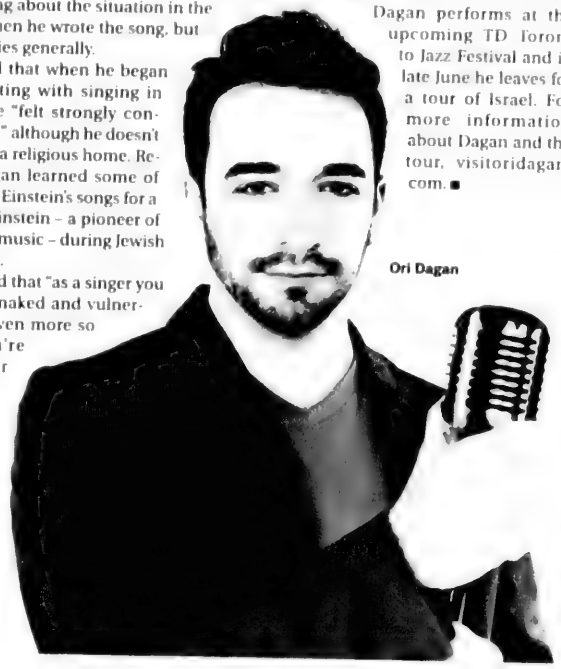
It includes the Hebrew songs, *Eretz Zavat Chalav*, by Eliyahu Gamliel, and Dagan's self-penned prayer to peace, a blues song called *Nu Az Ma?*. He said he was thinking about the situation in the Mideast when he wrote the song, but it also applies generally.

He added that when he began experimenting with singing in Hebrew, he "felt strongly connected to it," although he doesn't come from a religious home. Recently, Dagan learned some of Arieh (Arik) Einstein's songs for a tribute to Einstein – a pioneer of Israeli rock music – during Jewish Music Week.

Dagan said that "as a singer you have to be naked and vulnerable, and even more so when you're singing your own song."

He enjoys recording, but he said that his favourite thing is to perform for an audience. "My hope with an audience is to give them something they've never heard before."

Dagan performs at the upcoming TD Toronto Jazz Festival and in late June he leaves for a tour of Israel. For more information about Dagan and the tour, visitoridagan.com. ■



Ori Dagan

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Cousins' musical debuts at Fringe

BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Cousins Evan and Rafe Malach have created *A Simple Twist of Faith*, a folk-rock musical that will debut at the Kiever Shul in Kensington Market this summer at the Toronto Fringe Festival.

The play is set during World War I at a synagogue in Germany. As the chazzan chants a prayer to welcome the Sabbath, an Allied soldier wanders into the sanctuary causing quite a stir among the worshippers.

Alex Lurye, played by Adam Jesin, is an American Jew, who has been traumatized by the war and is desperate to make a spiritual connection. He is befriended by Evan Malach's character, Herr Rosenau, a local Jewish congregant, who invites the soldier to his home for Shabbat.

The ensuing plot, which is inspired by a true story, revolves around the lives of these two Jewish men. Alex returns to America, marries and starts a family. His business survives the Depression, but in Nazi-run Germany, the outlook for Herr Rosenau and his family is grim.

One of the most unusual aspects of *A Simple Twist of Faith* is the venue of the performance. The scene in the German synagogue is performed in the sanctuary of the Kiever, where one of the shul's two chazzanim Pinchus Gutter and Menashe Solomon will take turns participating in the musical by reciting prayers from the bimah.

Evan Malach, (left) the creator and co-star of the original rock musical, *A Simple Twist of Faith*, is seen with his co-star, Adam Jesin, (right) and the show's violinist, Sonia Shklarov.

The three acts of the production take place in different locales of the synagogue. A mysterious fiddler played by violinist Sonia Shklarov will lead the audience to the various settings as the story progresses. Naomi Tessler is directing the production.

Malach, 29, a regular at the Kiever, says he thought the shul would lend itself well to a theatrical production. "I'd been trying to do a site specific musical."

When he went on a heritage retreat in Montana last summer, he heard the story of Alex and Herr Rosenau. "It stuck with me."

In the fall, he teamed up with his cousin, now a lawyer, to write the songs for *A Simple Twist of Faith*. "Evan had the idea for the show," says Rafe, also 29. "The musical was a big endeavour, but I convinced him to go forward. I thought it was a great idea and I was really excited to do the project with him."

Evan Malach wears several professional hats. Not only is he a singer/songwriter and actor, but he is the program co-ordinator of arts and culture at JUMP (Jewish Urban Meeting Place) and he is also studying to be a cantor.

He graduated with a music and history degree from McGill University. He co-wrote an earlier rock musical, *In Adequacy*, which was presented at the 2007 Toronto Fringe Festival. He went on to study acting in New York City and later released two CDs – *What Still Could Be* and *Along the Endless Highway*.

He is also 2012 winner of the Hallelujah Global Jewish Singing Contest.

A Simple Twist of Faith is the inaugural production of HOW (Harmony Over War). Evan created HOW, which is connected to the 100th anniversary of World War I, to promote an anti-war message.

He points out that the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, which set off World War I, took place on June 28, 1914. "It's important for Jews to remember this history. Music and culture and theatrical stories is a great way to do that." ■

A Simple Twist of Faith will be presented 12 times during the Fringe Festival, which runs from July 2 to July 13. For performance times and a list of other events visit fringetoronto.com

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APPLICATION PROCESS:
If you are interested in this opportunity please submit your resume by E-mail no later than June 27, 2014 to jeanette@arcentre.ca

כחול לבן

We appreciate and thank you for your application, however we will only contact those candidates we wish to interview.

Eye on Arts

by Bill Gladstone

MASTERPIECES OF POLISH CINEMA ON VIEW AT TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX

A presentation of Masterpieces of Polish Cinema at the TIFF Bell Lightbox includes several films of special interest.

Austeria, directed by **Jerzy Kawalerowicz**, is a cinematic treatment of **Julian Stryjkowski's** novel, about a day in a Galician country inn – the first day of World War I– as the Jewish proprietor meets assorted townspeople fleeing the approaching Russian army.

The Promised Land, directed by **Andrzej Wajda**, from the 1898 novel by **Wladyslaw Reymont**, focuses on the booming industrial city of Lodz and three friends who start a textile factory together.

The Hourglass Sanatorium, adapted by director **Wojciech Has** from the short stories of **Bruno Schulz**, is about a young man seeking his father at a dilapidated asylum; he experiences a weird labyrinth, hallucinatory visions and ghostly remnants of Poland's vanished Jewish world.

Screenings continue to July 1. tiff.net

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Theatre Notes

• **Stephen Sondheim** and **George Furth's** Tony Award-winning show *Company*, which has not been seen in Toronto in almost 30 years, is said by many to have launched the age of the modern musical. Presented by Theatre 20, the large-cast musical is set in upper-middle-class Manhattan and told through a series of vignettes featuring Robert, a single man unable to commit to a steady relationship, the married couples who are his best friends, and his three on-again off-again girlfriends. Berkeley Street Theatre Downstairs, June 21 to July 13. $30 to $89. canadianstage.com, 416-368-3110.

• *Spilling Family Secrets*, created and performed by **Susan Freedman**, focuses on a shoebox full of love letters written between 1927 and 1937 by Freedman's parents, and how they might shed light on her own marital misadventures. The Fringe Festival production runs July 2 to 13 at Tarragon Solo Room, 30 Bridgman Ave. fringetoronto.com, 416-966-1062, ext. 1.

• *She's Black, He's Jewish, They're Married, Oy Vey!* is a Toronto Fringe Festival play about the true story of **Naimah Hassan** and **Steve Epstein's** 27-year marriage. The comic duo has been called "the Burns and Allen or the Desi and Lucy for the new millennium." $12. Annex Theatre, 736 Bathurst St., July 3 to 12. fringetoronto.com

• Single-show tickets go on sale this week for Teatron's new theatrical season, consisting of *Peace Warriors* by **Doron Ben-Atar**, *DeliMax* by **Harvey Ostroff** and *The Value of Names* by **Jeffrey Sweet**, in performance from November 2014 to March 2015. teatron.theatre.com

• • •

Arts in Brief

• The Toronto Jewish Chorus presents "Shir Delight 2014," its third annual concert gala, with **Cantor Osborne**, **the Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir**, **Arbah B'Shir barbershop quartet** and **Harvey Atkin**. Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Ave., June 19, 7:30 p.m. $18 and $25; $5 more at the door. www.torontojewishchorus.org.

She's Black, He's Jewish, They're Married, Oy Vey! plays at the Toronto Fringe Festival.

• **Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism** presents musician-lecturer **Jordan Klapman** speaking on "Simply Brill: The Music of The Sixties." This is a sing-along celebration of the immensely successful songs penned by Jewish-American songwriting teams based in Manhattan's Brill Building in the early 1960s. First Unitarian, 175 St. Clair Ave. W. at Avenue Rd. June 26, 7:30 p.m. Non-members welcome, $20. RSVP to Roby, 416-385-3910, info@oraynu.org

• *Edea, Recent Work by Judy Singer*, is on view at Walnut Contemporary, 201 Niagara St., until June 28.

Out of Town:

Founded in 1874, the Chautauqua Institution in southwestern New York state presents an appealing mix of fine and performing arts, literary programs, lectures, interfaith worship and recreational activities over a nine-week season that begins June 21.

Situated three hours from Toronto by car, Chatauqua's featured guests this summer include **Ken Burns, Margaret Atwood, Pat Metheny, Bruce Hornsby, Tom Brokaw** and **Herman Cain**. Its calendar overflows with classes, workshops and performances, many involving its own symphony orchestra, opera company and theatre troupe.

Chautauqua is also the hub for much recreational activity including golf and sailing. The lakeside village was recently named the "best small town to visit in 2014" by the *Smithsonian Magazine*. For details, please visit www.ciweb.org ■

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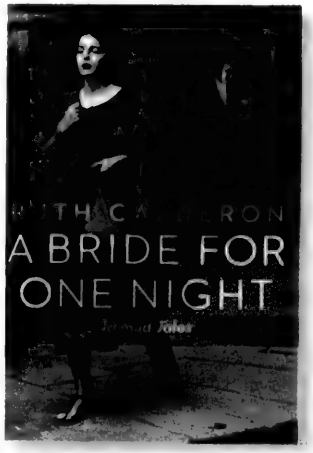

A Bride for a Night: Talmud Tales
Ruth Calderon, translated by Ilana Kurshan

Jewish Publication Society

Since 2013 when she was elected to the Knesset as a member of Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid party, Ruth Calderon has become famous throughout Israel. But for 25 years before that, she was well known as a creative force in Jewish education in Israel and, to a lesser extent, outside of Israel.

She has founded two innovative study centres for adults: Elul in Jerusalem, a beit midrash (house of study, a term generally connoting a yeshiva or other traditional religious institution) where secular Jewish men and women study traditional Jewish texts together; and Alma in Tel Aviv, another study centre where such text study is combined with the creative arts and cultural activities.

Years before her political life began, Calderon, who has a PhD in Talmud from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, published a Hebrew book combining creative and scholarly readings of rabbinic stories. The book has now been released in a first-rate English translation by Ilana Kurshan, under the title *A Bride for a Night: Talmud Tales*.

The book's 17 chapters all have the same three-part structure: the text in English of a very short story, usually less than one page long, found in the Talmud or in another collection of rabbinic texts; a creative retelling of the story; and a short analysis of the story's significance and meaning.

The unique part is Calderon's creative retelling. For example, after she presents the talmudic story from Kiddushin 40a about a rich Roman woman propositioning Rabbi Zadok (first century), she retells it in the first-person voice of the woman. Another story originates in Rashi's Talmud commentary to Avodah Zarah 18b. In it, Rabbi Meir (second century) urges one of his students to try to seduce Rabbi Meir's own brilliant and learned wife, Beruriah, in order to teach her a lesson. Calderon retells this disturbing story in the first-person voice of the student. Readers who are used to traditional ways of studying Talmud might find these retellings jarring, but they help to bring the stories and their characters to life in a new way.

> *Calderon's worldview is unabashedly modern, feminist and egalitarian*

Calderon's worldview is unabashedly modern, feminist and egalitarian, and the talmudic stories generally are not. Yet her explanations, most of which centre around women, are impressive and sometimes surprising. One example follows: the little-known story (Yalkut Shimoni Proverbs 18) about the wedding night of the son of Rabbi Akiva (second century).

"What did he do? When he brought his wife home he stayed up all night reading the Torah portion. He said to his wife: 'Hold a lamp and illuminate my page.' She held a lamp and stood before him. She illuminated his page until morning came."

After movingly retelling this story in the first-person voice of the bride who had had different expectations for her wedding night, Calderon addresses the question of what this strange story means. She admits it is possible for modern readers to read it as the story of an unfeeling husband who ignores his wife's needs and desires even on their wedding night. She, however, offers a different explanation.

She reminds her readers of the famous talmudic story (Ketubbot 63a) about the groom's father, Rabbi Akiva, who was an ignoramus until he married but then, with his wife's permission, went off to study at an out-of-town yeshiva. He returned home only 24 years later and was then a renowned scholar with 24,000 disciples.

The saga of Rabbi Akiva and his wife is often presented as a story of the true love of a long-separated husband and wife. After all, the Talmud reports that Rabbi Akiva told his disciples that all his accomplishments and all their accomplishments in Torah study were to be attributed to her. They had married, according to the Talmud, against her father's wishes, because she saw and admired his positive character traits. Later in life, Rabbi Akiva lavished expensive gifts on his wife.

Calderon, however, focuses our attention on how difficult it must have been to be Rabbi Akiva's son, growing up without a father at home. When you consider how the son presumably felt about a father and husband who abandoned his family in order to study Torah, then the son's unusual wedding night behaviour takes on a different meaning. From the very beginning he was making the point that in his marriage, Torah study would not involve separation from his wife.

The ending of the story describes the conversation between Rabbi Akiva and his son on the morning after the wedding. Rabbi Akiva asks his son whether he has found a good wife and his son answers that he has. Calderon suggests that this short conversation has a deeper significance. Rabbi Akiva presumably was delicately asking whether all had gone well on the wedding night. When his son said that he had found a good wife, though, he was telling his father (with dramatic irony, as we the readers know what he meant but his father doesn't) that he had established a better relationship with his wife than Rabbi Akiva's relationship with his.

In her first speech in the Knesset, Calderon argued passionately that the Torah and Talmud belong to all of the Jewish People, not just to Orthodox Jews. (The video of her dynamic speech, with English subtitles, can be found on YouTube.) Her book shows how different and worthwhile readings of our people's classics by knowledgeable Jewish readers from non-traditional backgrounds can be. ■

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What's New

JUNE 19 - JUNE 26

by Lila Sarick

Thursday 19	Friday 20	Saturday 21	Sunday 22	Monday 23	Tuesday 24	Wednesday 25
Kavanah Garden opens	Pride Shabbat at the Miles Nadal JCC	First day of summer	Zareinu bike ride for kids with special needs	Skip school. Learn the whole of Jewish history in an hour at Beth Emeth		

Thursday, June 19

UNDERSTANDING THE EVIL EYE
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Understanding *Ayin Hara* (the evil eye): Do you really need a red string?" 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca

GARDEN OPENING
Kavanah Garden holds its season opening at the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, 3:30-6:30 p.m. $6 per person/$18 per family.

SHIR DELIGHT
The Toronto Jewish Chorus presents their annual gala concert. Musical guests include **Cantor Charles Osborne,** Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir and Arbah b'Shir. Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m. $18/$25. www.TorontoJewishChorus.org.

A HISTORY OF JAZZ
Mike Daley presents "A Concise History of Classic Jazz." Tonight, "Crazy Man: Bebop and the Beginning of Modern Jazz." Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 8 p.m. $10/$12.

Saturday, June 21

B'NAI SHALOM
B'nai Shalom Congregation, a Conservative egalitarian congregation in Peel Region, meets today. Email info@bnaishalom.ca or call 905-901-9889.

PRIDE SHABBAT
Temple Sinai's clergy join Shir Libeynu and Kulanu for an interfaith Havdalah ceremony and musical evening, 9 p.m., McGill Square, 56 Queen St. E. 416-487-4161.

Deadline Reminder:
The deadline for the issue of July 3 is June 23. Please note there is no issue July 17. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email **whatsnewcjn@gmail.com**

Dance photography by Cylla von Tiedemann is on display at the Miles Nadal JCC gallery until July 8. Pictured here is her *Free Bird*.

Sunday, June 22

ZAREINU RIDE FOR KIDS
Zareinu's ride for kids with special needs starts in York Region. Four routes are offered – 100 km, 50 km, 25 km and a 25 km ride for women. To register, call 416-661-1800, ext. 228 or www.moveathon.com

LITERARY MEET AND GREET
Bill Gladstone, publisher of *A Basket of Apples,* a collection of stories about Toronto in the 1920s and '30s by **Shirley Faessler,** and the author's granddaughter **Karen Hines,** are holding a "meet and greet" at Israel's Judaica, 875 Eglinton Ave. W., 1-2 p.m. and at 441 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill from 3-4 p.m.

Monday, June 23

JEWISH HISTORY IN ONE HOUR
David Solomon discusses "The Whole of Jewish History in One Hour," 7:30 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. No charge but RSVP at 416-633-3838.

ORGAN DONATION
John (Shlomo) Anhang discusses "How my kidney made it to Israel without me." Introduction by **Rabbi Yoseph Zaltzman**, 8 p.m., JRCC, 1136 Centre St., Thornhill.

Tuesday, June 24

CHUG HA-TANACH
Rabbi Mark Smiley will teach Psalms, chapter 104. Beth David Synagogue, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, June 25

ART TOUR
Young professionals are invited to visit the art studios of potter **Michelle Kosoy** and glass maker **Pierre Bouchard.** Sponsored by the Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation. Tour starts at 6:30 p.m., call 416-781-3584 or visit youngheartsarttour.ca. $18.

TRULY HUMAN LEADERSHIP
Stephen Shedletzky discusses "Truly human leadership," with young professionals. Sponsored by JVS Toronto and Hillel of Greater Toronto. Program starts at 6 p.m., Network Orange, 221 Yonge St. Free but RSVP to kohnintern@jvstoronto.org or call 416-649-1630.

Thursday, June 26

THE NOACHIDE LAWS
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Noachide Laws: The Torah's path for non-Jews," 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca

COMING EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
Reena is looking for volunteers to work as "rec buddies" at Camp Reena this summer. No experience needed. Call **Mille Chadwick** 905-889-2690, ext. 2112.

- Act to End Violence Against Women is looking for volunteers with expertise in marketing, communications, public relations, social media or web development. Call 905-695-5372 or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

CAMP AND SCHOOL REGISTRATION

- Kavanah Kids, Shoresh's Jewish organic garden, offers a half-day camp for kids ages 6-10 from June 30 to July 4. Email claire@shoresh.ca.
- Registration is now open for Chabad of Markham's Kindercamp, Hebrew School and Torah Tots programs. Call 905-886-0420.

SINGLES IN THE PARK
Join Singles in the Park for an evening of team trivia, hosted by **Gene Stevens** (from AM 740). June 29, doors open at 7 p.m., Earl Bales Community Centre, 4169 Bathurst St. $15 pre-registration, $18 at the door. RSVP debbygo@rogers.com or 416-631-0005. Singles in the park meets for fun and entertaining events and is open to single, divorced and widowed Jewish men and women over 50.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

SUPPORT FOR ABUSED WOMEN

The Legal Information Service of Act to End Violence Against Women offers legal support and guidance to Jewish women who have experienced abuse. Free. Call 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

JF&CS Groups

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community. Fee reductions available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

- **Stop the Rollercoaster:** A workshop for parents and professionals about how to deal with the changes in adolescent behaviour and attitude. June 18, 7 p.m.
- **High-Conflict Divorce:** A workshop for parents who want to develop strategies to deal with a high-conflict situation. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. June 18, 6:30 p.m.
- **Dating in Midlife:** A workshop for men and women over 40 who have been single for more than 2 years. June 24, 7 p.m.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

For Seniors

- **Adath Israel Congregation.** Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, 12:30 p.m. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.
- **Shaar Shalom.** Play duplicate bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.
- **Beth Emeth.** Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.
- **Temple Har Zion.** Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email bevmichaels1@gmail.com.
- **New Horizons** is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors club meeting three times a week. Call 416-256-1892.
- **Bridge Players** wanted for games at Forest Hill Public Library. Call **Lea**, evenings, 416-487-7630.
- **Adult 55+ Miles Nadal JCC.** Have fun re-enacting episodes from classic radio shows – speaking parts, narration, sound effects and period commercials with actor **Jack Newman.** June 19, 1:30 p.m. (doors open at 1 p.m.) $4. Volunteer Appreciation Tea featuring the **Tost String Quartet,** June 26, 1:30 p.m. To register, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or email lisar@mnjcc.org. Specialty fitness classes in osteofit, posture perfect and tai chi are offered at the Miles Nadal JCC. Call 416-924-6211, ext. 526 or email colinb@mnjcc.org.
- **Bernard Betel Centre for Seniors** 416-225-2112. June 24, **Barry Shainbaum** discusses "It's not your age, it's your attitude," 10 a.m.; June 25, Canada Day Festival, movie and entertainment, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; June 26, **Judy Chodirker** discusses, "Dietary Sodium: Shaking the salt habit," 1:30 p.m.
- **Chabad of Markham** offers lunch and learn classes for seniors with **Rabbi Michael Gitlin**, Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. for women; Fridays at 10 a.m. for men. Call 905-886-0420, or email Rabbig@chabadmarkham.org.
- **Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park** (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Lunch and Song, June 19, noon. Couples dance with live music, June 22. Casino Woodbine, June 25. Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Prosserman JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com. To register for programs call ext. 4235.

- Looking for something easy and delicious to prepare? Chef **Margie Arosh** showcases her Moroccan Spanish heritage. June 19, 6:30 p.m. $45.
- The monthly book club discusses *Brooklyn* by **Colm Toibin,** June 23, 1 p.m.
- Come explore ceramics. Classes start Tuesdays, July 8-Aug. 26, 1-4 p.m. or 7-10 p.m. Another series starts Mondays, June 30-Aug. 25, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. $275.
- Join **Leon Soriano** for a 3-day workshop for artists to explore techniques, collage, colour theory, materials and more. July 23-25, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. $220.
- **Kevin Courrier** discusses "Nowhere Land: The Darkside of the Beatles' Utopian Dream," Wednesdays July 9-Aug. 6, 1 p.m.
- Learn to play mah-jong, Wednesdays July 2- Aug. 6 at 1 p.m.
- Join "The Beholding Eye: Photography from 1839 to today." Discover major trends and artists in the history of photography. Tuesdays, July 8-Aug. 12 at 1 p.m.

Miles Nadal JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

- Celebrate World Pride with a Kabalat Shabbat service with Shir Libeynu, June 20, 7:30 p.m. A children's program will be provided during the service. For more information, email shirlibeynu@yahoo.com or 416-465-5488.
- **Shai Doitsh** and **Itay Harlap,** senior figures of the Israeli LGBT community, discuss "From Holy Land to Gay Mecca in 40 years," June 25 at 7:30 p.m.
- Dance photography by **Cylla von Tiedemann** is on display in the gallery until July 8.
- Critic **Adam Nayman** analyzes the work of **David Lynch,** 7-9 p.m. June 23: *Inland Empire.*
- Like to sing? Drop-in anytime to the daytime choir Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. with instructor **Gillian Stecyk.**
- Sign up for the Summer Institute Adult Theatre Edition Aug. 18-22. Adults will take part in acting, playwriting and directing. All levels welcome, no experience necessary. Call ext. 250.
- Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

Schwartz/ Reisman Centre

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821 To register for programs, call ext. 3006

- Supervised bridge meets Thursdays July 10-Aug. 28, 10 a.m.
- Learn to play mah-jong July 8-Aug. 12, 1 p.m.
- **Avihu Medina** performs in concert June 29, 7:30 p.m. Tickets $30.
- Harkada party and barbecue with Israeli choreographer **Elad Shtamer,** June 30, 6 p.m. $20. ■

Ask Ella

Take back control

Ella Burakowski
eb@thecjn.ca

Dear Ella,

After my divorce, I met Julia. She helped me through my depression when I gained 30 pounds. Julia says I'll lose it when I'm ready, but since we've moved in together, she's done the shopping and cooking while I continue to gain weight. Julia has never had a weight problem and can eat whatever she likes. Everything she makes is laden with calories. I've been on enough diets to know that she's serving me poison. I don't want to hurt her feelings and have tried talking to her, but she says I'm being silly and look fine. I don't want to hurt her, but I'm growing on an hourly basis and feel very unhealthy.

Killing Me with Food

Dear Killing Me with Food

This is less about Julia and more about you. If you're overindulging in the wrong foods, it's because that's what you've chosen to do. Sparing Julia's feelings is an excuse to continue in this pattern.

It's easy to come home and have a delicious home-cooked comfort meal waiting for you after a stressful day. How many people could actually resist that? Enjoying it with someone you love is the icing on the cake (excuse the pun).

If you're really serious about regaining control over your body and mind, you need to take matters into your own hands and not sit back and enjoy being catered to. Enough time has passed since your divorce, and you're well into a new and loving relationship, but it's hard to say no, especially when it's so satisfying and enjoyable. You're not unusual. Who wouldn't like it? But letting it go on so long is where the danger comes in.

Take control. Insist on being part of weekly food planning. If you know your way around dieting, or "lifestyle change" as it's called today, you know how to put yourself on a healthier path with diet and exercise. There's no magic pill. Just do it.

Explain to Julia that you know she cares, but your excessive weight gain is making you unhappy, and enlist her help. Once she realizes she has been enabling your misery, she'll do what it takes to make you feel right again. Julia sounds like she really cares and wants what's best for you. Don't make this about her. It's all about you. Take your life back.

Dear Ella,

I was cleaning up after dinner when I heard a familiar sound coming from my son's pocket. He received a text message. Jeff was sitting on the couch in the family room with his sister and dad watching a movie. He typed something and no sooner did he put his phone down than two dings came from Jenna's phone. Jeff texted his sister who was sitting less than 15 feet away. When I confronted them, all I got was eye rolling and a dismissive tone. Can this actually be normal? Why can't we enjoy some family time together without everyone being so focused on their phones?

Texting Instead of Speaking

Dear Texting Instead of Speaking

Texting has become part of our lives. You will rarely take a walk, sit in a restaurant, doctor's office, theatre, bus or anywhere else without seeing someone texting. You can't change it, so get used to it. It's a normal way to communicate.

The question is why are your kids texting each other in the same room? Is it because they can't be bothered to speak? Were they discussing something they didn't want you to know? Or did they not want to disturb their dad's movie? Whatever the reason, it's your home, and if this really bothers you, take control.

Establish a rule that for a couple of hours during family time, smartphones must be switched off. You can be sure the backlash will be loud and fierce, but you're fighting against what has become a literal extension of our selves. Adults are just as guilty, so both you and your husband had better be prepared to adhere to this new rule of family communication.

If this is the worst problem you're having with your kids, you're doing very well. You may want to rethink why this is bothering you, considering that your family is home, together and sitting safely in front of you. This may not be as big a problem as you're making it out to be. ■

Ella's advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

Family Moments

Happy anniversary to my wonderful husband and best friend on our 30th anniversary, June 7. You remain the best decision I ever made in my life. Love you and then some. Susan

Mazel tov on the engagement of our son Jordan Michael Brown and his beautiful fiancée Arne Weatherup. We love you. Mom & Dad.

Happy 90th birthday Jakob Sylman, the most incredible husband, father, zaidy, and friend. May you be healthy and happy till 120!! Love from your family.

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Happy 50th Anniversary

to Ray & Rosalie Moscoe on June 21

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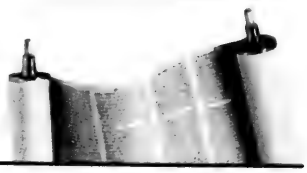
Parshah

Korach | Numbers 16:1 - 18:32



Rabbi Ilan Acoca cautions that money spent unwisely will ultimately be hurtful to its possessor
Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl wonders why some disagreements are permitted while others aren't
Rabbi Catharine Clark examines the conveyance of meaning in the violent end of Korach's rebellion

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

The Talmud explains that the opening phrase of this week's parshah, "Vayikach Korach" – "And Korach took" – teaches us that Korach made a bad purchase for himself. How are we to understand the Talmud? The Ben Ish Hai explains that *ashir* – Hebrew for wealthy person, which Korach was – is spelled *ayin, shin, yud*. If one donates his money to charity, it will assist him to get to the world to come, which is alluded to in the word *yesh* (spelled *yud, shin*). His money will not cause him harm because money can be harmful for a person if he wastes it on mundane matters. Therefore the word *ashir*, contains a first and last letter that spells the word *ra*, bad. The word *yesh*, or charity, breaks up the *ra* because the letters *yud* and *shin* comprise the middle letters of the word *ashir*.

When a person gives money to the necessities of *yesh* – that is, on matters that will bring him to the world to come – he will not be harmed when he spends his money on material possessions. If money is selfishly hoarded and not spent on worthwhile endeavours, it can become hurtful to its possessor, because the letters of *yesh* flee the *ashir* and what remains is *ra*.

Korach did not expend his money toward *olam haba* because he was a miser. He, therefore, only actualized into *ra* because he never developed and exerted effort to bring out the *yesh* in his character. Thus, our Sages said that he took a bad *ra* portion for himself. Mishlei 28:22 states that "a miserly man runs after wealth; he does not realize that wealth will overtake it." Since a miser does not give to charity, he winds up lacking. By withholding charity, the *yesh* is missing and the *ashir* is only left with *ra*. ■

Rabbi Ilan Acoca is rabbi at Congregation Beth Hamidrash in Vancouver.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl

In Mishnah Avot, we're taught about the difference between the Korach gang's conflict with Moses and the disagreements of Hillel and Shammai. While the first didn't last, the latter persisted. What makes some disagreements permitted and others prohibited?

In 1656, the Portuguese Jewish community of Amsterdam declared that 23-year-old Baruch Espinoza "taught and practised... abominable heresies" and "monstrous deeds." Community members were prohibited from contact with him. Recently, a special committee advised the chief rabbi of Amsterdam that the *cherem* should remain for three reasons: Spinoza is dead, and he neither cared about the expulsion nor changed his views.

Should religious communities place boundaries on public discourse and private thought, or do restrictions interfere with a sincere quest for religious truth? According to Rabbi Ovadyah of Bartinura, when the Mishnah stated that "an argument for the sake of Heaven will endure," it meant that "the intent... is to reach the truth. This [truth] will endure, since 'From argument truth will emerge.'"

Despite the sometimes fierce fights between followers of Hillel and those of Shammai, the Talmud says they "did not abstain from marrying women from the families of [the other]." Whatever the dispute, they "displayed love and friendship," seeking ways to live with each other.

Recently, a rabbi made headlines for excoriating Reform, Conservative and open Orthodox expressions of Judaism, declaring that they are "steeped in *apikursus* [heresy, and their teaching] is a violation of the Maimonidean 13 Principles of Faith." However, research has shown that Maimonides' contemporaries and rabbis in later generations did not accept those principles as law and often differed about their details.

Spinoza's philosophy is still debated, but his extraordinary autonomy left him isolated from his community. It seems wiser to follow the words of Hillel: don't do onto others what you would not have done to yourself. Don't steal, cheat or lie. Help the poor, heal the sick and act with love and friendship. Make life better. ■

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl is senior rabbi at Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto.

Rabbi Catharine Clark

The dramatic story of the rebellion of Korach and his followers reaches its climax in their violent deaths when they're consumed by fire, and by the earth that swallows them up. Unlike in *Game of Thrones*, there are no bodies to hang from the city walls as gruesome warnings to would-be rebels.

Instead, it appears the victors must resort to less obvious means of conveying the same dreadful message. At the Lord's command, Moses takes a staff from each chieftain and places them before the Pact in the Tent of Meeting, the inner chamber of the Tabernacle. Overnight, the staff of Levi, inscribed with Aaron's name, sprouts blossoms and almonds. The staffs are brought before the Israelites to demonstrate the miracle. Aaron's staff is returned to its place before the Pact as a sign for the rebels to cease their mutterings against God, lest they die.

As far as threats of a dreadful death go, the flowering staff isn't nearly as effective as a hanging body. It's symbolic of a horrible way to die, but the staff isn't on a city wall. Rather, it's in a part of the Tent of Meeting, where rebellious Israelites who long for priestly privileges will never see it.

Therefore, it must have a message more subtle than those sent by King Joffrey. (Plus, this is Torah, not *Game of Thrones*.) The true content of the message is to be found in who receives it. Only priests are permitted to approach the Pact, and only they will receive the message meant to warn potential rebels. Perhaps the message is that the priests must examine themselves for any behaviours of theirs that might lead others to rebel. Perhaps seeing Aaron's staff will be a check on boasting of their exclusive access to the holy or their importance to the community. You almost never see that kind of humility on *Game of Thrones*. ■

Rabbi Catharine Clark is spiritual leader of Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ontario.

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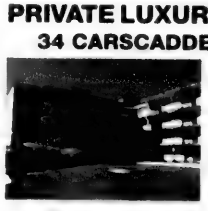

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Drildzers mark 80 years in Toronto

CYNTHIA GASNER
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

From left are Drildzer board members Rick Goodman, Mitchell Cowitz, Debbie Cowitz, Burney Bongard, Sabina Lefler, Irv Lefler, Rochelle Sufferin, Ronnie Hoffer, Sam Hoffer, Brenda Dales, Barney Dales and Ron Kirshenblatt.

After five generations in Toronto, the Drildzer Congregation and Society celebrated its 80th anniversary at an event at Pride of Israel Synagogue.

The first group of Drildzer men began meeting informally in the early 1900s. Eight men formed the landsmanshaft in 1934. It became the Drildzer Young Men's Society and had an active sisterhood.

The congregation began on Huron Street, then moved twice more before settling into its current location on Wilson Avenue.

Ronnie Hoffer, president, is the daughter of the late Joe Rutman, one of the early members of the society. Her father served as president for many years. Hoffer followed her sister, the late Mae Waese, as president. Waese took the presidency when the society was close to expiring and revived it by including women and younger members on the board.

"She, together with a great team of like-minded members, breathed new life into the society," Hoffer told *The CJN*.

Rochelle Sufferin, the daughter of the late Jack Stopper, who was a founder of the organization and who became known as Mr. Drildz, chaired the multi-generational banquet, attended by about 75 people, out of about 100 member families.

At a candlelighting ceremony at the June 1 event, grandchildren of the founding members lit candles in memory of their ancestors.

Attendees watched an archival video of the history of the society, with the founding members telling how they came to Canada and started the society and why it became a significant part of their lives.

In her speech, Sufferin spoke of the activities of the society including regular meetings, summer picnics and banquets.

The society undertook the restoration of the cemetery established in 1837 in the small shtetl of Ilza, also known as Drildz. It was almost totally destroyed in World War II. A stone wall was constructed around the area with large iron gates at the entrance, and the society has arranged for ongoing upkeep. ■

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Shmuley Boteach: Marriage needs lust

SHERI SHEFA
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Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, best-selling *Kosher Sex* author who is widely known as "America's Rabbi," will be one of about 50 speakers featured in the 15th annual Ideacity conference running from June 18 to 20 and streamed live from Toronto's Koerner Hall.

The webcast of the conference, starting 8 a.m. on June 18 at www.ideacityonline.com, will be hosted by the New AM 740 Zoomer Radio's Dale Goldhawk and Ramona Pringle.

Rabbi Boteach spoke to *The CJN* about his new book, *Kosher Lust*, which explores the idea that a successful marriage is built on lust, rather than love.

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach

Can you briefly describe what people can expect from your latest book?

The book maintains that lust is the most important ingredient in a marriage. The fact that we've gotten it wrong and made love so central is the principle reason we have an astronomical divorce rate. In other words, love is not a strong enough bond to keep a husband and wife together for the duration of their lives. Love is a warm, comforting emotion of partnership. Lust is a fiery, passionate emotion of erotic desire, and you're supposed to be in a marriage because you desire the person with an electrifying gravitation that we call lust. Lust has always been kosher. Judaism always promoted lust between a husband and wife. It was Christianity that targeted lust for condemnation, which is why we have a negative view of lust. But look at the 10th commandment, for example... thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, which means, you should be coveting your own wife.

Tell me about the three components of a lustful marriage: unavailability, mystery and sinfulness.

Steve Jobs became the most successful marketer in the world – he didn't want people to love his products, he wanted people to lust after his products. He wanted people to lust after an iPhone, the way Romeo lusted after Juliette, waiting outside her balcony. You're waiting in line for five hours to buy a phone. How did he do it? First and foremost, through unavailability. He made it impossible to buy the phone. Apple has a policy with its new products that they only put 300 in every store per day. They're sold out in an hour.

Can you tell me how people can inject mystery and sinfulness into a marriage?

Don't walk around the bedroom naked in front of each other. Don't over-expose yourself to one another... We tend to think that marriage involves no privacy and involves morphing into the personality of your spouse. I disagree with that completely. I think over-exposure of the body in marriage, for example, demagnetizes the body. We become bored of each other.

As far as sinfulness is concerned, we in the West live under the false assumption that men are much more sexual than women – that they have these elaborate sexual fantasies that women don't have, that they're much more interested in pornography. None of that is true. Women are much more sexual than men. They are multi-orgasmic, while men are uni-orgasmic. Many studies have shown that women have these very elaborate, very detailed sexual fantasizes about other men. They never tell their husbands, because they don't think that the brittle male ego can actually handle hearing about these fantasies.

Sometimes we have to, like, scrape away the outer layer and get to the core erotic nature of our wives, and I think many people in marriage sanitize women's sexuality. I even argue in the book that many husbands unwittingly extinguish their wives' libidos. They transform them from women to wives, from ladies into homemakers, from mistresses in mothers.

You don't believe that lust is a fleeting feeling or emotion that can't be maintained longer than the honeymoon stage of a relationship?

I don't believe that for a moment. The erotic mind can be easily influenced and manipulated through erotic principles. We simply have to understand it.

If it's true that it's chemical, how are the chemicals created? Why can't we manipulate the mind into seeing a relationship as novel and new? Studies show that the first reaction by a husband, upon discovering that his wife has been unfaithful interestingly enough, they want to have sex with their wives. They're angry, but they want to have sex with their wives. Why is that? Because the woman who you thought was incapable of that kind of unfaithfulness, or wasn't attracted to other men, or attractive to other men, she becomes something completely new right in front of his eyes. There is this sudden novelty. That's a destructive novelty to be sure – I'm only using it as an example, but it's a way of demonstrating that the erotic mind can be manipulated.

You say the question of "What do women want?" was one that even Sigmund Freud couldn't answer, but that based on your counselling experience, you've decided that women want to feel desired by their husbands.

The words that I use in the book is that what a woman most wants – and yes, Freud couldn't answer [French psychoanalyst] Marie Bonaparte's question in 1938 – what women most want is to be chosen. In other words, if a woman wants to be loved... why did she leave her parents' house? She's never going to be loved more than by her mother and father who will love her unconditionally and never divorce her... Her parents can give her everything in life except one thing, and it's the one thing she most wants. They can't choose her. To be chosen is to be distinguished. It's to be made to feel unique and special... But being loved in a marriage does not make you feel chosen. It makes you feel appreciated, it makes you feel protected, comforted, but it doesn't make you feel special. I know tons of wives who feel loved by their husbands, [but] who aren't happy. When someone desires you and pines for you, you feel incredibly special.

To paraphrase [Rabbi] Abraham Joshua Heschel, I always say that we want to be wanted, we need to be needed and we desire to be desired. ■

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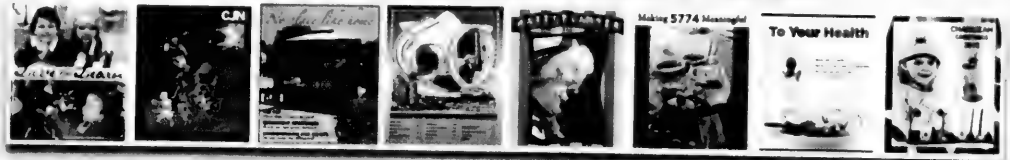

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Abravanel and the 'biggest mistake' in Spanish history

Backstory

ALLAN LEVINE
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Don Isaac Abravanel, the renowned 15th-century Jewish scholar and financier, was a fatalist. In the aftermath of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, he searched for life's inner meaning, for its purpose and significance. He believed that God directed man's existence; that everything was pre-ordained, and that man was "a failure, dismal and hopeless, which can be rectified only by God."

If he were alive today, Abravanel would likely regard the Spanish government's decision to rectify "the biggest mistake" in its history, as Spain's justice minister, Alberto Ruiz-Gallardón called it, and welcome back Sephardi Jews 522 years later as far too long in coming, but still an act from the heavens.

When the legislation soon passes, Sephardi Jews around the world will be able to reclaim Spanish citizenship, which entitles them to a Spanish, as well as a European Union, passport. There is no requirement to relocate to Spain or give up another country's passport. All Sephardi applicants have to do is obtain proof of their family's heritage from a rabbi or local community organization.

Among those interested in Spain's offer will likely be some of the thousands of descendants of Don Isaac Abravanel and his extended family. Located across the globe, the Abravanel family, which dates back to 13th-century Spain, has over the centuries morphed into Abrabanel, Abarbanel, Barbanel and similar derivations.

According to Jonathan Abarbanel, a Chicago theatre critic, there are an estimated 250,000 people with some connection, albeit distant, to the revered Don Isaac. In 1992, on the 500th anniversary of the expulsion, the Abravanels held a family reunion in New York that attracted 130 members of the family, mainly from Europe and North America. Abarbanel finds the idea of obtaining a Spanish passport novel. "It would be a great treat to return once more as a citizen or at least as a not-so-humble tourist," he says.

One of those who attended the 1992 gathering was Howard Barbanel, a journalist from Long Island, N.Y., who now writes for the *Huffington Post*. He recalled in an interview with the *New York Times* that as a young boy more than one rabbi said to him: "Do you know who you are? Do you know where you come from?"

The Abravanels claimed descent from the house of King David. Such a distinction, whether true or not, conferred upon members like Don Isaac a distinguished and influential status.

Isaac Abravanel was born in 1437 in Portugal, where his family had relocated from Spain many years earlier. His grandfather and father had made much of their wealth as bankers and tax farmers (or collectors) for the royal court. Isaac followed his father, Don Judah, as an adviser to the king of Portugal.

In the early 1480s, Abravanel and his wife and children had to flee Portugal, after he was caught up in a palace intrigue. He found safety in neighbouring Spain, where the Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, were impressed by his integrity and his ability to manage finances. Still, in the spring of 1492, he could do nothing to quash the Edict of Expulsion, part of a grand plan following the conquest of the Moors (Muslims) to institute firm centralized Christian control.

Once Abravanel decided to leave Spain, he was given special permission to take 1,000 gold ducats out of the kingdom. This was the exception rather than the rule with Jewish wealth. The majority of the estimated 40,000 to 120,000 Jews who departed Spain were compelled to pay exorbitant royal exit taxes and sell their property for much less than it was worth.

Just as many Jews refused to give away their property and opted to convert to Christianity. They became *conversos*, new Christians, whose faith was suspect – and likely for good reason, since some continued to secretly practice Judaism.

Abravanel and his family found refuge in Naples and later in Venice. Many more members of his family, like other Sephardim, established new lives in the Ottoman Empire, where the sultans welcomed their expertise as merchants and artisans. Many settled in Salonika (now Thessaloniki, Greece), which by the middle of the 16th century had a Jewish population of 20,000. From there, the Abravanels eventually moved to every corner of the Diaspora. ■

Historian Allan Levine's next book, Toronto: Biography of a City, *will be published in September.*

OBITUARIES AND RELATED NOTICES

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Petcherski, Irgenia	May 28/14	
Tsatskina, Ida	May 28/14	31 Carmel St
Ostrovsky, Yeva	May 30/14	Private
Grinberg, Zalman	May 31/14	Private
Levitt, Mary	May 31/14	
Vatenmacher, Rachel	July 1/14	Private
Shabtai, Yona	July 2/14	12 Tinti Place
Zweig, Kathleen	July 2/14	65 Spring Garden Ave
Hochberger, Frieda	July 3/14	14 Kindale Way
Kane, Juliet	July 4/14	866 Sheppard Ave. W
Minuskin, Moshe	July 4/14	24 Lowbank Crt
Willinsky, Cecily	July 5/14	147 Elder St
Keter, Francis	July 6/14	605 Finch Ave W
Langer, Hedy	July 6/14	30 Hotspur Rd
Ginsberg, Albert	July 6/14	Private
Ronski, Mania	July 7/14	1 Canyon Ave
Kaminskaya, Fanya	July 6/14	Private
Black, Martin	July 7/14	1925 Steeles Ave. E
Ettenson, Martin	July 7/14	60 Fairholme Ave
Cohen, Ruth	July 6/14	2 Neptune Dr

HEDREW OASIC

Estelle Nopolsky-Davis	Jun 3/14	2 Sanibel Crescent

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Ann Rotenberg	Jun 1/14	133 Torresdale Avenue
Saul "Stip" Stipelman	Jun 2/14	2 Neptune Drive
Yolanda Haviv	May 31/14	63 Bessarion Road
Alice Lewkowicz	May 31/14	46 Tyrrel Avenue
Debbie Martin	Jun 2/14	33 Landwood Avenue
Jules Fine	Jun 3/14	90 Fisherville Road
Dorothy Baptie	Jun 3/14	3560 Bathurst Street
Norman Bacher	Jun 4/14	85 Skymark Drive
Doris Gerstein	Jun 4/14	147 Elder Street
Anne Padber	Jun 5/14	120 Promenade Circle
Reta Fridenberg	Jun 6/14	10 Tetherwood Court
Mark Besner	Jun 6/14	401-120 Promenade Cir.
Gerald Doren	Jun 8/14	

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THE CANADIAN JEWISH NEWS

CJN

Israeli artists part of Tel Aviv square's makeover

JEFFREY F. BARKEN
JNS.org

The Norman Tel Aviv, a luxurious boutique establishment, has restored two buildings on Nachmani Street, at the heart of the Tel Aviv UNESCO heritage site for historic Bauhaus architecture. The newly renovated hotel's management is also a dedicated patron of the arts, seeking to support contemporary artistic expression in Israel. When complete, the complex will be a travel destination that houses and showcases many avant-garde cultural treasures.

"Tremendous care has been taken to restore these buildings to their original grandeur, preserving the eclectic style, Renaissance and oriental influences that characterize the edifice at 23 Nachmani, as well as the striking modernist architecture of the adjacent building at 25 Nachmani," says Olivier Heuchenne, managing director of The Norman.

The hotel – whose grand opening is planned for this summer – will sport an interior design echoing the luxury and style of the grand hotels of the early 20th century, featuring top restaurants, an extraordinary collection of Israeli artwork, an elegant library bar, and The Norman's signature world-class amenities.

Outside The Norman Tel Aviv hotel COURTESY OF THE NORMAN TEL AVIV

The art collection of more than 100 works stands at the centre of this accomplishment, uniting design themes and creating an interactive experience for guests. Featured are works by Ilit Azoulay, Sigalit Landau, Klone, Dana Levy, Assaf Shaham, and Tsibi Geva, among others, celebrating a class of leading contemporary Israeli artists whose work already is exhibited worldwide.

For Tamar Dresdner, the in-house art curator and consultant who selects works for display, the opportunity to participate in the restoration was a dream come true.

> *Participating in restoration was a dream come true*

"I've been living in Tel Aviv for years," Dresdner says.

"I remember walking past these buildings when they were residential properties and then entering them when they housed offices for businesses and lawyers. I always fantasized about what could be done with the space."

Mindful of the layered history that defines the new hotel's premises, Dresdner sought works she felt were in dialogue with the buildings. "Since we have an eclectic style building, I wanted eclectic art," she explains. This meant acquiring works of assorted media, including video, sculpture, photography, and paintings.

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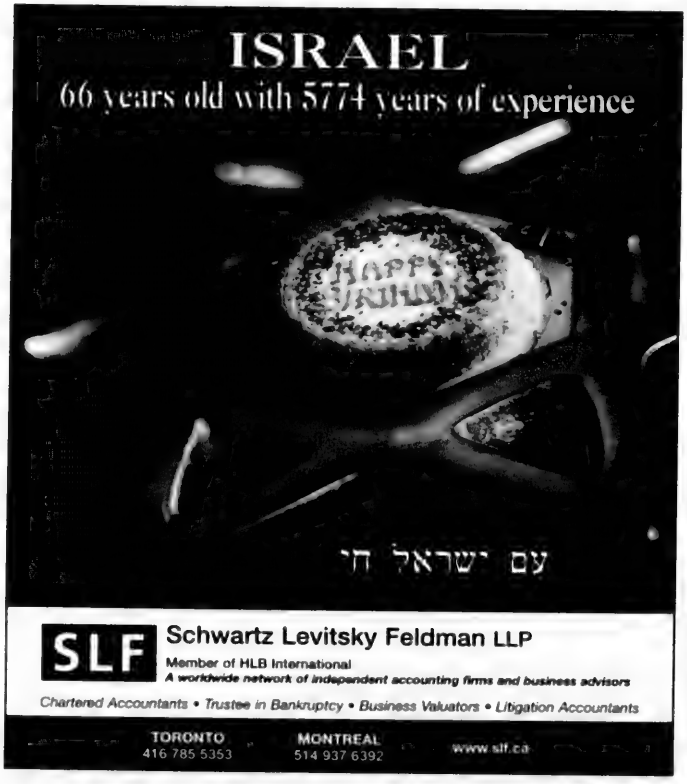
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Four innovative charities in Israel

DANIELA BERKOWITZ
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

Israel, known for its startups, also has produced some forward-thinking and unique charities that service various populations in Israel. Below are four innovative charities that showcase Israel's creativity and compassion.

Efrat: A Charity Warehouse

Always fully stocked, this central Jerusalem warehouse could be confused with a nursery because there are hundreds of brand-new strollers, cribs and baby bathtubs. There's a whole wall of baby clothing and many boxes of food. Volunteers are packing boxes with diapers, wipes, food and clothing.

This warehouse belongs to the organization, Efrat, started in 1977 by the vision of a Holocaust survivor named Herschel Feigenbaum, whose principal goal was to increase the Jewish birthrate.

Founder Dr. Eli Schussheim and his team of social workers and volunteers have helped some 4,000 women from every corner of Israel, who receive free boxes each month. This support lasts up to two years.

A group of boys at an Ohel Sarah school program participate in a baking competition.
COURTESY OF OHEL SARAH

"We are the only organization in the world that is successfully removing the financial pressures for women, and giving them a fair choice," said Schussheim.

"We show [a woman] the joy that comes from raising a child. We help her financially, and she feels empowered."

Non-political, Dr. Schussheim and his volunteers offer aid to support women through community. "Our volunteers, mostly women who have previously received support from Efrat, befriend other women in need and guide them, instilling new mothers with hope. The physical support eases so many of their burdens."

One woman attributes Efrat for helping her "live life a little easier." She recalled, "the packages saved me so much stress, it's indescribable. The assistance and guidance from the volunteers was tremendous. I am so grateful that they helped me raise my beautiful son."

Meir Panim: Easing the Burden for Israel's Neediest

More than 1.7 million Israelis – about 22 per cent of Israel's population – are living below the poverty line, according to the 2013 National Insurance Institute's annual report. This data shows that one out of three children and more than 180,000 elderly live in poverty. Since 2000, Meir Panim has been responding to this crisis in a variety of ways. Meir Panim – which literally means "lighting up faces" – serves all Israelis, regardless of ethnicity or religious background through food and social service programs that give dignity, respect and relief to many of the country's neediest residents.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Israel offers lots of help

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Annually, the organization serves at least 300,000 free meals out of restaurant-style soup kitchens, which also prepare meals for delivery to the elderly and homebound. In addition, Meir Panim targets children in impoverished areas, offering hot lunches, after-school clubs and summer day camps.

Ruth is 85 years old and a regular at Meir Panim's free restaurant in Jerusalem. Widowed, Ruth fell into a serious depression after her husband passed away five years ago. Today, Meir Panim helps her stay socially active, well fed and happy. "They take care of us and are kind," she said. "Whoever thought of and built this institution is doing a huge mitzvah taking care of us – the people of Israel who have no family or work to sustain us."

Ohel Sarah: A Home for Life

For families raising a child with disabilities, the challenges are endless. Miriam, a mother of five, remembers how "normal" her life was until Sammy, her youngest son, was diagnosed with autism at age two. To care for Sammy, she needed to drive him to therapies and appointments nearly every day, taking a toll on her ability to work, and care for herself and for Sammy's siblings. Depleted, Miriam saw that her son needed attention and care she just could not give. With a partner like Ohel Sarah, both the child and their families win.

The organization services people with special needs starting at age six and through their entire lives. Programs range from educational centres, group homes, and even employment opportunities for adults, empowering people with special needs to blossom in the right environment. "At Ohel Sarah, we give parents peace of mind knowing that there is someone to take care of their child and that someone is going to be there when they cannot," said Naomi Kovitz, director of development at Ohel Sarah.

Under the guidance of Ohel Sarah's staff and programs, both children and adults can develop and be supported with friendships, compassion and care. Over 400 people across Israel benefit from similar programs and the expert guidance of trained therapists, teachers and counsellors.

United Hatzalah: Rescue in Minutes

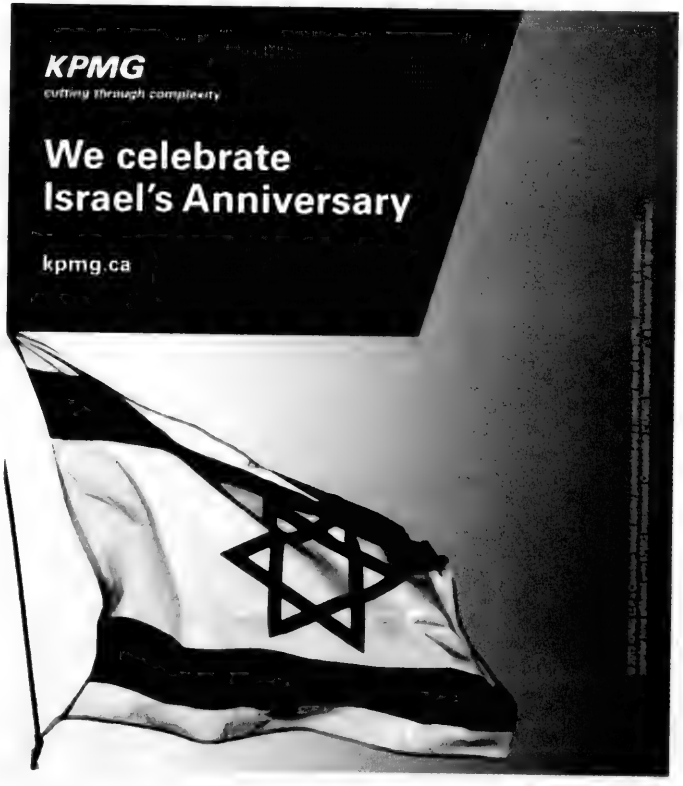
Combining technology, skill and volunteers has made United Hatzalah Israel's fastest emergency responders. In 2013, the organization's network of 2,300 volunteer emergency medical technicians (EMTs) treated 211,000 people across Israel for free. One-quarter of these people were found in life-threatening condition, yet all were treated within minutes by United Hatzalah volunteers.

United Hatzalah volunteers quickly treat an injured man following an accident.
COURTESY OF UNITED HATZALAH

"In order to save lives, we want to arrive at the scene of an emergency as soon as it happens," said Eli Beer, president and founder of United Hatzalah. "To do that, we use the best technology, and have volunteers located on every block across the country who are dedicated, able and ready to leave everything and respond without thinking twice."

In order to get there quickly, each volunteer uses a specially designed GPS app to alert volunteers in close proximity to an accident or injury. It guides volunteers on the shortest route, decreasing the average response time to under three minutes. Equipped with medical supplies, a volunteer stabilizes the victim until an ambulance arrives. In addition, United Hatzalah's fleet of 320 "ambu-cycles" can navigate through traffic and treat people at the scene of an emergency.

All names have been changed to preserve anonymity. ■



Alice Kern

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Israeli mom is a special needs inventor

Debby and Zohar Elnatan with their sons, from left, Rotem, Inbar and Shachar
TZVIKA PORTNOY PHOTO

ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN
ISRAEL 21C

A guitar and a contrabass are the first things you see when you walk into the Jerusalem home of Debby and Zohar Elnatan. You also notice the adaptive equipment for 19-year-old Rotem, who has cerebral palsy.

Those two elements – music and a child with special needs – are dominant threads in the tapestry of the five Elnatans' lives.

Debby Elnatan was recently the centre of global media attention following the April 7 launch of the Firefly Upsee, a novel co-walking harness based on a contraption she invented when Rotem was two years old.

"So many orders – thousands – came in over the first few days, that the website crashed," she says. "Parents all over the world are putting up videos on Facebook showing them walking or dancing with their kids for the first time. Some show siblings hugging for the first time. Parents write to me about their Upsee before they even take the price tag off. It's just incredible how virally this spread. Within one week it was in China, Bosnia, Iran, South America, Japan – the four corners of the earth."

CNN Turkey and a Brazilian television crew interviewed her, as well as an Italian radio station after a piece they did on the Upsee got 4.5 million hits.

Elnatan, 56, was born in Syracuse, N.Y., and moved to Israel in 1983. She's a lifelong music lover. "I'm a fiddler, and I have a country band called Habandanot [The Bandanas]. We do Wild West events all over Israel."

Her father taught her to work with tools, a skill that came in handy when she became the parent of a child with CP.

"If I saw something Rotem needed, I would build a prototype," she says.

"Since he was one year old I've designed crawling, seating, standing and walking equipment refined through trial and error. I have one patent and another patent application pending, and a lot of products to get into the market. I hope all my inventions will be commercialized, because I have a lot to offer and I want to give other families the advantages I had."

She is adamant that her inventions be sold online to remain affordable. The Irish company Leckey created a retail website for the Firefly Upsee and another product, after refining its design and testing it extensively throughout the United Kingdom.

Each of Elnatan's items is designed to leave the parent's hands free and give therapeutic benefits while allowing the child to participate in family activities.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B8

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Preserving the memories of Israel's creation

JUDY LASH BALINT
JNS.org

Elad Peled, 87, has told the story of how he was injured during the battle for Safed in Israel's War of Independence many times. Now, for the first time, the retired Israel Defence Forces major general's account of his days as Palmach commander will be readily accessible through a joint project of Toldot Yisrael (Chronicles of Israel) and Israel's National Library.

For Peled and hundreds of others who played a pivotal role in the creation of the state of Israel, the Toldot Yisrael initiative provides peace of mind that their stories will not be forgotten.

Conceived seven years ago by Eric Halivni, an American immigrant to Israel with a background in Jewish education and non-profit management, Toldot Yisrael has been quietly working to do for Israel what Steven Spielberg's Survivors of the Shoah Visual History project has done for Holocaust memory.

Dr. Zimra Peled (left) and Israel Defence Forces Maj. Gen. (retired) Elad Peled, Palmach veterans.

Halivni says he was astonished to learn after he made aliyah that there was no comprehensive archive to document the founding of the state. "There are some oral and written histories in places like the Palmach Museum, the Rabin Center, and Kibbutz Kfar Etzion," he notes, "but no comprehensive project that makes all this incredible material easily accessible in one archive."

> *Toldot Yisrael has completed 1,000 interviews resulting in 3,000 hours of raw footage*

To date, with funding from several prominent U.S foundations and private individuals, Toldot Yisrael has completed 1,000 interviews resulting in 3,000 hours of raw footage. "It's not only about the War of Independence," Halivni emphasizes. "We're documenting people who were witnesses to history."

One of Toldot Yisrael's first interviews was with Zionist leader Arieh Handler. Until his death at age 95 in 2011, Handler was the last living witness to the Israeli Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948. During his interview for the Toldot archives, Handler produced a hand-addressed invitation to the event in Tel Aviv.

Danny Streifler, director of digital photo archive and interactive services at the National Library of Israel, is excited at the prospect of bringing such gems to light. "The National Library was always very good at preserving material in the basement. Now we want to provide the widest access, and the Toldot Yisrael collaboration is the perfect merge," he says.

While many interviews are available on YouTube, what the National Library hopes to offer is the added value of links to existing archival material on events recounted by the participants.

Plans call for the Toldot Yisrael interviews and documentation to be used by scores of Israeli teachers who attend summer programs at the National Library to develop curriculum related to Israel's history.

So far, material from Toldot Yisrael interviews has been used in the *Eyewitness 1948* series of documentary films that have aired on Israel's History Channel and been viewed online more than 500,000 times, as well as in a series of two-minute films entitled *The Founders: The Story of the 1948 Generation*, which features kibbutzniks, new immigrants of the time, and members of the Lehi and Haganah who bring their different perspectives to that turbulent era.

For Peled, the former Palmach commander, that's one of the reasons for his enthusiasm for the Toldot Yisrael-National Library collaboration. "The same event can be viewed so many ways by different people," he says. In order for history to be understood, various perspectives need to be taken into account, and that's the strength of the huge number of interviews that will now be archived and available.

"I didn't dance in the street after the Nov. 29, 1947 UN vote. I was on guard at Kibbutz Ramot Naftali near the Lebanese border. I was 20 years old and wrote a letter to my mother, that I had a very heavy feeling. I knew we were entering war," he recalls.

Peled, a former director general of Israel's Ministry of Education, and his wife Zimra, who holds a PhD from Columbia University, have been married for 66 years. Zimra was also a member of the Palmach unit that escorted convoys between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem during the siege of Jerusalem. The Peleds are acutely aware of the need to intensify efforts to digitally record the testimonies of the shrinking ranks of eyewitnesses to Israel's founding and surviving military veterans of the 1948 War.

"This afternoon we're going to another funeral of one of our Palmach chevra (group of friends)," Peled tells reporters. "We are disappearing every week." ■

Toldot Yisrael (Chronicles of Israel) initiative founder and director Eric Halivni with the invitation to the 1948 ceremony of the Declaration of Israel's Independence. JUDY LASH BALINT PHOTOS

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TORONTO

Program restores balance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B5

"Having a child with special needs can bring great stress to a family and all the relationships in it," Elnatan says. "There is a danger of investing too many resources in the child with special needs at the expense of the health of the family."

Rotem's older brother, Shachar, is a professional jazz guitarist, while 12-year-old Inbar is the one who plays the guitar and contrabass. Zohar is a guitarist and music teacher. Rotem, an aspiring DJ, entertained at a Passover party at Ilanot, his special school in Jerusalem. His mom lent some help. "We do what he can't and he does the rest, and feels great about it," she says.

Before Rotem was born, Debby and Zohar started an evening music group through the Shekel Association, which provides community services for people with special needs with the support of JDC Israel, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Jerusalem municipality and other agencies. This remains a weekly commitment.

"We perform with our drumming group around the country at regular schools as a way of introducing people who have special needs in a fun environment," she explains. "The group includes young adults with a variety of special needs, who all like music and have good rhythm."

About 12 years ago, Elnatan conceived of a program with Miri Weiss, another mother of a special-needs child, to counter what they term "the broken child syndrome."

"If you break an arm it does heal, but children with a chronic disease or impairments may never become like a typical child," she explains. "If you always see your child as broken and needing to be fixed, it will cause an imbalance in your family."

After 11 years of seeking a sponsor and sitting in board meetings, the Shemesh (Full Family Rehabilitation) pilot program was born to help restore family balance through play and leisure, family participation, sibling togetherness, parenting, and learning how to ask for help. Parents of older children with special needs are trained to accompany families with younger children with special needs.

> *Family is the main influence behind the quality of life of a child*

JDC Israel developed the program and sought governmental funding partners. A three-year pilot of Shemesh is now wrapping up in communities including Ashkelon, Rosh Ha'ayin, Baqa al-Gharbiyye and Rehovot.

"We had to get the government to understand that family is the main influence and mover behind the quality of life of the child, and they need to help the entire family," says Elnatan.

Play builds special-needs children's confidence and personality, she says. "The best advice I got was from [Israeli clinical psychologist] Aliza Vig, who recommends parents find what brings a spark to their child's eye and follow that lead." She was also advised to favour activities that the parent enjoys as much as the child.

The same goes for siblings. Inbar says that he and Rotem play Wii and card games, bake cookies and prepare salads together. "Maybe it's because he was in the Upsee [when he was younger] and could stand and do things with his hands," the preteen says. ■

We congratulate the State of Israel on its 66th Anniversary

Frank and Judy Wilson, Avi and Barbi Koifman and families

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Art offers glimpse into communities

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B2

In contrast to other hotels, which typically hang commercially reproduced prints and stock décor, Dresdner has taken significant risks in her selection, making the collection reflective of Israel's fractious social dialogue, as well as an open-ended commentary on the country's economic and political situation. "A work, even in a hotel, should challenge the viewer," Dresdner says. "[In Israel], we are sitting on a powder keg. Art should ask questions, not offer answers, directing the viewer to places that are not clear, that are edgy and explosive."

A small sampling of the collection reveals a wide breadth of styles and themes. Paintings by Tsibi Geva offer penetrating glimpses into Israel's communities. "Tsibi is very influenced by American abstract paintings, but he is also very local. His work addresses political issues and is very rooted in this place," says Dresdner.

Sigalit Landau's salt crystal sculptures and videos draw from the Dead Sea landscape and mythology. Works by the graffiti artist Klone, meanwhile, provide a fresh perspective of Israel's melting pot immigrant heritage and the collision of disparate cultural populations in Israel's cities.

"An immigrant himself, Klone's works mirror the alienation of urban life and explore the difficulty of assimilation," Dresdner says.

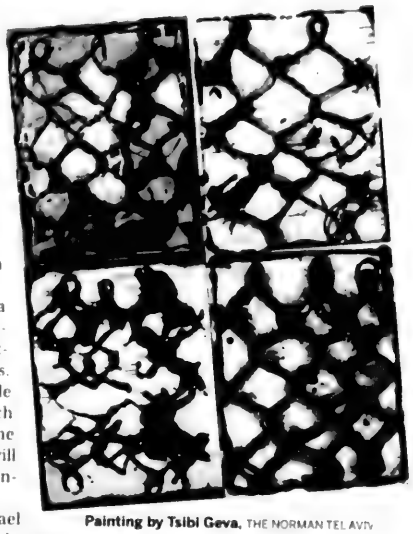
Ilit Azoulay's photography in the collection captures a particular sensitivity for the artifacts of urban decay. "The artist goes into dilapidated buildings, discovers objects, and then by shooting each one separately and digitally re-assembling them, creates a new reality from the city's demolished environments," Dresdner explains.

To mimic the series of modernist windows on the larger building at 25, Dresdner was attracted to sequential compositions that extend the prevailing colour scheme composed of pleasant blues, browns, cream, and pinks. Likewise, renowned British designer David d'Almada of Sagrada was conscious of the patterns found in the salvaged and refurbished antique tile floors. He cleverly designed curtains and bedspreads that duplicate geometric shapes and colours, blending textured elements in harmony with the elegant and conceptual artwork.

The Norman's management made a point of supporting Israeli artists through the collection. In a move that is rare in the art world, 95 per cent of the collection has been purchased directly from the artists. "When you ask an artist to loan their work, you are manipulating them," Dresdner says, noting the opportunity cost lost by artists when their work lingers on someone's walls without promise of remuneration. "We made a point of buying from artists," she adds.

The collection will have a permanent and prominent presence in the city, attracting collectors, critics, and art enthusiasts. By request, Dresdner will provide tailored art tours based on each guest's specific interests, and the artists whose work is displayed will be invited to participate in sponsored events.

To establish a tradition in Israel that supports and appreciates the arts has proven challenging. External pressures and internal discord relentlessly strain the country's resources and people, undermining their enthusiasm for artistic and visionary talent. But The Norman Tel Aviv is hoping to create a mechanism for promoting emerging artists, and through the art to stimulate discussion of themes relating to Israel's existential issues. Notably, the hotel's financial investment in artists will continue past this summer's grand opening, according to Heuchenne, who notes The Norman plans to offer an annual prize to "celebrate an artist's success and promote their continued development." ■



Painting by Tsibi Geva, THE NORMAN TEL AVIV

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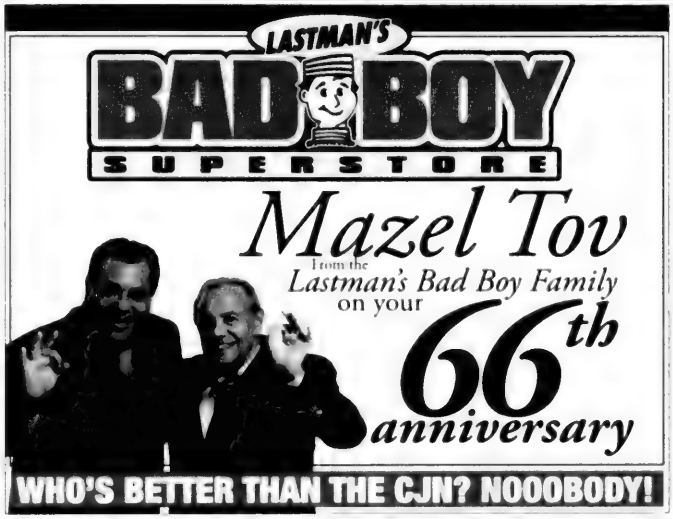

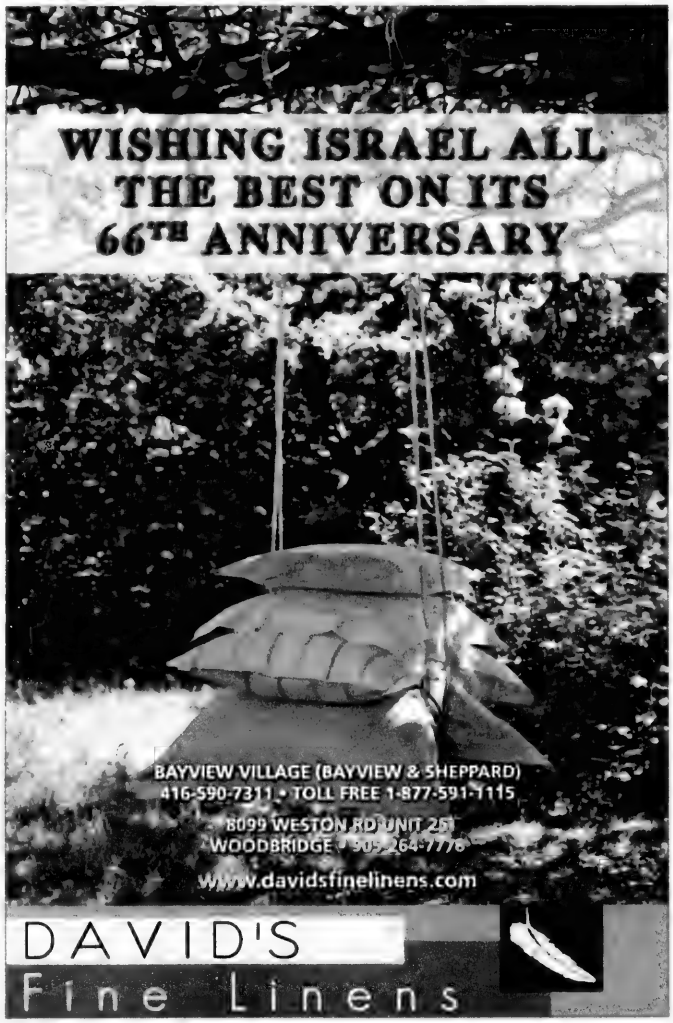

New tool is on the way in the fight against leukemia

KARIN KLOOSTERMAN
ISRAEL 21C

Dr. Shai Yarkoni

A new Israeli company is using the natural process of cell death to help people undergoing transplants of all kinds live longer. This counterintuitive approach is the vision of Cellect – and could radically change the way people with leukemia manage their disease.

Stem cells hold the promise to eradicate cancer and other devastating diseases. But one of the biggest bottlenecks for clinicians and researchers is getting enough stem cells in a blood sample to use in transplantation.

If too many of the donor's regular body cells are left in the sample, a patient undergoing a bone-marrow transplant will probably suffer an immune reaction, which can be deadly. In fact, about half of all bone-marrow transplants lead to graft vs. host disease, requiring a lifetime of immunosuppressant drugs.

A new approach to harvesting stem cells is required, says Dr. Shai Yarkoni, a medical doctor, biomed expert and co-founder and CEO of Cellect.

"Stem cells are defined not by how they look but what they can do. So my partner, Dr. Nadir Askenasy – also a physician, a chemist and a genius – came up with an intuitive approach for how we should select them from a sample for transplantation," says Yarkoni.

Several companies, such as Miltenyi Biotec in Germany, make tools to cull stem cells from donor blood. But the process is expensive, about $50,000 per transplant, and requires three days of work by skilled personnel. Worse, the current technology still leaves a significant amount of body cells behind – or alternatively, too few stem cells.

"Thousands of companies and millions of researchers know what they can do with stem cells, but the raw material is the critical issue," Yarkoni says. "How do you get enough stem cells to start the treatment?"

Cellect's stem-cell selection kit, a unique medical device originally conceived by Askenasy about a decade ago, could accomplish the task more effectively, and for a fraction of the cost.

The only tool that's needed is a biological hood, and these can be found even in developing countries. The process takes less than 10 hours and it's simple to do, based on the natural process of cell death (apoptosis).

All cells in our body are programmed to die and turn into "compost" at certain points in their life cycle, says Yarkoni. And stem cells migrate to areas with extensive apoptosis because their job is to rebuild tissue.

Significantly, the stem cells withstand the biological process that would trigger the death of other cells lingering in the area.

By simulating apoptosis in a tube lined with a cell death-causing protein, the Cellect kit effectively kills the immune response-inducing cells while leaving the very desirable stem cells intact for the transplant. They call this process "aposorting."

The company has published about 15 scientific reports on its findings involving animal studies, says Yarkoni.

About 80 per cent of the control group in his lab experiments developed graft vs. host disease. Using stem cells collected with Cellect technology, the numbers went down to about zero. Similar results were seen in vitro on human cells.

Cellect will be recruiting patients for Phase I clinical trials in about one year, pending approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Yarkoni expects to have Cellect's first product on the market within four years.

He predicts that within the next decade, Cellect's kit will make a bone-marrow transplant about as risky as getting your appendix removed. This is major news for anyone with immune-related diseases and disorders from lupus to Crohn's, leukemia and diabetes.

"We [reduce] the risk, and so we believe that bone-marrow transplantation can be a huge solution for all autoimmune diseases." For now, the company is focusing on leukemia.

Cellect was founded in 2011 and is based in Kfar Saba, Israel, where it employs a team of six people. The founder physicians have been best friends since childhood.

The company has just raised $5 million and was previously funded with a $1 million seed fund contributed by the founders. Strategic partners are currently sought to bring the technology forward. ■

Hebrew U professor moves printing into the future

ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN
ISRAEL 21C

Ever notice how a spilled drop of coffee spreads into a ring stain on your shirt? The particle-filled liquid flows outward from the drop, leaving the particles on the rim of the ring as the liquid evaporates.

This phenomenon posed big problems for printers. How do you keep drops of ink in place? Then Hebrew University Prof. Shlomo Magdassi realized it could actually provide a way to move the industry toward a fantastic future in functional printing.

"Instead of solving the coffee-ring problem, I thought I could use it," he says.

On the university's Givat Ram campus in Jerusalem, a company called ClearJet uses Magdassi's patented technique to make transparent conductors by digitally printing clusters of narrow silver nanoparticles, forming "coffee rings" on plastic or glass. This is what makes the touchscreen on your smartphone possible.

"When I started to be involved in the world of digital printing, there was very little public information on how to make the inks, so I had to learn from scratch," says Magdassi in his office at the university's Casali Institute of Applied Chemistry.

Since 1995, he has formulated revolutionary micro-nanoparticle solutions to deliver active ingredients, whether in cosmetics, pharmaceuticals or inks.

In California's Mojave Desert, the Israeli-US company BrightSource Energy built the world's largest solar electricity generation installation using coatings containing nanoparticles that Magdassi and a colleague, Prof. Daniel Mandler, developed. The field's mammoth towers are each surrounded by about 10,000 mirrors throwing sunlight at them.

The mural-like glass walls made by the Israeli company Dip-Tech, adorning buildings across the world, are based on Magdassi's patented GlassJet, a heat-resistant digital inkjet ink made of nanoparticles of glass and inorganic pigments.

"What I do is related to basic science, but I also like to see something real coming out of it – a product on the shelf – and I was lucky to have several products go on the market based on my inventions," says Magdassi, a pioneer in silver nano-inks for printing conductors directly on plastic or solar cells.

"It's all about controlling the behaviour of the particles, which is based on basic colloid science," he says.

Yissum, the university's research and development company, licensed Magdassi's process to XJet Solar, an Israeli firm that makes nano-ink and inkjet printers for solar cells.

Magdassi is now working with Yissum to find a commercial partner to develop his new oxidation-resistant copper nano-inks for inexpensive printing of conductive patterns on heat sensitive plastic substrates.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B12

Shlomo Magdassi, right, with graduate student Alon Shimoni and the lamp lit with conductive nanoparticles. ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN PHOTO

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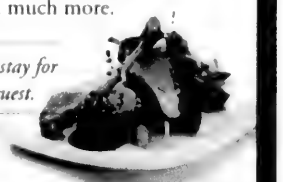

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Chemistry a lifelong dream

Shlomo Magdassi in his lab

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B11

Remarkably, the 60-year-old scientist's life trajectory has taken him from *ma'abara* (transit camp) to *ma'abada* (laboratory).

His parents emigrated from Iraq in 1951, married and settled into one of the hard-scrabble transit camps set up for new immigrants in Ramle, not far from today's Ben-Gurion International Airport.

Though his home lacked material comforts, his education propelled him to become the first of his family to earn a doctorate. "I knew when I was in fifth grade I was going to be a chemist, while conducting experiments at home," Magdassi says.

After serving in the army, Magdassi went to the Hebrew University and never left, aside from an 18-month postdoctoral fellowship in Ohio and a sabbatical in Los Angeles, Calif., during which he developed nanoparticle drugs.

His wife, Tsila, is deputy director of school psychological services for Jerusalem. Their son, 27, is studying industrial design at the renowned Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem. Their 23-year-old daughter, recently back in Israel after a post-army trip around the world and volunteering in Uganda, will study law and social work at the Hebrew University next fall.

Magdassi's students readied a few dazzling demos for the fourth International Nanotechnology Conference and Exhibition (NanoIsrael) conference in the spring in Tel Aviv.

Among the printed electronics they fashioned are electro-luminescent devices imprinted with transparent conductors – in other words, a lamp illuminated by nanoparticles.

"Using our inks, you could have signage without light bulbs, and sensors of all kinds," says Magdassi as his master's student Alon Shimoni plugs in a glass panel on which the word "Yissum" lights up.

"You can print contactless credit cards, solar cells and RFID [radiofrequency identification] tags, which are a type of antenna.

"It's all related to how we make a small particle and put it on a substrate exactly where we need it. Then we use its specific property to get something out of it."

Silver has long been known as an excellent and stable conductor, but at $700 to $1,000 per kilogram, it's not practical for mass ink manufacturing. Copper, less than $7 per kilo, has similar conductivity but not stability, as it oxidizes quickly on contact with air.

Magdassi hit on the unique idea of using copper precursors of the metal, because they do not oxidize.

"Once we put it on a substrate and heat it to a certain temperature, it decomposes and makes a self-reduction, meaning it converts into copper and it becomes conductive," says Magdassi. "The copper nanoparticles are formed from the precursor and therefore it's stable."

Yissum CEO Yaacov Michlin noted that the total market for printed, organic and flexible electronics is projected to grow from approximately $16 billion in 2013 to $76.8 billion in the next 10 years.

"The copper-based nano-ink invented by Prof. Magdassi solves some of the major limitations that are preventing widespread use of conductive inks, and we are certain that this novel ink will become an important aspect of the growing industry of printed electronics," Michlin said. ■

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SHUTTERSTOCK PHOTO

Hologram-guided surgery a heatbeat away

ISRAEL21C

It sounds like something out of a sci-fi thriller, but an Israeli holographic imaging system for the operating room is poised to revolutionize surgery in the near future.

Though only in the clinical beta prototype stage, the world's first 3D holographic display and interaction system for medical applications was already featured on the TV show *Grey's Anatomy* and has been tested successfully by surgeons at Israel's Schneider Children's Medical Center in Petah Tikva.

This proprietary digital technology from RealView Imaging in Yokneam projects hyper-realistic, dynamic 3D holographic images of body structures "floating in the air" without the need for special glasses or a conventional screen.

The physician can literally touch and interact precisely with the projected three-dimensional volumes, providing an unprecedented tool for planning, performing and evaluating minimally invasive surgical procedures.

Co-founder Shaul Gelman explains that the breakthrough technology can be summarized as very rapid printing of light in free space. The system is fed with data from standard medical imaging sources, such as ultrasound.

The doctor sees a hovering dynamic image such as a pumping heart or a fetus moving in utero – and can manipulate that image to guide an actual surgical procedure.

In RealView's pilot study, clinicians manipulated the projected 3D heart structures by touching the holograms.

Eventually, RealView Imaging's technology could enhance capabilities in anything from virtual gaming to architectural design. For now, the focus is on medical applications.

"Our system is built from two subsystems," Gelman says.

"The first system can take any 3D data – from ultrasound, CT, MRI or even from your computer. Instead of printing this data, we create a hologram out of it with our unique hardware and software, and then it goes to an electro-optical system that reconstructs this data in three dimensions in free space."

A hologram is formed by the interference of light beams from a laser or other light source. This invention won Dennis Gabor a Nobel Prize in physics in 1971. Since then, it was the holy grail of display technologies to create the sort of live, high-quality, full-colour usable holograms now demonstrated by RealView Imaging.

For the Schneider trial concluded in October, RealView Imaging used real-time data from 3D cardiac ultrasound and 3D interventional X-ray systems made by the Dutch-based Philips Healthcare. The trial successfully proved the real-time feasibility of using holographic visualization and interaction technology during minimally invasive structural heart disease procedures.

"The holographic projections enabled me to intuitively understand and interrogate the 3D spatial anatomy of the patient's heart, as well as to navigate and appreciate the device-tissue interaction during the procedure," said Dr. Einat Birk, pediatric cardiologist and director of the Institute of Pediatric Cardiology at Schneider Children's Medical Center.

"We are continuing clinical evaluations and working on our first commercial system, which will take into account all the input that we received in clinical trials and technical analysis and testing," says Gelman, who also is vice-president for research and development due to his expertise in electro-optical and display technologies.

The company aims to have this system ready for sale next year. Talks are currently underway with potential partners.

"We are very passionate about realistic visualization and intuitive interaction with 3D images, specifically for medical imaging," Gelman says.

"Minimally invasive procedures are becoming more common, so it is more of a necessity to understand 3D data. There is no better way to do that than with a hologram, and interacting with it is only possible with a 3D hologram. We are happy to collaborate with any company that shares this passion."

RealView Imaging – not to be confused with two other Israeli companies, RealView Medical and Real Imaging – was founded in 2008 by Gelman along with entrepreneur Aviad Kaufman and Prof Carmel Rotschild, who heads optical engineering studies at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. The company's medical director is Dr. Elchanan Bruckheimer, director of the cardiac catheterization laboratories at Schneider Children's Medical Center.

Financed by the founders in its first years, RealView Imaging raised additional private funding led by its chair, serial medical device entrepreneur Dr. Shimon Eckhouse. He is currently chair of Syneron Medical.

In addition to cardiac applications, RealView Imaging medical holography could also be used in obstetrics, orthopedics and neurosurgery – "anyplace that 3D data gives added value to the physician, procedure or patient," says Gelman.

For more information, see www.realviewimaging.com. ■

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Negev tourism is now an easy train ride from the rest of Israel's treasures

JEFFREY F. BARKEN
JNS.ORG

Past the Gaza Strip, toward the rocket-battered city of Sderot, a new train now connects isolated Negev communities to the larger Israeli population centres. Not surprisingly, the Sderot line also opens the gates to increased tourism in that region.

For many people in Sderot, the new rocket-proof train station, which opened in December 2013, was a landmark event symbolic of the noble national effort that Israel's first president, David Ben-Gurion, outlined in his 1963 speech, "The Renewed State of Israel."

"The Negev is a great Zionist asset, with no substitute anywhere in the country," Ben-Gurion said. "It is a desolate area which... has the potential to be densely populated, even amounting to millions."

This is an exciting process of infrastructure development, expansion, and national renewal. The train ride through the desert territory to the south offers travellers a unique glimpse into the social-economic and national security realities faced by the modern state of Israel.

It is also a starkly beautiful, scenic, and rugged trail of adventure. Indeed, the view from a southbound train is a spectacular realization of Ben-Gurion's vision for the Negev. Tall cranes dot the horizon of Israel's rising cities south of Tel Aviv. Among the white sands, shrub studded hills, and sprouting wheat fields, high-rise apartments are under construction everywhere.

New developments gradually are easing Israel's shortage of affordable housing, and cities like Ashkelon and Sderot are booming despite the ever-present threat of terror from hostile neighbour Hamas.

The Negev PHOTO COURTESY OF ISRAELI MINISTRY OF TOURISM

"Sderot was dying until we went into Gaza with operation Pillar of Defence," Marianne Navon, a resident of Kibbutz Dorot, situated five miles east of Sderot, says.

"Now the city is safe. [Israel's] Iron Dome [missile defence system] is effective, and every single apartment in Sderot has had a shelter built. It's no longer fun for Hamas to aim rockets here," she says.

According to Yankele Grosfeld, who manages the small guesthouse at Kibbutz Dorot, Israel's south is a practical destination for tourists seeking to make the "star trip of Israel." "We are only one hour from every major site – Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, and Tel Aviv – and it is much cheaper to stay here," Grosfeld says.

Couples can enjoy a cozy room at Kibbutz Dorot for as little as 400 shekels (about $115) per night. Their accommodation includes an Israeli breakfast, and on Friday evenings they can join kibbutz members at the communal dining hall for a traditional Shabbat dinner experience.

The kibbutz itself is a beautifully landscaped oasis, including a lap pool, and there are scenic trails to be taken through the surrounding garlic and carrot fields, citrus orchards, and olive groves.

"Tourists love the cows," says the secretary of Kibbutz Dorot's guesthouse, Orian Orbach. "Foreigners come to enjoy the quiet country, biking and hiking trails, commute to the other major sites, and then return for a pleasant weekend."

Nearby, at Kibbutz Ruhama, early risers can catch a brilliant sunrise over the badlands. The rolling grassy landscape marked with scattered Roman ruins offers the ideal picnic spot. For 100 shekels (about $29), tourists can also experience the best view of the Negev and Gaza by chartering a hot air balloon tour of the countryside.

Further south, the hot springs and Turkish baths at Kibbutz Zeelim are also a popular destination. Be sure to arrange your visit in advance, as space is limited.

History buffs seeking a perspective on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should visit "Black Arrow" park, where they can glimpse a panorama of the no man's land between Israel and Gaza, and read the memorial plaques illustrating the military campaigns fought to defend this territory.

A little secret: There is also a small museum behind the police station in Sderot, where visitors can view some of the mangled Qassam rockets fired from Gaza. The sporadic rocket assaults that have stymied Sderot's growth in the past are an unfortunate reality, one of which visitors and residents are all too painfully aware. "Normally we are not really having that experience," Orbach says.

But while area residents "hear the booms [of Gaza rockets] and it is vivid, the threat is small," according to Orbach.

"During the attacks, we had a few guests with families that were frightened. We showed them we have shelters, and they relaxed. If they wanted to leave, of course, we were pleasant with them. Afterwards, they came back," Orbach says. Sderot has proven resilient in the face of aggression.

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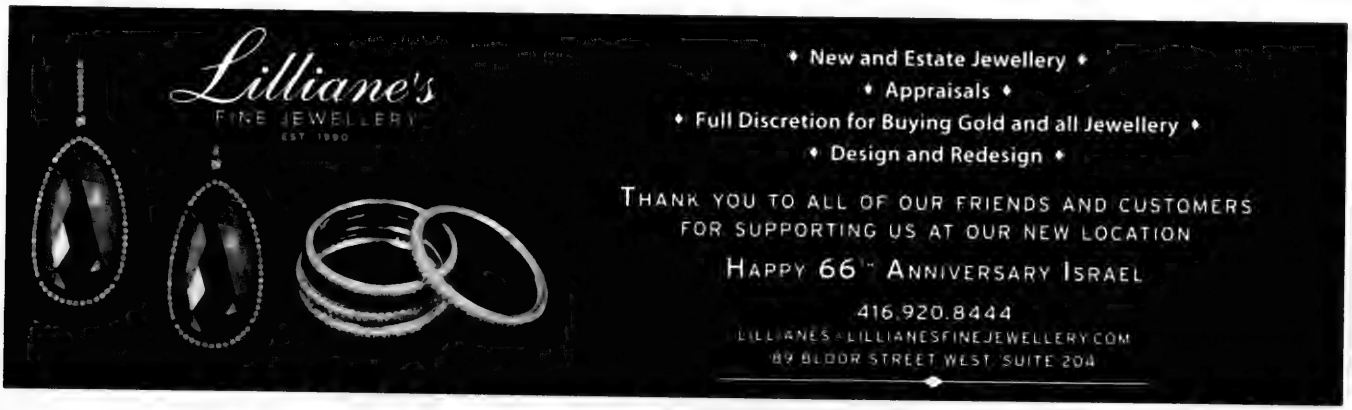
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Researchers focuses on how to ditch reading glasses

ISRAEL21C

Visual crowding is a condition that prevents some people from seeing beyond the clutter – or recognizing people's faces, objects or single letters inside big words. It's a common problem among people with lazy eye, traumatic brain injuries, and those of us who need reading glasses.

Until now, it was believed that visual crowding was caused by a problem in the peripheral vision.

But in a new study published in *Nature's* Scientific Reports, Prof. Uri Polat, Maria Lev and Dr. Oren Yehezkel of Tel Aviv University's Goldschleger Eye Research Institute have found that visual crowding can be traced to a different area in the eye – the fovea, the sharp vision centre in the retina. The way it is linked to the brain's processor appears to have a strong influence on visual crowding.

"Current theories strongly stress that visual crowding does not exist in the fovea, that it's a phenomenon that exists only in peripheral visual fields," said Polat. "But our study points to another part of the eye altogether – the fovea – and contributes to a unified model for how the brain integrates visual information."

The Tel Aviv University researchers showed that visual crowding can be linked from the retina to the brain's processing speed. This makes them suspect that using novel training methods focused on the fovea could help people overcome their limitations and let them ditch the reading glasses altogether.

Polat says that vision is dynamic and it has the ability to adapt quickly to new things, yet it still takes a certain amount of time for the brain to process what it is seeing – whether news headlines on the television screen, or an abundance of traffic signs along a highway.

All of these are hard for anyone to read, but given enough time to see these fast-moving objects, usually a person with healthy vision can "get" the gist of the information.

But people with slower brain processing speeds may not be able to "get" any of the signs or headlines. When Polat retrained the brain and the foveal part of the eye, he could measure improved vision. He said, "training adults to reduce foveal crowding leads to improved vision. A similar training conducted two years ago allowed adults to eliminate their use of reading glasses using a technology provided by the GlassesOff company.

"Other patients who had lost sharp vision for whatever reason were also able to benefit from the same training and improve their processing speed and visual capabilities," said Polat. ■

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Culinary Bazaar a treat for foodies

SYBIL KAPLAN
SPECIAL TO THE CJN

In September 1892, the Jerusalem train station opened as the first and last stop of the Jerusalem-Jaffa line. It closed in 1998, and the station offices, ticket office and hall and its 3,000-square-metre concourse sat deserted until First Station was renovated and restored in May 2013.

Today it is a venue for numerous restaurants, a family bazaar, a design fair for 30 designers, a running shoes' store, an activity centre for children, and a visitors store. Plus there is a myriad of activities running seven days a week.

For those interested in food, a tour of the kosher Culinary Bazaar is a must. Nir Zook, the 37-year-old, Israeli-born chef, was our guide. Zook has worked in restaurants in Israel, France and the United States since the age of 13 and currently owns three restaurants in Jaffa – upscale, candlelit and romantic Cordelia; its little sister, Noa; and the Jaffa Bar.

When Avi Murdoch, partner in the management team and entrepreneur, created the idea of making the old train station a centre for culture and food, he approached Zook with the idea of a culinary bazaar to be located in what was once the storage room for goods being shipped to Tel Aviv.

On the outside patio is a seating area with clever stools made from used tires with grass-like seats; nearby is a hot, corn-on-the-cob container. A restaurant has recently opened opposite this area.

Next to the seating area is a bar with drinks for sale on one side and produce on the other as well as a candy bar with 27 different candies, nine spices and 28 dried fruit, nuts and snack varieties.

By the main entrance is the booth of Michal Havirian and her husband from Moshav Nocham (near Bet Shemesh, 15 miles from Jerusalem). The booth sells 50 to 60 different kinds of organic produce, freshly picked for only a day's sales. Kale, baby leeks, lettuces and other vegetables are sold in their natural state with their leaves attached. Particularly tasty was the raw corn on the cob and the Napoli pumpkin.

Inside the old building are 10 kiosks starting off with a booth where fresh falafel and hummus are sold.

Itzhik sells kosher cheeses, and 150 different kinds of wine from 30 wineries around Jerusalem plus one from the Golan. Itzhik also operates a cheese and olive stall in the Jerusalem produce market, Machaneh Yehudah.

Next is a shop that sells pots and pans imported from France and knives.

In the fish shop on the day we visited was sea bream, striped bass, red mullet and grouper – delivered twice a day – and imported salmon from Norway, delivered twice a week. Oriental condiments to go with the fish are also for sale. One can also find fisherman accessories and organize a fishing trip with Nir Elimelech.

Halvah, techinah and baklava are sold in the next shop; fresh pasta and pizza are nearby to eat there or take home.

Gruda's Bakery, made by Leon Gruda, pastry chef, has breads, cakes, tortes, cookies, quiches and croissants to eat here or take home or, as they say in Israel, "take away."

At Daskalide's, one can buy Belgian chocolate, one of the 30 varieties offered or boxes from 125 grams to one kilo. Chocolate chips, and all sizes of gift items and gift baskets are also available.

Tom runs the coffee shop, Cafe Barista, where beans are roasted. One can drink the house coffee, made from five different kinds of beans, or take home a bag of coffee.

For ice coffee enthusiasts, the beans are soaked in water for 24 hours then separated and the liquid strained. This is poured over crushed ice resulting in a wonderful tasting cold coffee.

The Culinary Bazaar is a fun experience day or night. Wandering through the bazaar is definitely an entertaining and enjoyable time one wants to repeat on a regular basis. ■

Coffee counter at the Culinary Bazaar
BARRY A. KAPLAN PHOTO

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Israeli discovery could reverse Alzheimer's damage

DAVID SHAMAH
TIMES OF ISRAEL

Research by a Tel Aviv University team may point the way to protecting cells from the damage wrought by Alzheimer's disease, and even reverse damage that the disease caused before treatment. The method involves a protein similar to one which protects the brain from damage, but which is lacking in Alzheimer's patients.

What causes Alzheimer's is still a mystery, but the direct physical conditions leading to the dementia associated with the disease are very clear to scientists. Plaque accumulations and tangles in neurons kill brain cells in Alzheimer's sufferers, leading to the degeneration of cognitive function and the loss of memory associated with the disease.

One of the most important objectives of Alzheimer's research has been to figure out ways to protect brain cells from these senile plaques and neurofibrillary tangles. In a study published in the May 2014 edition of the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, Tel Aviv University Prof. Illana Gozes describes how NAP, a snippet of a protein essential for brain formation, has been proven in previous studies to protect cognitive functioning. Loss of NAP exposes cells to physical damage that eventually destroys them, but applying proteins with NAP-like properties makes them healthy again.

It's just such a protein that Gozes and her team have discovered. The research, she said, could eventually lead to the development of drugs to treat Alzheimer's.

"Several years ago we discovered that NAP showed efficacy in Phase 2 clinical trials in mild cognitive impairment patients, a precursor to Alzheimer's," she said. "Now, we're investigating whether there are other novel NAP-like sequences in other proteins."

NAP has been shown to provide potent neuroprotection in several human trials. It is derived from activity-dependent neuroprotective protein (ADNP), a molecule that is essential for brain formation.

In tests on mice suffering from dementia-like characteristics, a tubulin fragment with NAP-like sequences was applied to cells with promising results, Gozes said. As NAP "evaporated," the brain cells were less protected and deteriorated. The tubulin treatment reversed the damage.

"We looked at the mouse 'dementia'-afflicted brain and saw there was a reduction in the NAP parent protein, but upon treatment with the tubulin fragment, the protein was restored to normal levels." "We clearly see here the protective effect of the treatment," she said. "We witnessed the restorative and protective effects of totally new protein fragments, derived from proteins critical to cell function, in tissue cultures and on animal models." ■

TimesofIsrael.com

Kibbutzim are popular spots

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B15

"The Sunday market takes place weekly, rain or shine," says Shaun Deakin, a former kibbutz volunteer who now manages Kibbutz Dorot's gardens and landscaping projects. With the promise of safety and improved transportation comes new investment. New houses are springing up in almost every neighbourhood around Sderot's Sapir College, and students now find space and opportunity to live comfortably.

There is even a busy youth centre with a cinema where student films are shown. Negev kibbutzim are popular destinations in the summer for Israeli tourists. Many families travel together and rent out guesthouses to host parties.

Perhaps nowhere else in the country is the true Israeli experience and character more accessible to tourists. Sderot may not offer the same intensity of culture and history as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, but it certainly has many charms of its own and should be a choice destination on tourists' itinerary. This is kibbutz country, a pioneering experiment and now an easy train ride from the rest of Israel's treasures. ■

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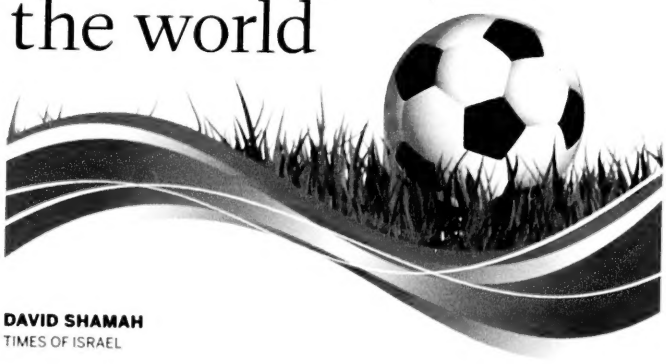
LiveU transmits World Cup around the world



DAVID SHAMAH
TIMES OF ISRAEL

LiveU, an Israeli startup, is gearing up to deliver television-quality video of World Cup coverage via cellular connections to broadcast centres and the Internet, using a network of 200 of the firm's mini-broadcast boxes, devices about half the size of a laptop.

Over 30 international broadcasters are scheduled to beam the games from stadiums in the 12 host cities across Brazil, where games will be held during the month-long quadrennial tournament.

LiveU will thus be responsible for ensuring that broadcasts of most of the games get out to the rest of the world. It's a heavy burden, but one LiveU CEO Samuel Wasserman believes the company can manage.

LiveU is headquartered in Kfar Saba, with a U.S. office in Hackensack, N.J. It was established in 2006 and is said to be the only company offering a remote uplink solution for broadcast-quality video without requiring a satellite or wired Internet connection.

The company has hundreds of clients in about 60 countries around the world, including Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association and the National Football League. The BBC used LiveU devices for major events, such as the Queen's visit to Ireland in 2011 and the 2012 London Summer Olympics.

BBC news uses LiveU's technology for many of its field reports, said Wasserman, adding that the company was honoured at the BBC's "vote of confidence in the flexibility of our solution." About 50 people work for LiveU.

LiveU is currently the only company offering a robust transmission solution for broadcasters, consisting of up to 14 cellular modems over multiple carriers, as well as multiple LAN and even BGAN satellite connections (as backup). The solution works with any camera. The bonded modems (both 3G and 4G) aggregate all data connections simultaneously to achieve high bandwidth and smooth transmission, even as bandwidth and signal levels change across the different connections.

Some of the connections from some carriers may suffer from fluctuations and slowdowns when there is heavy traffic in the network, but LiveU's software is built to compensate by drawing on other resources to keep the uplink going at the best possible quality.

Until LiveU developed this solution, most broadcasters relied on satellite uplinks to deliver broadcasts. But satellite broadcasts require a line of sight connection to the satellite, said LiveU vice-president Ariel Galinsky, making it impractical for broadcasting from indoors, under bridges, inside caves or even in very cloudy weather. "Since LiveU uses the cell network, our device can broadcast from locations where satellite use is out of the question," he said, adding that the leased systems that LiveU provides clients are a lot cheaper for broadcasters than renting a satellite van or using a satellite phone, which "costs a lot of money per minute, with the hardware itself very expensive."

LiveU recently upgraded its broadcast boxes, making them smaller and adding

Interview using LiveU equipment
COURTESY PHOTO

Internet transmission capability. The company's new DataBridge device allows users to download content from the Internet, edit it and transfer the file back to the cloud, where it can be downloaded for broadcast or viewed via a web site. The device can act as a Wi-Fi hotspot, allowing fans in the stadium, or elsewhere, to view the broadcast via their devices or on a website.

As a result, FIFA plans for the first time to broadcast live feeds of games on the Internet. LiveU is set to partner with TERRA, the largest Internet company in Latin America, to show full games and clips on subscription sites TERRA will administer. TERRA expects over 80 million people in Latin America and beyond to tune in to at least some of the action online.

According to Ronen Artman, LiveU's vice-president of marketing, "the FIFA World Cup is one of the pre-eminent sporting events on the global calendar, and 2014 is no exception. This is a tremendous opportunity for media companies, be that broadcast or online or a combination of the two, to show how dynamic they can be in what's a very competitive arena. LiveU technology is ideal for covering stories and sports news around the tournament." ■
Timesofisrael.com

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